

Travellers can have a huge environmental impact on a community. Travellers can risk damaging the environment due to factors like increased waste, excessive consumption of material goods and overuse of plastics, particularly bottled water.

It's an ethical dilemma for many travellers who are environmentally minded and want to avoid single-use plastics or just find a bin to dispose of their waste. However, in some countries, it's very difficult to manage these things which are easy to do back home. So, here are a few eco-friendly travel tips from cycle tourers.

When you travel, you can do to reduce your impact on the environment.

1. Use a water filter to reduce single-use plastics

When you first start travelling you're sure to hear "don't drink the tap water over there" or "only drink bottled water". For us, these are outrageous suggestions as they promote the use of bottled water. For example, in 2016, over 32 million people visited Bangkok, Thailand. If all of them drank bottled water, then it would be a nightmare for the environment. This is just Bangkok and only accounting for tourists.

You can avoid single-use plastics with a water filter.

If you're worried about the overuse of plastic bottles then you must carry a water filter with you while you travel. Single-use plastic bottles are awful for the environment! Not only do they ruin the aesthetics of your riverside camping spot but they take hundreds of years to break down, meaning your one time use will stay on that river bank for your great, great, great, great grandchildren to pick up.

A water filter means you can refill your bottles from most water sources and reduce your reliance on bottled water. We use our filter regularly and it's a critical component of our equipment. Great options for water filters include the Sawyer squeeze mini-filter or the Grayl bottle filter.

A water filter is an economical and environmentally friendly choice for travel.

2. Travel overland instead of by plane

We recently had a friend comment on how Australians always refer to travelling as "going overseas". We hadn't thought about it before but it's true. We are one of the few countries which have to take a plane (or boat) to travel outside of Australia.

Once you've reached your destination, travel overland.

However, flying does have an impact on global carbon emissions and other climate variables which can lead to an increased effect of global warming. Once you're "overseas", it's worth considering to continue travelling overland, where possible, rather than flying.

We believe that this is a step in the right direction to reduce individual emissions. Even better, travel by bicycle and reduce your emissions even more!

Purchase food locally to reduce your impact.



3. Buy your food at the local markets

Travelling by bicycle means you are always passing through villages with local markets selling fresh food and it's a great opportunity to meet locals while reducing your impact. Why buy prepackaged food from the supermarket when you can buy your carrots from the friendly farmer at the local market?

This has a dual effect as you're avoiding packaged and supporting the local of the country you visit. Be sure to bring your own shopping bags because most village markets still use plastics bags, and you'll need to quickly bag your food before they put it in a plastic bag.



Your own utensils can be re-used instead of disposed of.

4. Reduce, reuse and recycle everything

Does anyone remember this from school? Or from the Jack Johnson song? Reduce, reuse and recycle. It's a great catchphrase and can be applied while you travel. If you put a little thought into your travel preparations you can reduce your impact on the environment while travelling.

This could be done by buying products that are either environmentally friendly or reduce your reliance on single-use plastics. So, next time you travel maybe buy some environmentally sensitive products such as soaps, detergent, shampoo, and toothpaste.

Or bring travel products that can be used multiple times like a lightweight shopping bag, a thermos/water bottle, a travel coffee filter, your own pots, cutlery, cups and bowls. Also, be sure to say a big fat NO to plastic straws when ordering drinks.



Pack lightly and buy minimally.

5. Be a minimalist by reducing your consumption of goods

It's a no brainer when you set off to travel, that you need to pack light. But being a travel minimalist isn't just limited to packing light. Reducing your consumption of un-necessary items while you travel can reduce your environmental impact.

For example, do you need that extra Bali singlet? What's the environmental impact to produce that singlet? How much water was used to make the material or how much wastewater was produced in the company who mass produces products like these?

Focusing on enjoying the scenery of a country rather than the material goods could reduce your impact on that countries environment.



Take the time to sit back and enjoy the simplicity of the scenery.

6. Get everywhere by bicycle

A cycle tourist will naturally meet all (most) of the ideals of the above environmentally friendly points just due to the nature of this type of travel. You don't fly often. You don't over



consume. You are usually self-sufficient. You are forced to reduce, reuse and recycle. You have a very small carbon footprint as you make your own power – pedal power.



Pedal power is a great way to reduce impact.

If you want to see a person get the most out of clothing just check out a long term cyclist. We have some clothes that have lasted 15 months of nearly daily, tradesmen level use, and are still going strong. So, if you want to travel and reduce your environmental impact...travel by bicycle!

What are your best tips for travelling green?