

TOWARDS A FUTURE-PROOF TRAVEL INDUSTRY



CONTENTS





INTRODUCTION

Travel has become an essential part of our identity. It has brought us much: we understand the world better and have become more multicultural and globally minded. As such, travelling has become a source of adventure, discovery, prosperity and happiness. It brings entrepreneurs together, strengthens ties between people from different countries and helps us to comprehend the world better.

At the same time, the impact of our travels is increasing. We are seeing the consequences of climate change and experience the effects thereof at our destinations. That is why we - the Dutch Association for Travel Agents and Tour Operators (ANVR) and its members - want to commit to sustainability now. This way, we can ensure the continuation of travel, both now and in the future, and realise a transformation towards a travel industry where sustainability, equality and inclusiveness are the norm. In doing so, we are not only helping to solve the climate crisis, we are also improving the quality of travel, and ensuring that we can continue to do business in the future.

We are already making strides to make the travel industry more future-proof, but realise that there is much to do still. For this reason, we have developed this vision in collaboration with the Centre of Expertise in Leisure, Tourism & Hospitality. It sets out our sustainability ambitions for 2030 and 2050, as well as the guiding principles that will serve as our compass for accelerating our sustainability transformation. This vision represents the start of a series of activities and initiatives. We will hit the ground running and start developing our goals and making plans to quickly implement sweeping sustainability improvements.

As a travel industry, we embrace inclusiveness and promote understanding amongst one another and amongst diverse cultures. Amid growing polarisation, we aim to not only create connection through tourism, but also be a positive force in society. This will enable us to undergo the transformation into a future-proof travel industry where sustainability, equality and inclusiveness are the norm.

“As a travel industry, we embrace inclusiveness and promote understanding amongst one another and amongst diverse cultures”





AMBITION AND BASIC PRINCIPLES

2.1 | Ambition

By 2050, we will have realised the following ambition:

The Dutch travel industry has a **positive impact**. We create **social, ecological and economic value**, both domestically and at our **destinations**. We operate with full **transparency** and show **leadership** throughout the entire **supply chain**.

To realise this ambition, we must start right now and accelerate our efforts to reduce our climate impact and increase our positive impact on travel destinations. We will do this together, within the jointly established framework of this vision. This will enable travel organisations to become more sustainable in a manner that suits them. After all, these organisations each have their own starting point, challenges and opportunities.

Based on the overarching vision, we will create a specific plan to achieve our goals in 2024. Our goals will be in line with existing publications¹. We will use 2019 as the baseline, as it was the last year before the COVID pandemic and the reference year in the report [‘Envisioning 2030’](#)², which explains how to meet the goals of the Glasgow Declaration signed by the ANVR.

Our first measurement point will be 2030. By then, we will have taken concrete steps and be structurally on track to achieve our sustainability transformation. Our emission reductions^A will be in line with the Glasgow Declaration and we will have made significant progress in sustainability within our value chain and at our destinations. These ambitions are concretised in

Chapter 3. By 2030, we will be leading the way internationally and also helping other partners.

By the year 2050, we will have achieved our ambition. This means that the Dutch travel industry will have been transformed into a sustainable industry, with net zero emissions, transparent and societally responsible chains and a range of products and services that contributes to the well-being of travellers and better business relations, the social, economic and ecological quality of travel destinations and the well-being of residents.

“By 2030, we will be leading the way internationally and also helping other partners”

^A ANVR is committed to the Glasgow Declaration. This focuses on CO₂, like other mainstream science-based emission reduction targets. This may change in the near future based on new insights within climate science. As such, ANVR will determine in 2024 whether CO₂ or CO_{2e} will in fact be used as a starting point.

