

Trip.com Group™



**Trip.com Group Sustainable
Travel Consumer Report 2024**

Message from Our CEO

The need for the travel industry to mitigate and adapt to global environmental challenges remains as pressing as ever. As part of our aims to promote more sustainable travel on a global scale, we are pleased to present our most recent findings in the second Trip.com Group Sustainable Travel Consumer Report.

This report offers fresh insights into current public perceptions and the latest trends in industry practices. Encouragingly, recent years have seen a growing number of people endorse more sustainable travel, with an increasing preference for providers to offer options with environmental and social impact in mind.

This year's report also notably highlights the growing urgency to raise market awareness of more sustainable travel, including by providing more transparent labelling and removing barriers to making more environmentally conscious choices.

This call to action is matched with Trip.com Group's determination to elevate our own efforts, and to work closely with our industry partners to advance shared sustainability goals. Leveraging our leading product capacities and global user network to make more sustainable travel options transparent, accessible and impactful, we are determined to be part of the solution, as we work together towards a more sustainable world.

At Trip.com Group, we affirm our commitment to sustainable development through our ESG strategy, which prioritises the environment, communities, families, and stakeholders, as well as our goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2050. Through our various efforts, including the introduction of 'lower-carbon travel products', as well as investments in communities which create jobs and boost local economies, we are committed to making travel a force for good.

As we enjoy the planet's natural wonders, it is our duty and responsibility to protect and preserve these treasures for future generations. We invite you to join us on our mission to "pursue the perfect trip for a better world", as we collectively work towards a more sustainable future.

Jane Sun

CEO, Trip.com Group



Executive Summary

Trip.com Group's Sustainable Travel Consumer Report 2024 presents a fresh, in-depth look at the evolution of sustainable travel in the eyes of consumers, especially post-pandemic.

Most global travellers now see access to information about more sustainable travel options as a consumer right rather than a novel or secondary concern, signalling a new norm.

According to the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), sustainable travel is an aspiration to acknowledge all impacts of tourism, both positive and negative. It aims to minimise the negative impacts and maximise the positive ones.¹ However, our study shows a lack of shared understanding of what sustainable travel entails, with regional differences in interpretations and motivations.

A key disparity is price sensitivity. While an increasing proportion of travellers recognise sustainable travel as beneficial and desirable, most are reluctant to bear the additional costs.

This highlights challenges in turning newfound awareness into impactful action. Public education is urgently needed to inform consumption, but as our survey shows, making sustainable options more visible and credible is also vital. As many as a third of respondents have never chosen a more sustainable product.

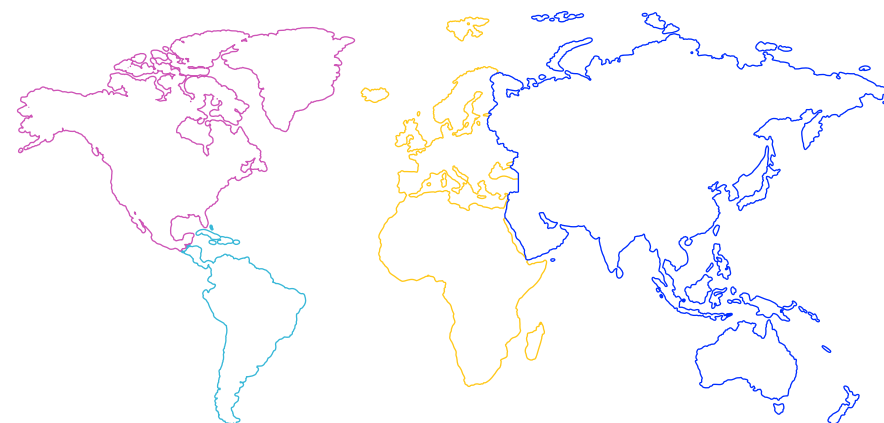
In response to these challenges, the report guides the broader travel industry on the next steps to take, emphasising that sustainable travel is a collective responsibility. Travellers expect OTAs to contribute by offering more reward programs, especially amid post-pandemic economic challenges.

This year's report, based on 9,867 survey samples from 109 countries and territories across four regions, expands Trip.com Group's inaugural 2022 survey beyond APAC and EMEA to include markets like LATAM and NORAM², with further insights into Gen Z preferences and regional variations.

We hope these findings will deepen awareness and encourage all stakeholders to collaborate in advancing more sustainable travel.

