

### 1 Read about ecotourism and match each paragraph with a heading.

—A definition of ecotourism— Benefits and Downsides Organisations involved  
The principles of ecotourism The future of ecotourism The history of ecotourism

#### 1 *A definition of ecotourism*

Any form of tourism – adventure, sports, recreational, cultural or educational – can be based on the principles of sustainable tourism, because it contributes to and doesn't harm the environment it's in. However, ecotourism is a separate branch of tourism altogether, widely defined as: 'responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people'.\*

2 \_\_\_\_\_

What most ecotourism holidays have in common is their ecological sustainability, their support for local communities, conservation of the environment and of natural resources, their sensitivity towards cultural diversity, and their educational focus.

3 \_\_\_\_\_

Ecotourism was developed to meet the needs of the increasing number of nature tourists who were also concerned about the environment. There was an early example of ecotourism in Kenya, East Africa in the 1970s, where people began paying to visit safari parks and the money was used for wildlife conservation. Other successful examples are the nature lodges in the rainforests of Costa Rica and Belize, and recent expeditions to Antarctica.

\* The International Ecotourism Society, 1990.

4 \_\_\_\_\_

The greatest danger with ecotourism lies in its popularity. The high number of people means there is a constant need for accommodation, transportation and natural resources, all of which can damage the environment and natural habitats.

On the other hand, Ecotourism also enables us to sustain and support communities and their economies by creating jobs and investing in conservation, development and education projects.

5 \_\_\_\_\_

Today many international non-profit organisations are involved in researching and promoting ecotourism. Some of the best known include the World Tourism Organisation, the World Travel and Tourism Council, Tourism Concern and the World Wildlife Fund. Yet ecotourism has become so profitable that there are also many commercial organisations now focusing on this niche market.

6 \_\_\_\_\_

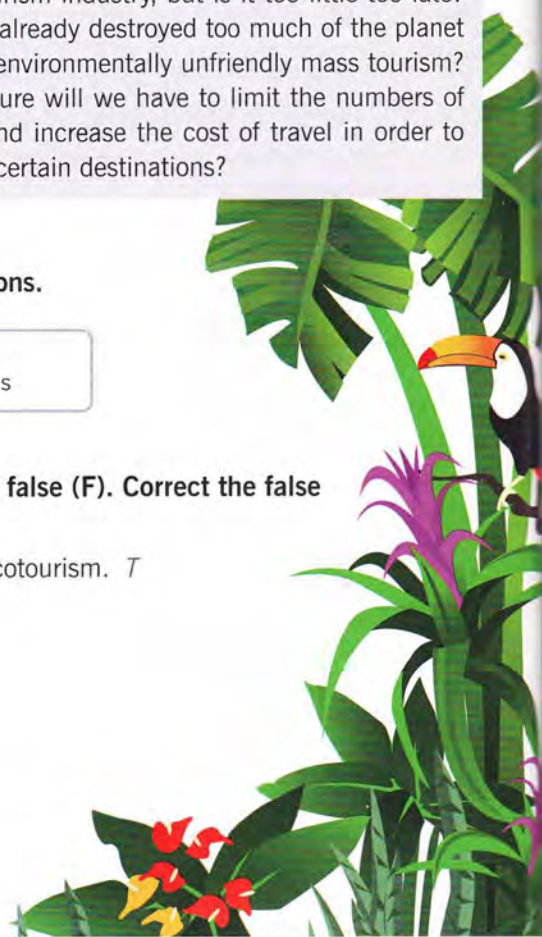
Ecotourism is currently the fastest growing market in the tourism industry, but is it too little too late? Have we already destroyed too much of the planet with our environmentally unfriendly mass tourism? In the future will we have to limit the numbers of visitors and increase the cost of travel in order to preserve certain destinations?

### 2 Read the text again and try to write a definition for these expressions.

habitat ecotourism niche market environmentally unfriendly wildlife conservation non-profit organizations

### 3 Read the text again and decide if these sentences are true (T) or false (F). Correct the false statements.

- 1 Any form of tourism can be sustainable but that doesn't make it ecotourism. T
- 2 Ecotourism usually has an educational focus.
- 3 The earliest form of ecotourism was in Belize.
- 4 The popularity of ecotourism can be a problem.
- 5 Ecotourism doesn't create jobs.
- 6 It is possible to make a lot of money from ecotourism.
- 7 Ecotourism is not a fast growing market in the tourism industry.



#### 4 Are you a good ecotourist? Take this test and find out!

##### When you're abroad, do you...

- 1 learn words and phrases in the local language and try to use them?  
Yes  No
- 2 only visit places that are listed in your guidebook?  
Yes  No
- 3 use as much water as you want to wash your hair, body and clothes?  
Yes  No
- 4 travel by public transport, hire a bike or walk?  
Yes  No
- 5 ask people before taking photographs of them?  
Yes  No
- 6 act and dress in the same way as you would at home?  
Yes  No
- 7 buy goods produced locally and eat typical local food?  
Yes  No
- 8 stay in big luxurious multinational hotels?  
Yes  No



#### 5 Now match these answers to the quiz. Do you agree with them?

- a  It's a good idea. It shows real respect for the people and culture and is a great icebreaker.
- b  It's a good way of supporting local communities and businesses and learning more about a place.
- c  Travelling by public transport is a great way to meet local people, and reduce carbon emissions.
- d  You should respect people's right to privacy and always ask before taking a photo of a person.
- e  Use water carefully. It's a precious natural resource in many countries and Westerners tend to use and waste far more than local people.
- f  Keep in mind that many luxurious hotels don't support local economies; they often exploit local people and the environment.
- g  Guidebooks are useful for learning about a place before you go, but local people always know the best places to visit. Ask them!
- h  Remember that people in different places have different ways of thinking, behaving and dressing and you should respect that. Always ask if you're unsure about taking shoes off or covering your head.