2019

- This will be the reference year to measure and compare progress

2024

- Vision for a future-proof Dutch travel industry
- SMART objectives developed for a societally responsible, sustainable and transparent supply chain and preservation and regeneration of destinations
- Backcasting for different types of travel organisations to determine concrete objectives for each focus area

2030

- The travel industry follows the Tourism Decarbonisation scenario from the Envisioning 2030 report, and has met the targets set therein
- Product development takes into account insights into societal and environmental sustainability across the chain
- Societal and ecological targets have been met, improving net impact on travel destinations
- The ANVR and the Dutch travel industry help partners transform the global travel industry

2050

- The Dutch travel industry has been transformed and has a positive impact. It creates societal, environmental and economic value both domestically and at destinations and operates with full transparency and true leadership throughout the chain



“The ANVR and the Dutch travel industry help partners transform the global travel industry”

2.2 Basic principles

This vision for a future-proof travel industry is rooted in several basic guiding principles. The *'Guiding Principles'* constitute the core values from which we operate. Our ambition may be honed over time, but our guiding principles are fixed and not interchangeable. They apply now, but will continue to apply in 2030 and 2050 and are all equally important.

1 | ASSUMING RESPONSIBILITY NOW

We take our responsibility seriously. We will not wait; we act now. To realise our climate ambitions, we are committed to a rapid transition from 'offsets'^B to 'reductions throughout the value chain', as well as making our products more ecologically and societally sustainable.

2 | EQUITABLE, SOCIETALLY RESPONSIBLE AND FAIR

We ensure a societally responsible, fair and equitable travel industry. We not only take, but also give back to destinations by making them more beautiful and sustainable and contributing to a better quality of life for the people who live and work there.

3 | LEADERSHIP BY EXAMPLE ACROSS THE VALUE CHAIN

We demonstrate leadership and act as role models throughout the value chain. We assume responsibility for the impact of our travels. We listen to our partners within the supply chain, proactively come up with solutions for sustainable business and work together to achieve our sustainable transformation.

4 | TRANSPARENCY AND FAIRNESS TOWARDS CUSTOMERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

We embrace transparency in our communications with customers and stakeholders, and do not engage in greenwashing. We use objective criteria and a common standard to measure the impact of travel. We do this using specific targets and uniform annual reporting. We also help consumers to make different choices. We actively inform them about the impact of our travel offer and highlight trips that have a more positive impact.

^B Carbon offsetting and neutralisation programmes are only used to clean up residual emissions beyond the set near-term and long-term targets, in line with the international standard for setting climate science-based emission reduction targets

"We ensure a societally responsible, fair and equitable travel industry"

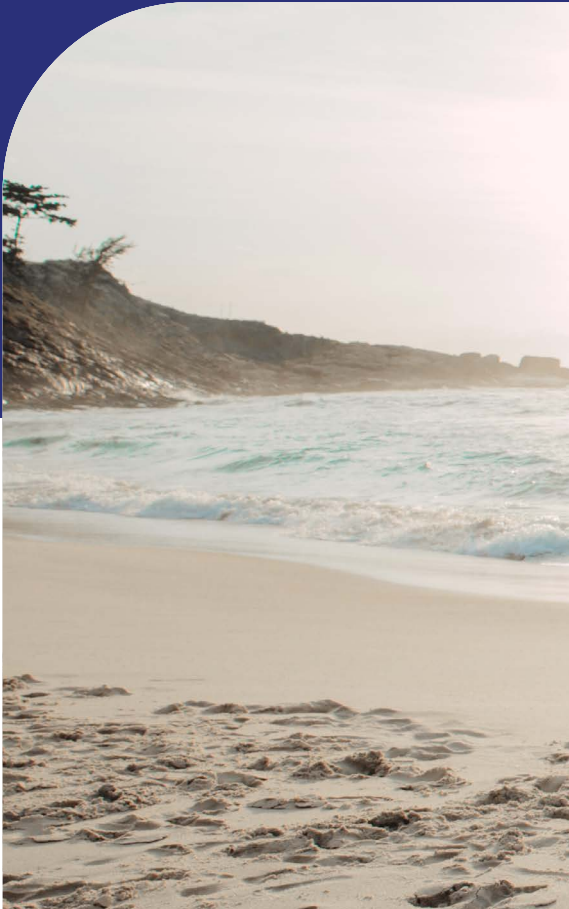
2 | AMBITION AND BASIC PRINCIPLES

5 | INCLUSIVE AND COOPERATIVE

We work together in a collaborative and inclusive way. Sustainability is not seen as a unique selling point (USP) or a means to compete, but as a common goal to which everyone must contribute. Together, we will take the necessary steps towards sustainability. To this end, we share our knowledge and expertise with one another and with our partners in the chain, wherever possible. If there is no willingness to change, we will take action.