9,867 Survey samples

109 Countries and regions



■ APAC
 ■ EMEA
 ■ LATAM
 ■ NORAM

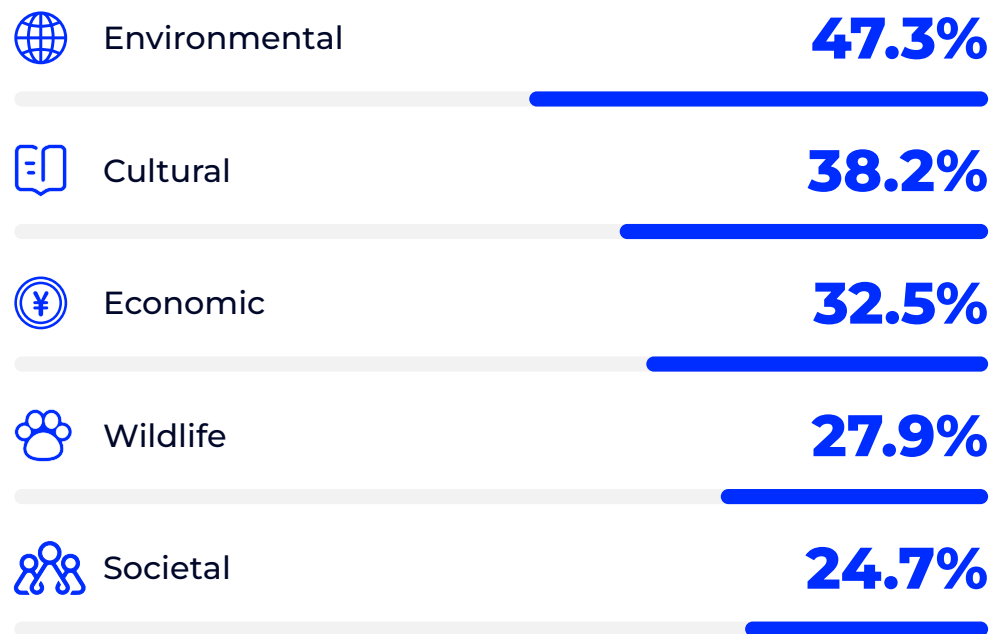
¹ GSTC definition of Sustainable Tourism: <https://www.gstcouncil.org/what-is-sustainable-tourism/>

² APAC and EMEA are acronyms for Asia Pacific and Europe, the Middle East and Africa. LATAM is short for Latin America, while NORAM stands for North America.

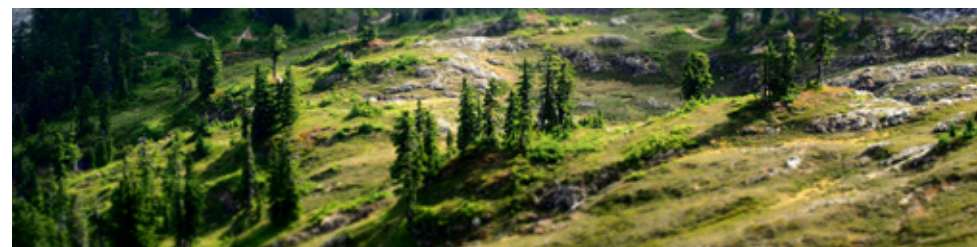
Shared Vision, Varied Motivation

Although sustainable travel is looming large in the minds of global travellers, people in different regions are focused on different dimensions when it comes to the motivation for travelling more sustainably.

Of all the factors, our survey shows respondents place the biggest emphasis on environmental and cultural aspects of their travel experience, followed by other concerns:



Environmental protection emerges as the primary catalyst for travellers from APAC and LATAM to engage in sustainable travel. In comparison, travellers in EMEA and NORAM tend to approach the term in a broader sense, convinced that wildlife protection, economic impact, cultural heritage and societal factors also matter to sustainable travel.



47.2% of **APAC/LATAM** consumers cite the environment as the most significant motivation

46.2% of **EMEA/NORAM** travellers state they also take other factors into account

As our data suggests, while the overall concept has caught on since its inception, the areas of focus are different across the globe.

Heeding Nature's Call to Action

Sustainable travel carries the assumption that humans are temporary guests in the homes of wildlife. With this understanding comes a spontaneous commitment to protect and nurture the delicate ecosystems we explore. As our partnership with WWF China shows, many travellers are increasingly vigilant against the purchase of wildlife products like ivories and have purposefully dedicated their journeys to the preservation of nature and its diverse species.

More sustainable practices travellers have adopted as part of wildlife preservation:

62%

are willing to engage in nature tours that conserve local wildlife and their natural habitat



28%

are aware of the illegality of ivory purchase in travel destinations



Data source: WWF China (2023)

Case in Focus

- Join Sustainable Travel Alliance
- Choose sustainable consumption and lifestyle
- Live in harmony with nature

- Refuse to buy illegal wildlife products
- Reduce buying and using single use plastic products
- Cherish food, save energy, reduce waste

Logos: Sustainable Travel Alliance, GSTC co-Initiator



Since 2019, WWF China has partnered with Trip.com Group on non-profit activities, from awareness campaigns for travellers to training sessions for industry practitioners, highlighting the importance of endangered wildlife and habitat conservation.

In 2020, WWF China and Trip.com Group launched the [‘Sustainable Travel Alliance’](#), aimed at promoting biodiversity, environmental protection, and sustainable development of the travel sector.

