

# Tourism That Doesn't Cost The Earth

QuickTime™ and a  
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor  
are needed to see this picture.

TED  
ROGERS  
SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT  
RYERSON  
UNIVERSITY

Shannon Guihan  
Executive Director  
The Icarus Foundation

May 28/09

# The Debate Is Over

- It is very likely that human activities are causing global warming (IPCC, 2007)
- Extreme weather could reduce global gross domestic product (GDP) by up to 1% (Stern Report, 2006)

# Business Risks of Ignoring Climate Change

- Potential irreversible changes in habitats and ecosystems that support tourism activity
- Increased unpredictability and severity of climatic events such as those which impede the movement of visitors, damage settlements and undermine economies
- Reduction in travel demand due to negative attitudes towards air-based travel
- Increased operational costs from insurance, taxation, energy and government regulation
- Ineffective or delayed mitigation and adaptive responses.

# Opportunities in Acting Now

- Differentiating Canada's tourism sector in terms of its response to this issue, thereby increasing Canada's competitive edge
- Increased operational efficiencies and the resulting reduction in costs
- Development of new products and services
- The export of expertise (modeling, mitigation, adaptive responses, technology)

# The Challenge For Our Industry

- Tourism depends on fossil fuel to move its customers to the point of consumption.
- Aviation contributes 3-5% of total emission today but its share is increasing
- Gains from reducing greenhouse gas emissions in other parts of the economy are likely to be negatively offset by aviation-related travel
- Aviation still dependent on the jet engine that burns kerosene. Cannot easily move to alternative fuels. Use of bio fuels still a long way off.
- Future tourism demand is vulnerable due as much to the indirect effects of climate change as the direct effects

# Direct Effects

- Climate change is more complex than global warming
- The canals of Ottawa will not resemble the Everglades
- The culture, economy and ecosystem of Canada's Arctic are under serious threat
- Destruction of habitats will affect eco-tourism, land use, agriculture, fisheries and our image as a destination
- Perceptions regarding response to climate change will be as important as average temperature

# Indirect Effects

- Global tourism growth projections may now be suspect and vulnerable
- Indirect effects include:
  - Oil prices
  - Economic vitality
  - Security
  - Disease
  - Consumer/voter response
  - Government response to all the above

QuickTime™ and a  
PDF (Uncompressed) decompressor  
are needed to see this picture.

# Opportunity

- Affects perceptions of Canada by visitors
- Increased demand for green travel
  - Lonely Planet survey
  - Travel Mole survey
- Increased demand for carbon offsetting & climate friendly travel
- Corporate Social Responsibility and the ethical consumer

# The Icarus Foundation

- Formed to help Canada become a climate friendly tourism destination
- To encourage the tourism to take responsibility for its contribution
- To help tourism businesses reduce their carbon footprint and mitigate the negative effects of climate change

SmallTIFF™ and ©  
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor  
are needed to see this picture.

# Objectives

We aim to do this through three areas:

## *Education*

- To provide input into both destination and corporate strategies, policies and programs that result in the reduction of greenhouse gases associated with tourism.
- To develop tools and manuals for tourism businesses to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

## *Research/Action Projects*

- To develop innovative projects within and for the tourism sector that encourage visitors and tourism supplier to reduce their carbon footprint.

## *Communication/Advocacy*

- To advocate the importance of the Climate Change issue to the future viability of Canadian tourism through public speaking, blogs, articles, seminars and conferences.

# Shining Example - Bike Train



- Over 30% (majority) chose taking the Bike Train because it was a more "sustainable travel option"
- - Over 70% of passengers indicated they would definitely take the Bike Train in the future
- - 25+ media articles in 4 months, including major articles in Toronto Star, and Globe and Mail
- - [www.biketrain.ca](http://www.biketrain.ca) received over 20K unique visitors in 6 months, with hits from people around the world
- Now funded for expansion

# In Conclusion - The Business Case

- Benefits of responsible business practices
  - Cost Savings
  - The Customer
  - Staff Loyalty
  - Company Image
  - Risk Management
  - Legal Compliance
  - Social Dimensions
  - The Industry's Future

QuickTime™ and a  
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor  
are needed to see this picture.