

Notice of Article Publication

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Title	A Reflection on Sustainability in Travel

Climate change is one of the world's most pressing issues and addressing this challenge is vital to the future of the travel industry.

In the following piece, we will delve into the various methods of achieving sustainable travel and explore the most promising route towards decarbonization of the aviation sector.

We have always believed that travel is a force for good in the world. Travel powers progress, driving trade and commerce across industries. The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTTC) estimated the sector's direct financial contribution to global GDP at 7.6%. This included 22 million new jobs for 2022.

Travel also drives social progress as it brings people together by connecting communities to build mutual respect and understanding., Evidence of the need for personal connection is offered by the simple fact that as soon as people were able to travel, they made it their priority to travel.

Travel is an integral part of driving business growth. It is therefore more imperative that sustainability considerations are built into corporate travel programs.

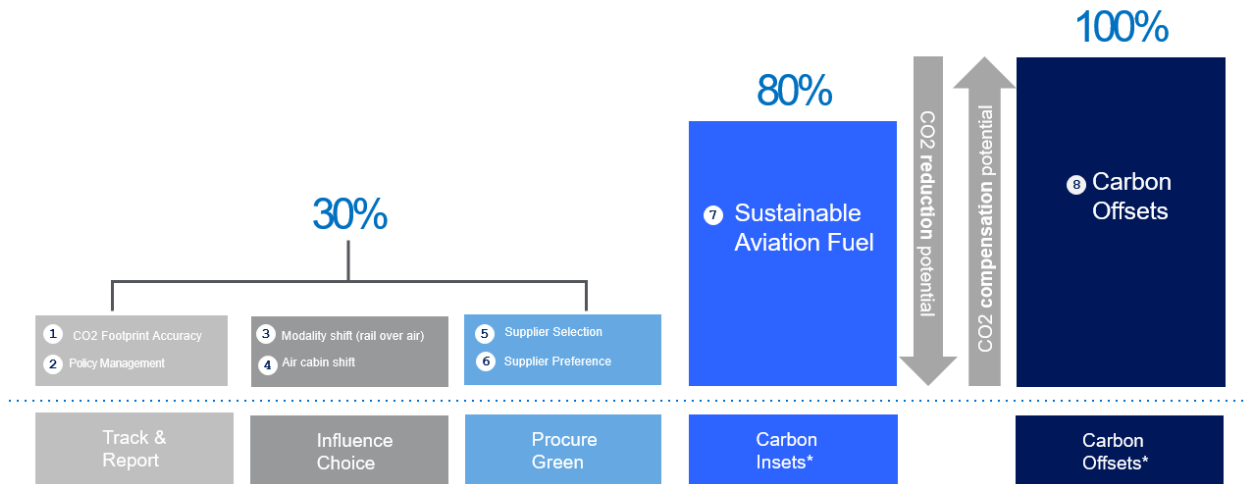
What our clients are telling us

We're seeing significant growth in companies committing to net-zero and reduction targets, and many pledges have a 2030 milestone – which is less than seven years away. This is certainly top of the agenda for our clients as well.

Therefore, we have committed to building a marketplace for green business travel where clients and suppliers can find solutions that help accelerate their transition to a low-carbon future. We have chosen five key pillars to focus. Each pillar offers a series of solutions and steps that companies can leverage to pursue their zero-emission targets.



A range of options to decarbonize aviation do exist



1. Track and Report:

A well-known saying attributed to the founder of management thinking Peter Drucker said 'You can't manage it, if you can't measure it'. Tracking and Reporting analytical tools are powerful resources to help inform your environmental strategy. We work with clients to set targets, monitor and report on emissions for air, rail, car, and hotels. This can be achieved using Amex GBT proprietary tools Insights and Premier Insights^{TM1}.

Furthermore, Amex GBT's Global Business Consulting(GBC) team has launched 'Green Compass ecosystem' which is a portfolio of sustainability consulting solutions. The entry level is the Green Compass data insights capability which provides an overview on the travel programme and helps identify initial opportunities and build scenarios to reduce carbon emissions.

Finally, GBC Team work with customers to design and implement customized decarbonization strategies, helping travel align with wider sustainability objectives, drive decarbonization and include policy, programme optimization, supplier management, and change management.

2. Procure Green:

Helping clients procure green with the most sustainable suppliers and creating budgets for sustainability. This extends also to meeting and events industry which can have a huge influence in helping to minimize the negative impact on the environment.