Bridging the Gap: Words vs Actions

92.0% of respondents acknowledge the importance of sustainable travel. But this belies a gap in expected and actual actions. Some travellers exhibit a low willingness to convert verbal commitment into concrete action.



Travellers who may consider sustainable travel vs those who don't

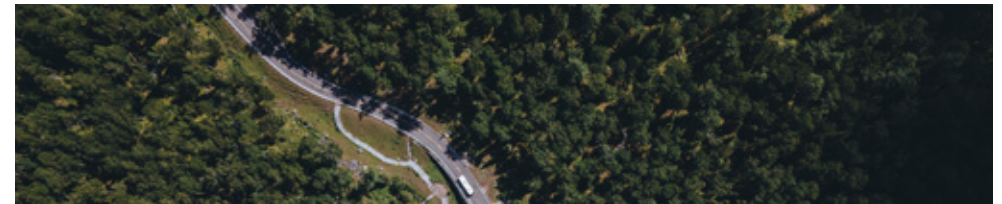
92.0% vs **8.0%**



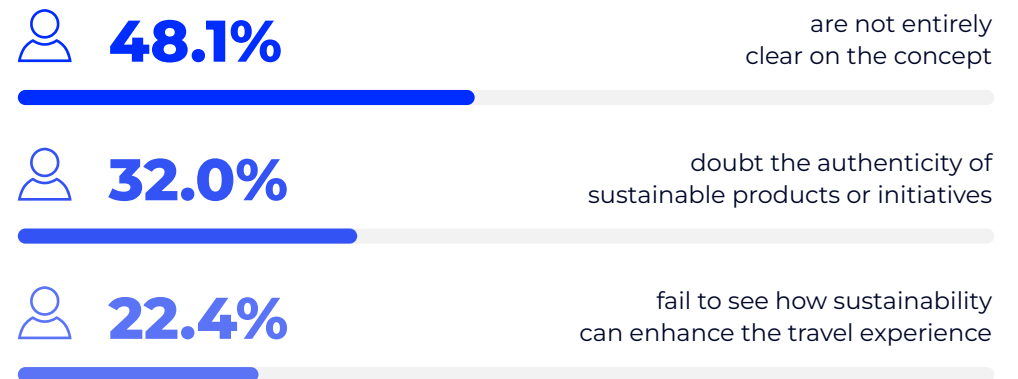
Travellers who may consider sustainable travel

Travellers who don't consider sustainable travel

However, only 56.9% of the respondents said they have practised sustainable travel. The disparity could result from an array of factors. A principal reason people give for not choosing or prioritising sustainable travel is 'a lack of clear understanding of the concept'. This underscores the significance of user education in promoting more sustainable travel.



The top 3 reasons for not pursuing a sustainable trip:



Behind the Regional Divide

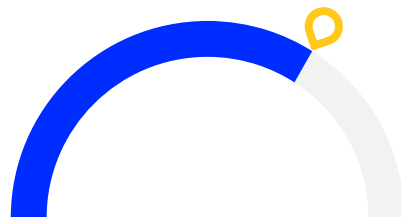
Exploring the reasons behind the reluctance to travel more sustainably helps uncover meaningful patterns for the travel industry. In regions such as APAC and LATAM, the growing enthusiasm for sustainable travel calls for further and widespread education to deepen commitment to this critical cause.

People who are not familiar with the concept of sustainability:



65.3%

in APAC



58.3%

in LATAM



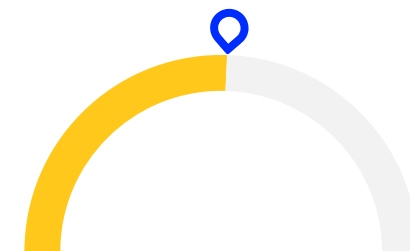
After years of awareness campaigns and sustainability efforts, travellers in NORAM and EMEA often need to be more convinced about the authenticity or benefits of sustainable travel products.

People who are increasingly wary of sustainable labels:



