



Consider Purchasing Carbon Offsets When Traveling

Did you know that 30 percent of greenhouse gas emissions worldwide are related to travel? <https://adventuresmithexplorations.com/company/conservation/carbon-free-cruising/> Traveling 1,000 miles by air on a commercial airline generates approximately 500 pounds of carbon emissions per passenger. Other forms of transportation are typically less carbon-intensive, but of course, they don't always meet our time and schedule needs.

One way you can help offset your travel footprint is by buying carbon offsets or credits. Carbon offsets are an internationally recognized way to take responsibility for unavoidable carbon emissions by donating money that is invested in carbon markets that support decarbonization programs and technologies.

According to The Nature Conservancy in "What are carbon markets and how do we work with them?" <https://www.nature.org/en-us/what-we-do/our-priorities/tackle-climate-change/climate-change-stories/carbon-market-credits-offsets/>, "Carbon markets are an effective mechanism to encourage and enable forest owners to take voluntary action to improve the health and resilience of their forests for future generations and generate revenue from carbon credit sales. Carbon markets can help companies meet their climate and net-zero goals by investing in natural climate solutions."

In the interest of full transparency, not everyone thinks that carbon offsets are a good investment. According to a December 2024 article in the New York Times, "In most cases, carbon offsets do not capture or reduce real emissions, and they have a dismal record when it comes to actually averting future emissions....What's worse: Even if the projects these offsets supported were effective, they are so inexpensive (about \$19, for instance, for a round trip on Hawaiian Airlines from Honolulu to New York) that what you pay wouldn't come close to negating your share of environmental damage caused by flying." <https://www.nytimes.com/wirecutter/reviews/buying-carbon-offsets-for-your-flight-doesnt-help/>

For those wishing to understand the purpose and value of carbon offsets, the Carbon Offset Guide <https://offsetguide.org/> offers technical information aimed at "companies and organizations seeking to deeply understand carbon credits and how to thoughtfully use them in voluntary greenhouse gas (GHG) mitigation strategies." You can think of carbon offsets as part of your cost of transportation and doing the right thing for the planet.

Many airlines now offer the option to purchase carbon offsets when you book your flight; you might have to search for it. Many cruise lines have implemented technologies to reduce their carbon emissions and there are even cruise lines that claim to be dedicated to carbon-friendly cruising.

There are also independent companies that provide carbon calculators and sell carbon offsets; following is a small sample.

- Sustainable Travel International <https://sustainabletravel.org/our-work/carbon-offsets/>
- MyClimate https://co2.myclimate.org/en/calculate_emissionsclimateimpact.com
- Terrapass <https://terrapass.com>