6 | ALIGNING WITH BROADER SOCIETAL TRANSFORMATION

Tourism and business travel form an integral part of society and are not stand-alone economic sectors. This means we can contribute to broad societal transformations (circular economy, sustainable food, regeneration of places) through our travels. In short, we are not trying to reinvent the wheel, but rather align with such transformational processes and use existing, science-based targets and metrics.



“We work together in a collaborative and inclusive way.”

3

FOCUS AREAS AND OBJECTIVES



FOCUS AREAS AND OBJECTIVES

Three overarching focus areas have been identified based on our ambition. First, reducing emissions: the biggest challenge for the travel industry. Second, making activities within the supply chain more sustainable, as this is an area where the travel industry can have considerable influence. Third, improving the impact on travel destinations. Unlike for first two focus areas, the travel industry has less direct influence here, but as a role model within its own chain, it does have a responsibility to actively and demonstrably commit to future-proofing destinations. For each of the three focus areas, specific targets have been identified for 2030 and 2050.

3.1 | Immediate emission reduction with a net zero emissions target in 2050

EXPLANATION

Immediate greenhouse gas reductions are essential for a future-proof travel industry. We can achieve this while remaining economically sound and continuing to offer quality experiences for travellers. As explained in the Envisioning 2030 report, the number of trips and overnight stays sold can grow, provided average travel distances decrease and there is a shift to zero-emission modes of transport for travel to, from and within destinations.

OUR GOAL FOR 2050

We will have reduced our emissions to net zero based on a clear and joint emissions reduction path, based on the latest climate science, without compromising on the quality of travel experiences. This way, there will be no more need for travellers to deliberately choose a sustainable trip, as all travel offered will be sustainable.

WHERE WILL WE BE IN 2030?

By 2030, we will have achieved significant absolute emission reductions. The climate impact of travel is demonstrably and structurally decreasing and has almost halved compared to 2019. Close-to-zero (business) travel is on the rise, carbon offset programmes are being phased out. We will have a clear plan for our common emission reduction path towards 2050, enabling us to meet the Glasgow Declaration targets.

“Immediate greenhouse gas reductions are essential for a future-proof travel industry”

CHALLENGES IN ACHIEVING OUR GOAL

- By far the fastest growing market is that of relatively short-distance travel. For this market to grow in a sustainable way, supply, speed, bookability and availability of international train and bus connections need to improve significantly.
- The travel industry largely depends on the existing mobility supply. It is crucial, therefore, that this supply becomes sustainable as a whole.
- Sustainable Aviation Fuels and technological innovations will have to play a significant role to achieve these goals. However, it will take years before these are sufficiently available, so behavioural and supply changes will remain necessary as well.
- Both a common measurement standard and a clear joint reduction pathway are lacking. These are necessary to achieve sufficient emission reductions and report on them transparently.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ANVR AND THE TRAVEL ORGANISATIONS

- In its domestic and international lobbying efforts, ANVR is committed to more sustainable travel options and is critical of trends that deviate from this vision. It assists travel organisations in revaluing quality over distance^c and extending stays. ANVR encourages members to phase out climate offset programmes quickly and is working with travel companies on a shared methodology to achieve collective emission reductions to net zero by 2050.
- The travel organisations structurally reduce their absolute emissions by applying carbon management within their product portfolio and adopting a 'quality over distance' approach. In doing so, they reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. In international discussions with other travel organisations, they take the lead on global emission reductions in the travel industry and on countering greenwashing.

^c It is possible to meet the Glasgow Declaration targets while increasing the number of trips, provided the average distance of these trips decreases. Revaluing quality over distance is the communication and marketing principle formaking this possible. (Peeters, & Papp, 2023)



“By far the fastest growing market is that of relatively short-distance travel”

3.2 | Societally responsible, sustainable and transparent offers throughout the chain

EXPLANATION

To transform the travel industry, we put our societal mission at the heart of our business operations. We do this by setting concrete societal and environmental goals for our own value chain, assuming responsibility for achieving these goals and being fully transparent.