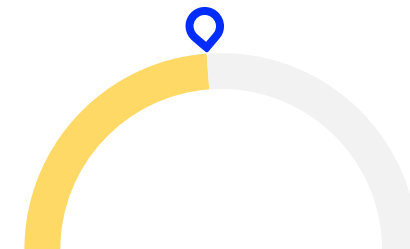
51.9%

in EMEA



47.9%

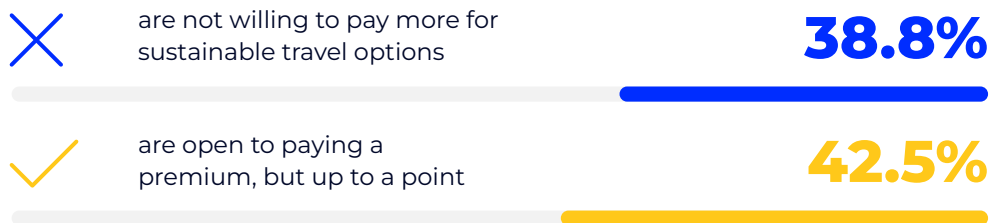
in NORAM



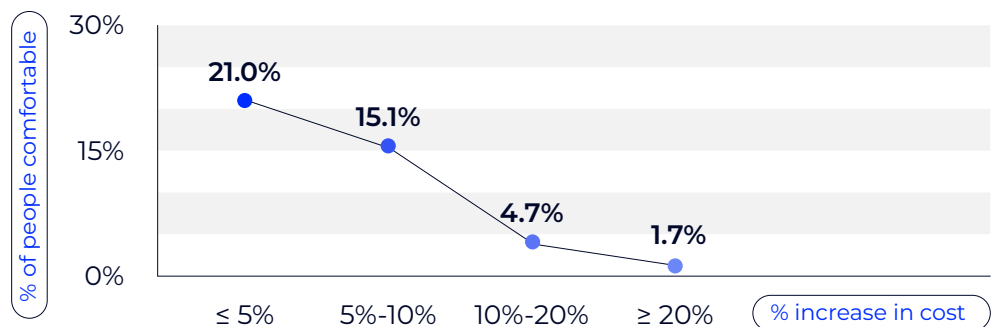
If anything, this level of scepticism helps to keep the travel industry on its toes, adding motivation to deliver trustworthy and verifiable sustainable offerings that stand up to scrutiny.

More Cost-Conscious Consumers

Apart from a lack of user education, growing price sensitivity at a time of economic challenge and soaring living costs contributes to people's ambivalence toward sustainable travel, which often comes with extra fees.



The proportion of people comfortable paying extra for more sustainable travel products declines with the increase in cost.

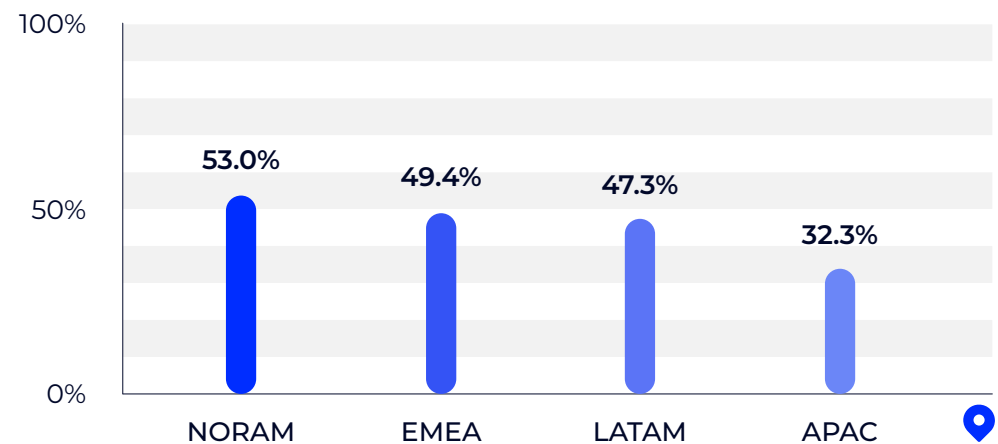


Despite varying degrees of responsiveness to price, respondents across all regions expect travel providers to present information related to sustainability, something they see as a consumer right.

Breakdown by region

APAC travellers might be less aware of what sustainable travel entails, but they are generally more comfortable with a premium for more sustainable options. In contrast, **NORAM** and **EMEA** travellers are less willing to pay more for sustainable travel.

Travellers unwilling to pay more for sustainable travel within each region:



