Tourism Policy

The Green Party supports tourism that is sustainable, inclusive, and enhances the well-being of people and the environment. For Māori, this means protecting and sharing culture through tourism that upholds tikanga and tino rangatiratanga. Aotearoa New Zealand needs a national strategy that supports low-impact tourism, reducing emissions, protecting nature, and strengthening local communities. When tourism is managed responsibly, it creates meaningful connections, supports local economies, and ensures future generations can enjoy our natural and cultural heritage.

Vision

Tourism enhances cultural connections and delivers an experience to visitors that protects communities and the natural world.

Values and Principles

Decision-making in relation to tourism must uphold the following interconnected values and principles:

- *Kaitiakitanga*: Tourism activities must protect and nurture our natural environment, which has more value than just an attraction or experience for visitors.
- *Āhua o te rangi*: Tourism is dependent on a stable climate, and must transition to lower emissions and greater resilience.
- *Manaakitanga*: Tourism is a form of hospitality that must enhance the well-being of tourists and communities.
- *Kotahitanga*: Tourism should work collaboratively to help achieve collective goals.
- *Rangapū*: Partnering with Māori provides unique, culturally authentic, non-exploitative tourism.
- *Tauutuutu*: Tourism should build reciprocal, long-term relationships that involve a mutually beneficial sharing of culture, experience, and resources.

Strategic Priorities

The Green Party's strategic goals include:

> "...regenerative practices in all areas of economic activity, including land use and food production, will predominate."

Actions in this policy that will help achieve this include:

- Phasing out permits and subsidies and introducing disincentives for high-emission tourism activities, and providing resources for a just transition. (1.1.1)
- Establish a regulatory framework for limiting international tourism, based on the environmental impacts of international flights. (1.1.3)

- Ensure fairness and justice in tourism development decision-making, by considering the impacts of tourism on communities. (2.1.1)
- Removing barriers to equitably accessing domestic tourism experiences. (3.1.1)
- Reorienting the Aotearoa New Zealand tourism strategy around domestic tourism, coordinating regional bodies, and enabling informed decisions by regional bodies. (3.1.1)
- Resourcing Māori Tourism to oversee and, if necessary, restrict tourism operators who are misappropriating Māori taonga, guided by local iwi and hapū. (4.1.1)

Connected Policies

Tourism falls under our wider [Business](#) Policy. Tourism benefits from [Te Tiriti o Waitangi](#), vibrant [Arts, Culture and Heritage](#), suitable active and public [Transport](#) options and other infrastructure (see also our [Government in the Economy](#) Policy), and healthy ecosystems (see our [Biodiversity and Environmental Regeneration](#) Policy), and must reciprocate. Tourism must adapt to the realities of [Climate Change](#) and the needs of communities (see our [Housing and Sustainable Communities](#), [Rural Communities](#), [Workforce](#), and [Community and the Economy](#) Policies). For more on upholding mātauranga Māori as intellectual property belonging to Māori, see our [Research, Science and Technology](#) Policy.

Policy Positions

1.   Environmental impacts of tourism

Issues

High energy consumption is embedded in most tourism activities, especially transport. The tourism industry contributes to environmental damage through, for example: the volume of visitors in eco-sensitive places; activities that change land use and pollute air, land and water; inefficiencies and waste in infrastructure and other systems that accommodate tourists; and noise and light pollution, especially in rural areas. Tourism also contributes to the crisis of climate change, including through high levels of greenhouse gas emissions from long-haul cruise ships and air travel. Aotearoa New Zealand may lose its clean green reputation, which will directly impact the tourist economy.

Actions

1.1.   Restrict tourism sectors with a high environmental impact, including by:

1.1.1.   Phasing out permits and subsidies and introducing disincentives for high-emission tourism activities, and providing resources for a just transition;

1.1.2.   Developing environmental standards for cruise ships that stop their emissions, waste, and impacts on marine and coastal environments; and

1.1.3.   Establishing a regulatory framework for limiting international tourism based on the environmental impacts of international flights.