#### 6 Work in pairs and discuss your answers to the quiz. Use the expressions in the box to help you.

To be honest...

To tell you the truth...

Have you ever...

Yes, I have / No, I haven't.

I've always / never done it.

I've never thought about it before.

Student A: *When you're abroad, do you learn words and phrases in the local language and try to use them?*

Student B: *Yes, I have always learnt a few words when I've been to another country even if it's only please and thank you.*

## 7 Read the texts and match a picture with each one.



- 1  Have you always wanted to photograph tigers in the wild? Why not take a wildlife photography holiday in India? You'll learn from a professional wildlife photographer and stay in jungle eco-lodges supporting sustainable wildlife parks staffed by locals. Group sizes will be limited to three people.
- 2  Have you ever thought about taking a walking holiday in Ireland, combining sea, hills and forests? You'll stay in solar-powered, eco-friendly guesthouses, hiking in small groups, eating locally produced food, learning about Irish culture and nature from your guides and socialising with the locals in traditional Irish pubs.

## 8 Read the texts again and complete the table with information in each category.

Country	Accommodation	Activities	Wildlife and natural habitats	Ecotourism elements
India	eco-lodges	photography	tigers	sustainable wildlife parks; group sizes limited to three

## 9 Complete the conversation below between a travel agent and a customer with the expressions from the box. Then listen and check your answers.

conservation projects ~~eco-resorts~~ solar-powered environmentally friendly  
natural disasters raise awareness renewable energy sources carbon-neutral

Customer: Hello. I'd like some information about (1) *eco-resorts* in the Maldives. Please.

Travel Agent: Certainly. They are owned and run by native Maldivian staff, who receive fair salaries.

Customer: What about my carbon footprint?

Travel Agent: Well, you might have heard that the Maldives is trying to become the first (2) \_\_\_\_\_ country in the world and the eco-resorts are contributing to that by using (3) \_\_\_\_\_ such as wind, water and sun.

Customer: How does that affect the accommodation?

Travel Agent: The luxury chalets are (4) \_\_\_\_\_ and extremely (5) \_\_\_\_\_.

Customer: Are there other ways in which the resorts promote sustainability?

Travel Agent: Yes, part of the money you spend on your holiday goes into (6) \_\_\_\_\_ like cleaning the local coral reef.

Customer: What about cultural and educational projects?

Travel Agent: There are plenty of opportunities to interact with the locals and learn about the wealth of cultural diversity, which makes up these islands. There are also educational projects to (7) \_\_\_\_\_ of environmental threats to these islands from (8) \_\_\_\_\_ like tsunamis and hurricanes.



- 3  Have you ever imagined trekking the Inca trail to Machu Picchu, kayaking the fjords of Chilean Patagonia and nature-watching on the Galapagos Islands? Local accommodation, hospitality and guides provide opportunities to interact and learn about Latin American people and cultures.
- 4  Have you ever wished luxury didn't cost the earth? Well it doesn't have to if you're relaxing in a new eco-resort in the Maldives, destined to be the first carbon-neutral country in the world. Your money will help finance coral cleaning, waste management, water conservation and renewable energy sources.
- 5  Have you ever wanted to get up close to a great white shark? Why not join a team of marine biologists in South Africa monitoring the sharks from boats and cages in the sea? You'll spend most of your time working with a small dedicated group of locals, learning about sharks and educating the general public about them.
- 6  Have you ever been on a volunteering holiday? Here's your chance! Come to Cambodia and teach sport, music, art or drama to disadvantaged children. You will live with local host families, learn about the culture and take sightseeing trips to beaches, temples and monkey refuges.



**10** You are a travel agent and you have received an email from a customer enquiring about one of the ecotourism holidays in exercise 7. Write a reply including the details below. Use the expressions in the box to help you.

- activities (nature, adventure, culture, etc.)
- accommodation (eco-lodges, locally run guest-houses, host families, etc.)
- the principles of ecotourism on which your holiday is based (group sizes, local staff, local produce, sustainable energy sources, educational focus, transport, etc.)

I am writing in reply to your letter asking for information about...

I would like to let you know that...

As for the...

I hope that you find this helpful...

## MY GLOSSARY

biologist /baɪˈlɒdʒɪst/ \_\_\_\_\_  
 carbon emission /kɑːbən ɪmɪʃən/ \_\_\_\_\_  
 carbon footprint /kɑːbən ˈfʊtprɪnt/ \_\_\_\_\_  
 carbon-neutral /kɑːbən ˈnjuːtrəl/ \_\_\_\_\_  
 coral reef /kɒrəl riːf/ \_\_\_\_\_  
 eco-friendly /iːkəʊfrendli/ \_\_\_\_\_

educational focus /edʒʊkeɪʃənəl ˈfəʊkəs/ \_\_\_\_\_  
 endangered species /ɪnˈdeɪndʒəd ˈspiːʃɪz/ \_\_\_\_\_  
 renewable energy source /rɪnjuːəbl ˈenədʒi sɔːs/ \_\_\_\_\_  
 solar-powered /səʊləɪə paʊəd/ \_\_\_\_\_  
 sustainability /səˈsteɪnəbɪləti/ \_\_\_\_\_