The Question of Obligations

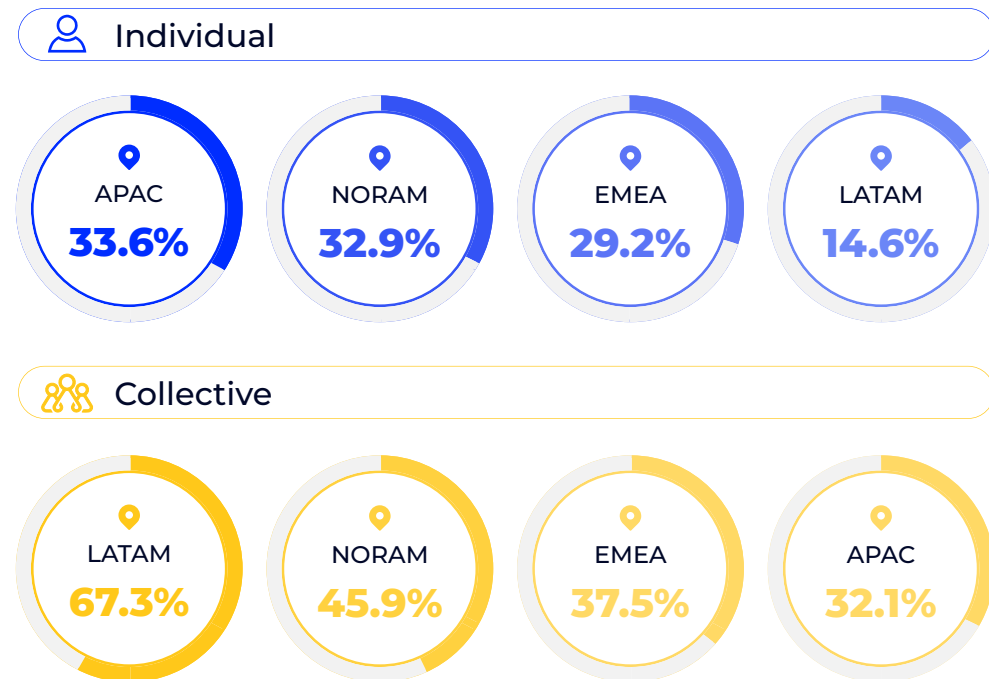
The world is debating how best to tackle global carbon emissions. The travel industry is also part of this important conversation. Our survey shows that a significant portion of consumers believe that addressing the negative impacts of tourism should be a collective effort involving all stakeholders to work together.

Who should take the lead in reducing the carbon footprint of travel?



In APAC, travellers stress sustainable travel is more of an individual responsibility than a shared duty, as opposed to travellers in EMEA, LATAM and NORAM.

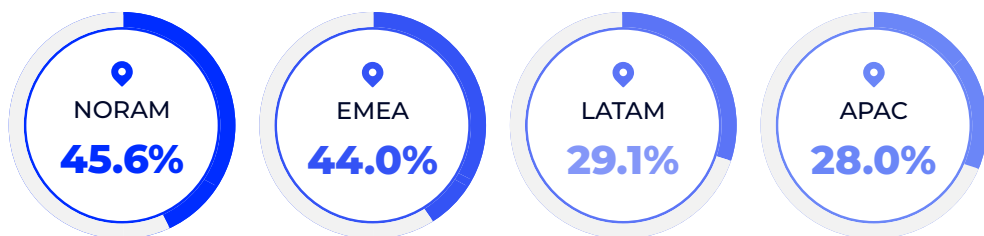
Whose obligation is this?



The Question of Obligations

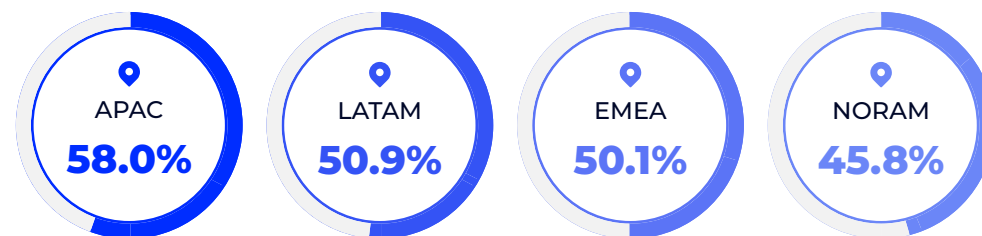
The perception of obligation also affects people's desire to actively look for more sustainable options.

Consumers who never search for these offerings when booking online within each region:

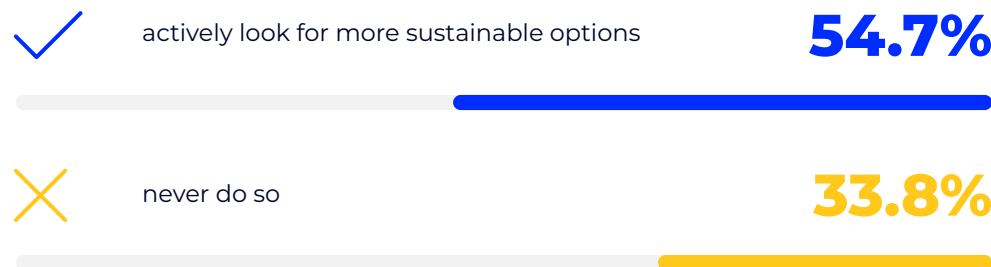


This does not suggest a lack of interest in more sustainable products on the part of NORAM and EMEA consumers. Instead, they perceive access to this information as a fundamental consumer right, regardless of whether they intend to act on it.

Travellers who occasionally or always seek more sustainable options when booking online:



On average, of all the survey's respondents,



Making Changes Happen

Travel industry players are pondering their next moves to encourage more sustainable travel. One effective way to start is to understand consumer preferences.

To overcome the hurdles to sustainable travel, efforts are needed on two fronts. First, we must use public education to dispel myths and misconceptions surrounding the term. At the same time, we should make more sustainable options more available and visible is also pivotal.