1.2.   Alleviate tourism's environmental impact on tourist hotspots, including by:

1.2.1.   Regulating tourist numbers and activities in areas of high ecological sensitivity, and developing alternative tourist destinations and opportunities, including digital exploration; and

1.2.2. Introducing a dynamic, data-driven visitor management system covering all areas of tourism to inform the sector about environmental and other impacts.

1.3. Support the development of tourism that is both low-impact and actively restorative, including by:

1.3.1. Strengthening 'freedom camping' legislation to minimise damage to the local environment;

1.3.2. Incentivise the electrification of tourist activities that are powered by fossil energy;

1.3.3. Establishing and monitoring a certification scheme for low-impact tourism operators; and

1.3.4. Developing and implementing a Tiriti-based, low-impact tourism strategy, integrated with the value of the Mauriora System Framework.

2. Social impacts of tourism

Issues

The tourism industry impacts communities with an overly heavy presence. Impacts include housing occupation, traffic congestion, increased cost of living in tourist hotspots, safety concerns, changes in community character, a lack of social license, social tensions, over-commercialisation of Māori culture; and inappropriate behaviour of some international tourists.

Actions

2.1. Ensure communities can minimise and are resilient to the social impacts of tourism, including by:

2.1.1. Requiring tourism development decision-makers to consider the impacts of tourism on communities;

2.1.2. Improving standards and protections for workers in the tourism industry, especially seasonal and migrant workers; and

2.1.3. Providing legal recourse for communities adversely impacted by over-tourism.

2.2. Enable Tiriti-based, community-led and differentiated decision-making in the tourism sector, including by:

2.2.1. Encouraging community-based ownership of and local employment in tourism ventures;

2.2.2. Facilitating the development of community-centred networks for tourism operators to advocate and collaborate; and

2.2.3. Implementing long-term, destination management plans by regional tourism bodies, in partnership with iwi, hapū, and other local communities.

2.3. Manage the impacts of high tourist numbers in communities with popular tourist sites, including by:

2.3.1. Increasing the international visitor levy and distributing it fairly, reflecting the impacts and distribution of costs associated with managing tourism's impacts; and

2.3.2. Establishing local strategies to discourage unmanageable visitor numbers, such as bed taxes or restrictions on the use of housing for tourist accommodation.

2.4. Restrict tourism activities that have a high negative social impact, including by:

2.4.1. Requiring tourism operations based on high-risk gambling to prove ongoing community consent to operate;

2.4.2. Prohibit the promotion of activities with a high risk of social impacts; and

2.4.3. Enabling community-led decision-making to impose local restrictions on harmful tourism activities.

3. Resilience of tourism

Issues

Businesses that provide services designed for tourists are vulnerable to a range of factors, both local and global. These include over-tourism, pressure on infrastructure, supply chain vulnerabilities, and overreliance on international tourists.

Actions

3.1. Support a resilient domestic tourism sector that enables New Zealanders to enjoy the cultural and natural environment of Aotearoa New Zealand, including by:

3.1.1. Reorienting the Aotearoa New Zealand tourism strategy around domestic tourism, coordinating regional bodies, and enabling informed decisions by regional bodies; and

3.1.2. Removing barriers to equitably accessing domestic tourism experiences.

4. Te Tiriti in tourism

Issues

Despite many successful Māori-owned and -operated tourist initiatives, there are still too many instances within the tourism sector and its governance where the value of Indigenous perspectives is not fully appreciated and the rights of Māori in relation to tourism are undermined.

Actions

4.1. Ensure Māori oversight and control over how Māori culture is represented and shared by tourism operators, by:

4.1.1. Resourcing Māori Tourism to oversee and, if necessary, restrict tourism operators who are misappropriating Māori taonga, guided by local iwi and hapū; and

4.1.2. Supporting Māori Tourism to establish accreditation of tourism providers that offer te ao Māori content.

4.2. Support the self-determination of Māori-led tourism.

4.2.1. Resource kaupapa Māori tourism initiatives led by iwi, hapū, and Māori commercial entities, as needed; and

4.2.2.   Prioritise Māori tourism businesses seeking to operate on public land.