

A 10-STEP QUICK START GUIDE TO DECARBONISE YOUR TRAVEL BUSINESS



2020

THE TIME TO ACT IS NOW

This year started with many communities around Australia experiencing the devastating impacts of climate change. Bushfires. Floods. Record heatwaves. Lives were lost and more than a million wildlife perished. For Intrepid, which is headquartered in Melbourne, the effects were all too clear. But we are not only seeing the impacts of climate change here in Australia.

As a global business, in 2019 we had more than 40 offices around the world and operations in some 130 countries. We have seen the effects of climate change everywhere we operate – a local community affected by flooding in Kerala, India, re-routing our tours in Europe due to heatwaves in 2019, and a hurricane causing destruction and death in the Bahamas and along North America’s Eastern seaboard.

We have been taking action on climate change for 15 years, have been a carbon neutral business since 2010, and we now aim to become climate positive in the future. But we recognize that this is not enough.

Before COVID-19 brought the world, and the travel industry to a halt, tourism accounted for roughly eight per cent of the world’s carbon emissions. And while the pandemic has crippled our industry, it has also provided us with the opportunity to reassess our actions and commit to being better. To use this time to challenge ourselves to emerge from this crisis better than we were before – more sustainable, more ethical and more responsible.



We fundamentally believe that the tourism industry can rebound even stronger than it was before, but only if it rebuilds more responsibly. And the best way to act on climate change is for individuals, businesses and governments to work together to reduce our collective carbon emissions.

That is why we’ve created this 10-step guide — to provide an easy-to-follow action plan for other tourism businesses to get started on their journey, and to encourage our industry to rebuild more sustainably.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J Thornton'.

James Thornton, CEO, Intrepid Travel

Step 1: Understand how climate change is impacting your business.

Engage with your stakeholders — customers, employees and investors — through a variety of mechanisms, including direct dialogue, surveys and engagement at professional and industry forums to understand how climate change is impacting your business and value chain. Take time to learn what the latest science says, and how your company's operations might be impacting that.

Intrepid has not only recently become worried about climate change. In fact, our journey started in 2005 when a group of senior managers read *The Weather Makers* by Tim Flannery about the history and future impact of climate change, which got us thinking about our role in it.

The next year, our concerns grew when we took the entire Intrepid office – along with 900 of our travellers – to see the documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*. No one liked what they saw. We realised that we needed to start to act – and fast. We then surveyed several thousand travellers across the globe and discovered that 91 per cent wanted us to take definitive action on climate.

Our customers – or potential customers – had spoken and we started to take practical steps. For example, our co-founder Darrell Wade was one of the first Australians to complete Climate Project training with former U.S. Vice President Al Gore.

[The Climate Reality Project](#), founded and chaired by Gore, is a pioneer in building a diverse set of voices on climate change, training individuals to better communicate and engage on this pressing issue.

Taking this action a step further, in July 2020 the organisation offered global virtual advocacy training. Find out more [here](#).

Step 2: Build internal support.

Make the case with data but do not underestimate the importance of interpersonal skills and ensure you engage employees early on. Real change requires the buy-in, work and dedication of the collective.

Intrepid has dedicated staff in our Responsible Business team who lead our climate journey. These individuals work closely with all levels of management. Together, the first big win was becoming carbon neutral in 2010. Our team recently doubled down their efforts with the process of setting emission reduction targets. This required discussing goals, assessing feasibility

and co-creating practical implementation plans.

As our employees outside of our Responsible Business team do not typically have a background in climate science, it has been important to engage employees across the company globally by running educational webinars and developing online learning resources.



Step 3: Define your project team.

Every organisation differs in size and available resources. If you do not have in-house staff who can effectively work on decarbonisation and reduction strategies, consider working with a third party to assist with the environmental data collection and build capacity overtime internally.

While we have been carbon neutral since 2010, in late 2018, Intrepid revised our reporting method in line with the [National Carbon Offsetting Standards](#) (NCOS) under the Australian Government's Carbon Neutral Initiative.

At this time we started working with a third party carbon and sustainability consultancy business called [Ndevr Environmental](#) to improve the monitoring and management of our environmental data. The third-party operator allowed us to make the process more efficient and user-friendly for

our staff while compiling Intrepid's annual GHG inventory for carbon neutral certification under the Australian Climate Active Carbon Neutral Standard.

In 2019, we hired an in-house Environmental Impact Specialist, Dr. Susanne Etti, who is responsible for measuring and driving environmental performance, as well as developing and implementing a culture of sustainability leadership within the organisation.

Step 4: Declare a climate emergency.

Every organisation is different and will develop their plans independently, although we encourage everyone who works in the travel industry to visit [Tourism Declares](#) to learn more about this initiative and specific actions you can commit to.

Although Intrepid has been carbon neutral for roughly 10 years, we have increasingly become aware this is not enough. That is why in January 2020, we declared a climate emergency with Tourism Declares, a global collective of tourism businesses, organisations and individuals who have pledged

urgent action on climate change. As part of our declaration, we committed to a seven-point climate action plan. One of the points is about science-based targets or SBTs, which we believe is truly fundamental. You can read our seven-point commitment plan [here](#).

Step 5: Develop a carbon management strategy.

Your carbon management strategy needs to focus on measuring your company's emissions annually, identifying emission reduction opportunities and offsetting the unavoidable emissions.

Intrepid has been maintaining a carbon management program since 2010, which includes an emission reduction initiative across our offices and trips. We continue to manage the impact of our trips and offices around the world using Measure – Reduce – Offset carbon management principles:

- **Measure** - In our offices, Intrepid measures emissions from electricity, gas, waste, business travel and paper usage.
- **Reduce** - In our offices, Intrepid

recycles waste, along with choosing green power providers and limiting paper usage at every opportunity.