Clients can measure and put into place strategies to reduce their carbon footprint with the help of our sustainable meetings and events tools. These are available through our Meetings and Event team.

3. Influence Choice at POS:

Travelers see trip emissions values in the search results, itineraries, and Mobile app for past and future trips. The initiative informs travelers about the impact of their choices on the company's environmental footprint and facilitates medium to long-term change.



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Neo is Amex GBT's proprietary travel and expense platform and has focused on strategies that help clients achieve their CO₂ targets and product development includes everything from a simple filter to display green booking options for travelers to more complete sustainable policy tools for travel managers.

4. Carbon Offsets:

Carbon offsets offer an immediate and relatively simple way for companies to 'neutralize/ compensate' their emissions in the short-term. Clients choose the offset activity they wish to support from a variety of project types, price points, and locations worldwide. Most recently, Amex GBT has entered into an agreement with climate technology company CHOOOSE to integrate carbon emissions calculations across Amex GBT's travel booking and reporting tools.

5. Drive Towards Net Zero Aviation:

The ultimate goal of a sustainable travel is to minimize the emissions on the first place. The World Economic Forum plots aviation as responsible for 3% of global carbon dioxide emissions. In the same article it states that this could rise to 22% by 2050 if not meaningful measures are implemented².

Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry was reported to be "making it mandatory that 10% of aviation fuel for international flights using Japanese airports be sustainable"³.

In 2021 the International Air Transport Association (IATA) resolved to achieve Net Zero carbon-dioxide emissions by 2050⁴.

The most viable and scalable alternative fuel that we have available to fossil-based jet fuel today is Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF). To support the creation of a scalable demand of SAF to the travel industry, Amex GBT has partnered since 2011 with Shell Aviation and have created a unique program, powered by an innovative platform – Avelia. Avelia is also one of the world's first blockchain-powered digital SAF book-and-claim solutions for business travel.

The main criticism to SAF is that is an expensive solution, particularly when compared to the conventional jet fuel. Being a product which is still at the early stages of its adoption, it suffers from limited supply constraints. GBT and Shell by leveraging Avelia platform, are aiming to aggregate corporate purchasing power to generate scale and send demand signals to supply investors. In connecting airlines and businesses globally to spread the cost and benefits of SAF across the aviation value chain. The initiative aims to make SAF more widely available and at more affordable prices.

Working on our own goals

Just as sustainability is a key priority for our clients, we believe in leading by example. Amex GBT has been working towards our formal commitment to the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi), and target net-zero by 2050.

In 2022, we became first TMC to join the World Economic Forum (WEF). We plan to participate in a range of initiatives and have already made public commitments, including:

Clean Skies for Tomorrow: Amex GBT signed the WEF Clean Skies for Tomorrow ambition statement to achieve 10% SAF by 2030.

First Movers Coalition (FMC): Amex GBT signed the FMC's aviation commitment.



IATA's Fly Net Zero commitment: Amex GBT support IATA's Fly Net Zero commitment to net-zero carbon emissions from their operations by 2050.

In November 2022 Amex GBT was awarded a Platinum EcoVadis medal for its environmental, social and governance (ESG) standards.

Also in November, we signed the Net Zero Carbon Events (NZCE) pledge, a joint commitment across the events industry to achieve the targets laid out in the Paris Climate Accord.

A brighter future -

As an industry, we have embarked on an exciting journey and achieved remarkable progress towards a brighter future. However, it must be noted that we are currently in the early stages of an enormous undertaking. Each company, with their unique culture, structure and priorities will likely follow unique path towards sustainability. The 5 paths discussed above are intended to offer a framework to create your own travel sustainability strategy.

I look forward to working with our clients, colleagues, and industry peers on a brighter, sustainable future for travel in Japan and beyond.

In our on-going effort to sensitize, educate and mobilise the corporate travel sector in Japan, we will be running on July 19 a free access webinar to share the journey that some companies have undertaken to reduce the environmental impact of their travel programs. If you want to join us, please register at https://amexgbt.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_1Pxsh5PuSjuba4CILtkqhw

¹ Amex GBT calculates greenhouse gas emissions according to the GHG Protocol, providing a proprietary emissions optimization algorithm as well as leading governmental standards.

² <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/09/aviation-flight-path-to-net-zero-future/>

³ [Japan to require overseas flights use 10% sustainable fuel - Nikkei Asia](#)

⁴ <https://www.iata.org/en/pressroom/pressroom-archive/2021-releases/2021-10-04-03/>

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