The top 4 favourite forms of sustainable travel:

#1

Take lower-emission transport



#2

Stay at eco-friendly accommodations



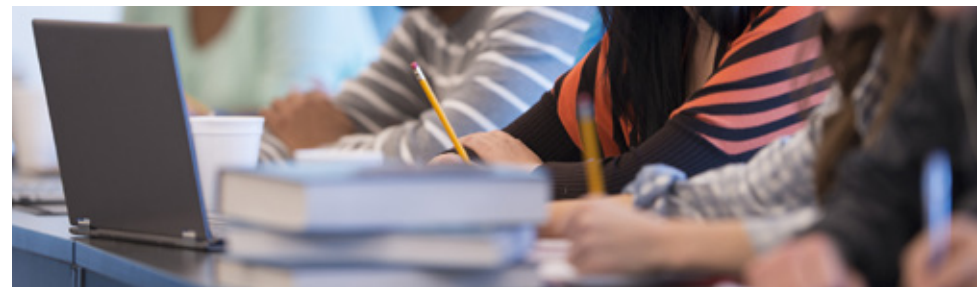
#3

Carbon offsetting



#4

Reduce single-use plastics



43.0%

are unsure what's considered a sustainable option

27.6%

blame unclear labelling for the difficulty in choosing sustainable products

26.3%

point to a lack of options that dampen their desire to travel sustainably

Engaging the Next Generation in Sustainability

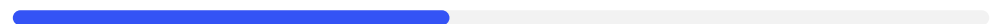
Nearly 9 out of 10 Gen Zs say they may consider sustainable travel, but in reality, a smaller portion of people from this age group are actively practising it. Understanding the following four attributes of Gen Zs could reveal ways to get them onboard.

i. Motivations and perceptions

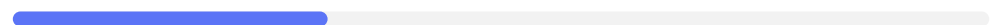
 **53.6%** say the environment is a major motivator for travelling sustainably



 **48.4%** are unsure what qualifies as a sustainable trip

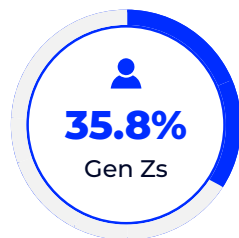


 **31.5%** fail to see any added benefit from sustainable travel



ii. Price-sensitive

35.8% are unwilling to pay a higher price at all. Gen Z's reluctance to pay extra is consistent with other age groups.

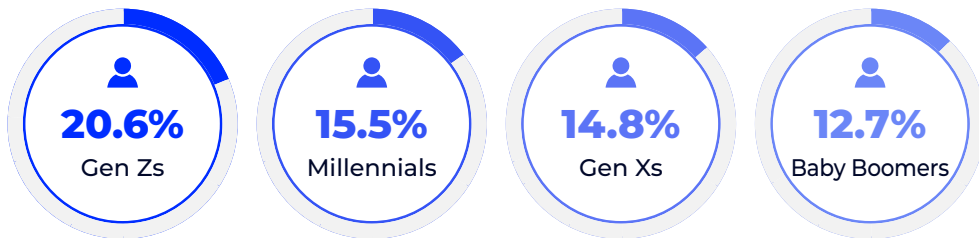


Engaging the Next Generation in Sustainability

iii. Greater exposure to sustainable options



20.6% of Gen Zs report seeing sustainable options regularly online.

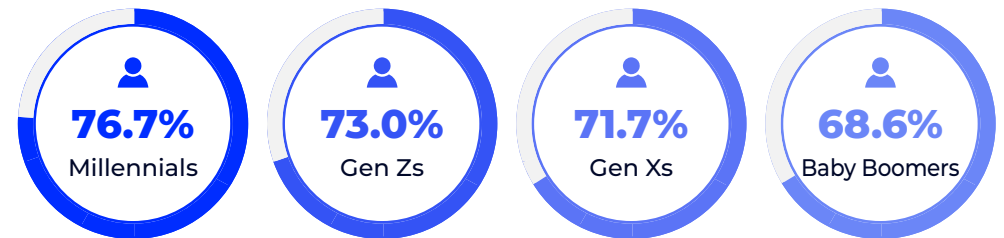


iv. Perceived role of OTAs

Who should be held mainly responsible for reducing the negative impact of tourism?



73.0% of Gen Zs consider using OTAs that provide more sustainable options, signalling the possibility of guiding them with incentives and other schemes.