OUR GOAL IN 2050

Every product for every market segment is now demonstrably 100% societally responsible and ecologically sustainable. We pay a 'living wage' at minimum and ensure good working conditions. The entire value chain is plastic-free and consists of independently certified suppliers who meet the highest environmental standards (water, energy and waste). Plant-based food is the norm and animal welfare is guaranteed.

WHERE WILL WE BE IN 2030?

By 2030, we will have made significant progress towards societal and environmental sustainability regarding the topics listed above, based on a methodology and SMART targets to be developed in 2024. We report annually, transparently and in accordance with a joint standard.

CHALLENGES IN ACHIEVING OUR GOAL

- We lack understanding of the value chain, and a clear methodology to provide transparency.
- Achieving a transformation will require shared common urgency and collaboration across the chain. It can be complicated to involve (all) partners at (all) destinations.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ANVR AND THE TRAVEL ORGANISATIONS

- The ANVR supports travel organisations in drawing up specific societal and ecological objectives appropriate to individual business operations to make their value chain sustainable by 2050, including by facilitating uniform standards and reporting methodologies. On the basis of this vision, the ANVR also includes a sustainability protocol as part of the membership requirement and ensures compliance.
- Travel companies are increasing their offer of sustainable travel options and communicate honestly and transparently about the impact of their products to travellers and other stakeholders.

“To transform the travel industry, we put our societal mission at the heart of our business operations”



3.3 | Contribute to conservation and regeneration of destinations

EXPLANATION

By paying attention to the quality of existing and new destinations in product development and tailoring travel experiences accordingly, we can (continue to) provide high-quality experiences that promote well-being, contribute to regeneration, combat overtourism and reduce exposure to climate risks. To do this, it is important to regularly review the key challenges in specific destinations and work collaboratively with our destination partners.

OUR GOAL IN 2050

At existing travel destinations, we collaborate with destination stakeholders and adapt our products to avoid overtourism, partly by offering as much added societal, environmental and economic value as possible through short and local chains (net). New destinations are developed only if we can demonstrably add societal, ecological and economic value through our activities. Our products always aim to enhance the 'essence' and unique features of a destination. This means that by 2050, tourism and business travel will have a demonstrably positive effect on the quality of place (flora, fauna, infrastructure), local well-being (residents), experience (tourists and residents) and work (businesses and employees) in all travel destinations.

WHERE WILL WE BE IN 2030?

Based on SMART objectives set in 2024, we will have created a concrete agenda for action in 2030 with the aim of improving impact and mitigating risks for customers, residents and businesses at travel destinations. We consult with destination stakeholders on how to improve our impact and adapt our products within our capabilities.

CHALLENGES IN ACHIEVING OUR GOAL

- We do not sufficiently understand how tourism and business travel can contribute to improved quality of destinations and how to reduce problems caused by continuous growth, especially in high-traffic travel destinations.
- Occasionally, the impact on destinations is still believed to be beyond the sphere of influence of the travel industry. As a result, opportunities are missed to make or keep destinations future-proof.



“Our products always aim to enhance the 'essence' and unique features of a destination”

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ANVR AND THE TRAVEL ORGANISATIONS

- The ANVR facilitates a process to promote collaboration between travel organisations and destinations to improve tourism and business travel impacts and records any agreements in guidelines or charters. It also collaborates with travel organisations to make the most efficient and transparent use of financing instruments to make the travel industry more sustainable.
- Travel organisations take joint responsibility for improving the quality of their destinations by creating meaningful experiences that capitalise on the destination's uniqueness in terms of people, history, culture, nature and landscape.



“In some cases, the perception is that destination impacts are outside the influence of the travel industry”

4

WORKING ON THE BASIS OF JOINT RESPONSIBILITY



WORKING ON THE BASIS OF JOINT RESPONSIBILITY

ANVR and the travel organisations are working together to create a future-proof industry. In addition to the roles and responsibilities for the various focus areas already mentioned, there are also a number of roles and responsibilities that apply to all focus areas:

General

ANVR

- Gathers and shares knowledge to help travel organisations and their partners to operate sustainably;
- Collects information relevant to making the travel industry sustainable in a unified and comparable format (using a 'centralised system' (e.g. a data-base) to report and monitor progress and to share best practices and learning experiences);
- Develops and manages a tool to finance travel industry sustainability initiatives (e.g. a mutual fund);
- Facilitates the establishment of charters and or guidelines if needed to coordinate joint actions and/or communications;
- Focuses its communication and lobbying efforts on increasing opportunities for sustainability (in particular sustainable mobility).

TRAVEL ORGANISATIONS

- Report annually on sustainability in a transparent and uniform manner on the basis of jointly defined standards;
- Contribute to the financing instrument established by the ANVR or a similar instrument to finance sustainability within the travel industry;
- Do not regard sustainability as a competitive tool, but rather a requirement for collaborative future-proof business and believe that unsustainable behaviour reflects negatively on industry peers and thus damages the partnership.



“ANVR gathers and shares knowledge to help travel organisations and their partners to operate sustainably”

5

GETTING STARTED



GETTING STARTED

This vision points us towards a more sustainable way of travelling and working. It is a major challenge, but we are determined to transform the travel industry. That way, we can be a leading and inspiring example worldwide, showing that change and sustainability is possible.

Collaboration is essential for achieving our goals. We understand that the various members of the Dutch travel industry can meet the set goals in different ways. As such, we will organise a series of backcasting sessions for different groups of ANVR travel organisations, looking specifically at ways in which these groups can achieve the goals of this vision.

The concrete goals of this vision focus on the period until 2030, but the work starts now! We will immediately start working on reducing our emissions, integrating sustainability into our product development and communication, taking stock of our chains and engaging in dialogue at our destinations. Furthermore, we will provide annual updates on our performance at general member meetings and indicate what still needs to be done to achieve our goals.

As stated in the introduction, considerable effort will be required from all stakeholders to realise our vision. Hence, the ANVR hereby issues an appeal to its members to commit to this vision and together develop the successive steps to be taken to climb this mountain.



“The concrete goals of this vision focus on the period until 2030, but the work starts now!”



GLOSSARY

BACKCASTING

A planning method that involves starting with a desired future situation, in order to then identify steps going back in time to determine how to achieve that desired future.

CARBON OFFSET PROGRAMMES

Initiatives that allow companies to offset greenhouse gas emissions they cannot avoid by investing in projects that reduce or absorb emissions elsewhere.

GREENWASHING

The misleading presentation of a product, service or company as environmentally friendly or sustainable, when actual sustainability practices and performance indicate otherwise.

QUALITY-OVER-DISTANCE APPROACH

Revaluing quality over distance can be used as a communication and marketing principle, to counter the perception that distant travel has more status than shorter trips.

LIVING-WAGE

Wages sufficient to meet basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing and healthcare and to enable social and economic participation in society.

EMISSION REDUCTION PATHWAY

A strategic plan that sets out measures and targets to reduce emissions of pollutants or greenhouse gases.

NET ZERO

The point at which total greenhouse gas emissions are offset by measures that reduce or offset emissions, so that no additional greenhouse gases are actually added to the atmosphere.

OVERTOURISM

A situation where tourism at a destination, or parts thereof, unduly affects the quality of life of residents and/or the experience of visitors in a negative way³.





SOURCES

- 1 European Commission. (2022). Transition pathway for tourism. European Commission; UNWTO (2021) Glasgow declaration: A commitment to a decade of tourism climate action; UNWTO. Peeters, P. & Papp, B. (2023). Envisioning Tourism in 2030 and Beyond The changing shape of tourism in a decarbonising world
- 2 Peeters, P. & Papp, B. (2023). Envisioning Tourism in 2030 and Beyond The changing shape of tourism in a decarbonising world. The Travel Foundation
- 3 World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (2018), 'Overtourism'? – Understanding and Managing Urban Tourism Growth beyond Perceptions.





This report is drawn up on behalf of the board of the ANVR. The text is composed by the sustainability committee, in coöperation with CELTH, the Centre of Expertise in Leisure, Tourism & Hospitality.

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