- **Offset** - Intrepid has offset more than 346,500 tonnes of CO2 emissions since 2010 (as of December 2019). We support projects that enhance social justice and equality, such as savannah burning projects in Australia's Northern Territory. These projects support employment for Aboriginal people and help maintain cultural practices, among other benefits.

Learn more about our carbon management process [here](#).



Step 6: Measure your emissions.

From transport, to waste, to energy use – you need to know where your emissions are coming from so you can understand how to limit them.

We measure our annual greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory in accordance with the global [GHG Protocol](#). In late 2018, we revised our reporting method in line with the National Carbon Offsetting Standards (NCOS) under the Australian Government's Carbon Neutral Initiative.

At this time, we started working with a third party carbon and sustainability consultancy organisation called [Ndevr Environmental](#) to compile Intrepid's annual GHG inventory for carbon neutral certification under the Australian Climate Active Carbon Neutral Standard.

For our business, this includes emissions from corporate

business activities and all customer-facing brands across 42 global offices covering bottled & natural gas, company vehicles, electricity, water, waste, paper, business travel and staff commuting.

For our trips, this includes all emissions produced from our tours in over 120 countries covering transport, accommodation and waste, though excluding customers' transport to arrive at the tour starting point & depart from the tour ending point, as well as optional activities, as these are not controlled by Intrepid.



In line with our carbon management program, we actively look for opportunities to reduce the carbon emissions from our trips. For example, on our tours, we have changed itineraries where possible so that our customers take buses or trains instead of flights and stay in accommodation with fans instead of air-conditioned hotels, amongst other initiatives. Additionally, Intrepid is working toward higher occupancy per trip as a measure to reduce emissions overall and per passenger.

In our offices, Intrepid recycles waste, along with choosing green power providers and limiting paper usage at every opportunity.

In 2019, awareness-raising campaigns were rolled out in collaboration with dedicated staff in various offices to improve signage and education about recycling practices, which contributed to a reduction in our GHG emissions for office waste. We use designated recycling program bins to help staff recycle and sort waste, and take waste not collected in Melbourne (our global headquarters), such as soft plastics and plastic bottle caps, to private business' collection programs rather than throwing them in a landfill.

Step 7: Reduce your carbon emissions.

Once you understand where your emissions come from, you can start to identify opportunities to reduce the carbon emissions your company produces from your daily business operations and travel offerings.

Step 8: Offset your carbon emissions.

Once you have reduced your carbon emissions as much as possible, purchase carbon offsets to take responsibility for your unavoidable emissions and become carbon neutral.

Intrepid invests only in the highest Gold Standard and Verified carbon standard certified projects, which bring additional economic, social, and environmental benefits, including habitat and biodiversity protection. Through these offsets, significant monetary contributions are made on behalf of our business, suppliers, staff and travellers to internationally certified carbon abatement projects, such as Winds of Change, a project in Turkey consisting of 20 wind power turbines which generate about 109.9 GWh of annual electricity for the local

electricity market. Read more about the six key international projects we have been purchasing carbon credits with [here](#).

It is not perfect, but carbon offsetting provides one way that we can limit our environmental impact while we invest in new solutions to reduce our emissions globally.

We acknowledge that on its own, carbon offsetting will not end climate change, but it is part of the solution.



Step 9: Report your emissions.

Communicating externally makes you more transparent and reporting helps to improve environmental performance. Share your results publicly and report annually on your progress towards your targets by following international guidelines.

It was our commitment to create genuine, long-term change that led us to pursue annual reporting – it has been a journey throughout the years improving our transparency and disclosure.

Intrepid Group has been a signatory to the [UN Global Compact](#) since 2008, the world's largest corporate sustainability initiative. It is both a practical framework for action and a platform for demonstrating corporate commitment and leadership. As a signatory, we are required to produce a Communication on Progress Report each year to show the progress we've made in each of the sustainability areas we've committed to tackling as a business.

Since 2017, Intrepid has released an annual Integrated Report combining our UN Global Compact

Communication on Progress Report with our financial results. By combining our sustainability reporting with our financial results, this report shows how we create both short-term and long-term value for all our stakeholders, including employees, customers, supply chain partners, travel industry partners, shareholders and regulators and government bodies. Importantly, it builds on our accountability and transparency as a business, sharing the business strategies that worked and those that didn't.

Learn about our environmental-related work and performance in Intrepid's 2019 Integrated Annual Report, on pages 49-52, [here](#).

Step 10: Set emission reduction targets.

Companies must set GHG reduction targets that align with the best-available climate science in order to transform their business for a low-carbon future.

Science tells us that we must cut global GHG emissions 45% from 2010 levels by 2030 and reach net zero emissions around 2050 to limit warming to 1.5°C and prevent catastrophic and irreversible climate change. This will require global transformational change.

As part of our climate emergency declaration, we committed to a seven-point climate action plan. One of the points is about science-based targets or SBTs, which we believe is truly fundamental. We committed to SBTs in December 2019 and will submit targets for approval this year.

Science-based targets provide companies with a clearly defined pathway to future-proof growth by specifying how much and how quickly they need to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

The [Science Based Targets initiative](#), a partnership between [CDP](#), [UN Global Compact](#), [WRI](#) and [WWF](#), champions science-based target setting as a powerful way of boosting companies' competitive advantage in the transition to the low-carbon economy.

This quick-step guide is intended to help businesses start on their carbon journey. It is not a one-size fits all solution and everyone is at a different stage. However, climate change is a collective responsibility of every government, organisation and individual. We hope you find this guide useful.



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Learn more:

www.intrepidtravel.com/carbon-management

Questions or Comments? Email:

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