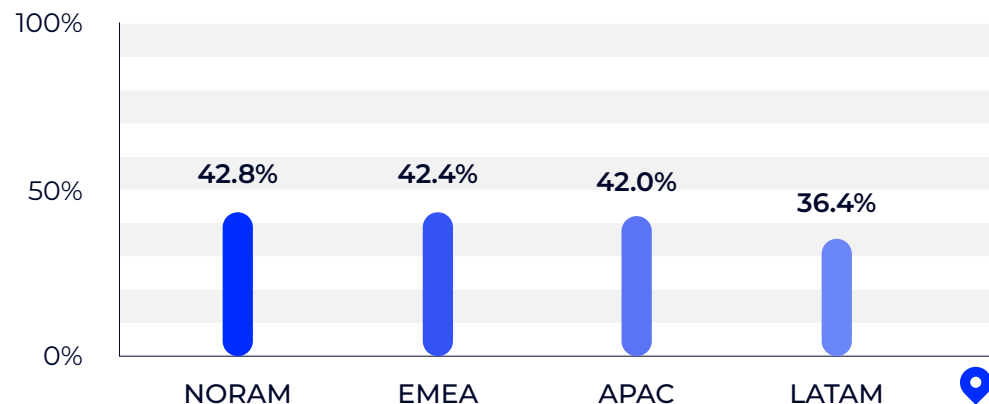
Turning Expectations into Opportunities

With sustainable travel displaying a gap between a rising awareness and a reluctance to act, the travel industry, especially OTAs, has a significant role to play in plugging information shortfalls. In particular, they should seize the opportunity to enhance the availability of more sustainable options in their offerings.

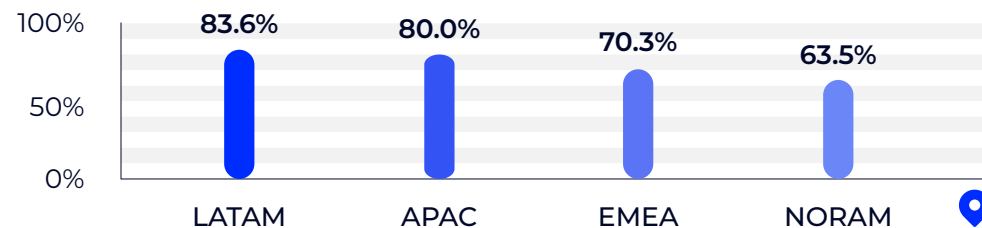
42.2% of respondents say they occasionally see these options when booking online.



In a region-by-region comparison, travellers' attitudes are:



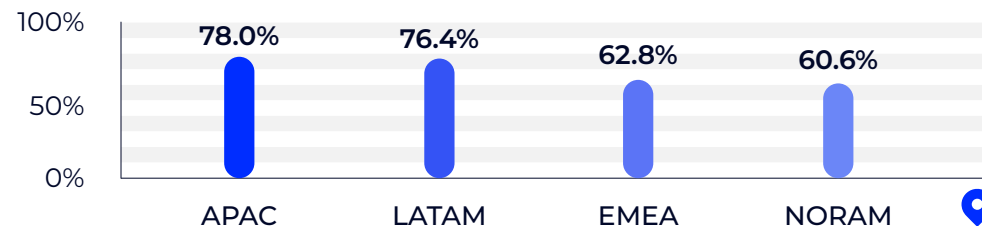
An overwhelming **75.8%** of survey takers expect OTAs to clearly label sustainable options. On a regional level, consumers within APAC and LATAM demand more from OTAs than those in EMEA and NORAM.



OTAs stand to benefit by offering more sustainable products to conscious consumers, with **72.4%** viewing this as a reason to buy from OTAs.



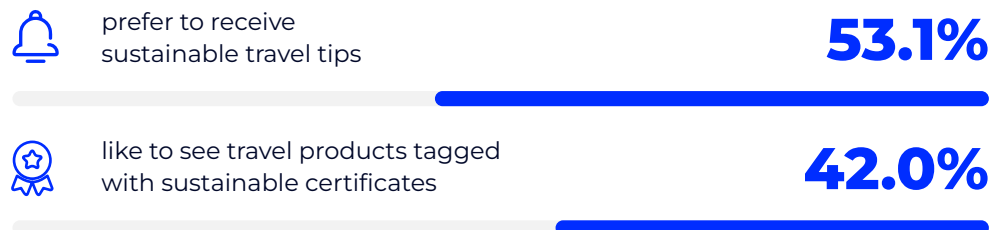
Percentages vary across regions, though.



Looking to the Future

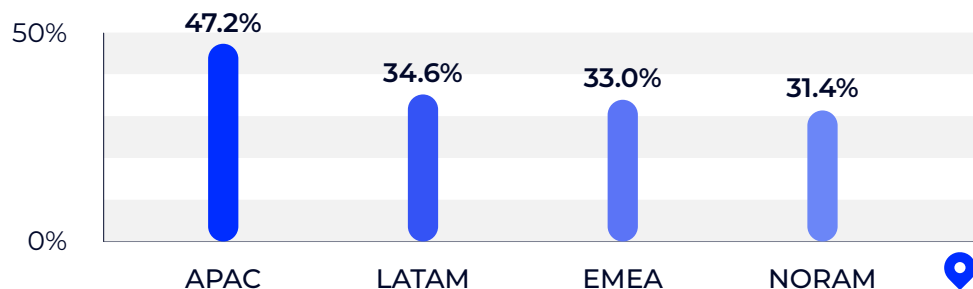


To cater to consumers who are increasingly mindful of sustainability, OTAs need not just set their sights on a richer product pipeline. Simple steps like showing a sustainable certificate and dispensing sustainable travel tips also win over travellers.

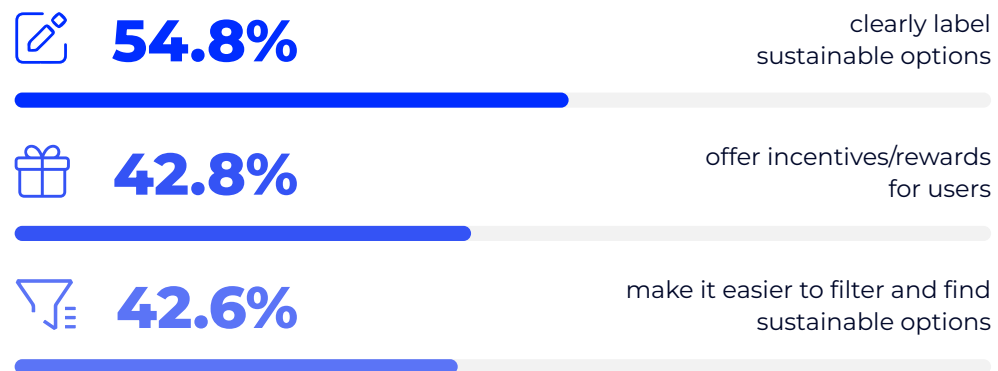


Regional disparities

While sustainable travel tips are most sought-after across all the regions we surveyed, respondents in APAC also favour a sustainable travel certificate to seek assurance that accommodations or other options are credibly 'sustainable'.



The top 3 things consumers expect OTAs to do to foster sustainable travel:



Trip.com Group: Pursuing a More Sustainable Travel Experience

Trip.com Group recognises the essential link between nature and people, which is at the heart of the travel experience. The Group firmly believes that it is a shared responsibility of the industry to protect the environment and strives to reduce its carbon footprint by offering global travellers lower-emission travel options.

In line with this objective, Trip.com Group joined the Science Based Target initiative (SBTi) and aims to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. Additionally, the Group also aims to introduce over 10,000 lower-carbon travel products, aiming to enable 100 million travellers to consider adopting lower-carbon travel practices. These targets aim to raise environmental awareness among customers and employees.

Trip.Biz

Trip.com Group's corporate travel division, Trip.Biz, achieved recognition by securing the EcoVadis Sustainability Silver rating. Trip.Biz offers lower-carbon travel products across flights, trains, car rentals, and hotels. Trip.Biz also provides a carbon account for companies to calculate their employees' carbon reductions, and carbon management allows companies to allocate carbon budget quotas for different departments and various business travel products.



Flights

The introduction of lower-emission flight options enables users to reduce their carbon footprint when travelling. (The emission data is powered by the [Travel Impact Model \(TIM\)](#), in collaboration with [Travalyst](#), a non-profit organisation promoting more sustainable travel experiences.)

Trip.com has partnered with the leading climate tech company [CHOOOSE](#) to offer carbon offset products. When travellers book flights on Trip.com, they have the option to pay to offset their carbon emissions.



Accommodations

Trip.com Group has introduced the 'Low-Carbon Hotel Initiative' to encourage hotels taking lower-carbon actions in China.



Trains

Train travellers can view the emissions they will emit comparing train and car travel on Trip.Biz and Trip.com (UK website and select European trains).



Cars

Users have options to choose either gasoline or electric vehicles from car rentals and airport transfer services.

Acknowledgements

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About Trip.com Group

Founded in 1999, Trip.com Group is one of the world's leading travel service providers. The Group was listed on NASDAQ: TCOM in 2003 and on HKEX: 09961 in 2021 and has become one of the most recognised tourism enterprises globally. The Group owns several well-known brands, including Trip.com, Ctrip, Skyscanner, and Qunar. With the mission 'to pursue the perfect trip for a better world', Trip.com Group is committed to creating long-term value for customers, employees, the environment, and communities. Its vision is 'to be the world's leading and most trusted family of online travel brands that aspire to deliver 'the perfect trip at the best price for every traveller'.

We recognise that the tourism industry is a challenge when it comes to sustainability, however Trip.com Group endeavours to tackle these issues by advocating to raise awareness for sustainable tourism initiatives and mobilising millions of travellers and numerous partners to participate. By aligning with key global industry associations, we adhere to their standards and extend these principles across the global travel industry, steering our focus towards contributing to enhancing sustainability efforts. Trip.com Group has joined several organisations, including:

- The Science Based Targets Initiative (SBTi)
- Member of the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC)
- Founding member of Travalyst
- Member of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC)
- Member of the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA)