



CISAustralia

Study | Intern | Volunteer Abroad



GREEN BOOK

TIPS & RESOURCES FOR
SUSTAINABLE LEARNING ABROAD

www.cisaustralia.com.au



WELCOME

Studying overseas is an exciting and life-changing opportunity. There is no better way to expand your professional and personal horizons, to learn about how the world works outside your home country, and to make new friends. At CISAustralia we understand that international education is about much more than simply seeing new places and having an incredible experience, it's the first step on your journey to becoming a global citizen.

Top Facts About Plastic Bags

160,000

PLASTIC BAGS A SECOND.

This year 5 trillion plastic bags will be consumed. That's **160,000 a second!** If you put one after another they would go around the world 7 times every hour and cover an area twice the size of France.*¹

MOST BAGS

ARE SIMPLY THROWN OUT!

Less than 1 percent are recycled. They are most often made from Polyethylene which takes centuries to degrade. Each ton of recycled plastic bags saves the energy equivalent of **11 barrels of oil.***¹

WHAT HAPPENS

TO THE PLASTIC BAGS?

In total, we use **100 million tons** of plastic every year. Some **10 percent** of this plastic end up in the oceans - and not without consequences.*¹

PLASTIC SOUP

In the ocean, the plastic is broken down into tiny pieces. These pieces are eaten by fish and cannot be digested. Consequently the plastic builds up and enters into the food chain.*¹

Did you know?

Carbon emission is the release of carbon into the atmosphere. To talk about carbon emissions is simply to talk of greenhouse gas emissions; the main contributors to climate change.*²

That is why we have developed this Green Book to help you understand the positive impact you can have on the world and what steps you can take to lighten your environmental footprint when you travel on a CISaustralia program.

The guide is filled with practical tips and useful resources on what to pack and how to choose the lowest carbon travel options, as well as how sustainability can help you make local connections and build skills that will benefit your future and career. We hope you enjoy this resource and that it will make your learning abroad experience with CISaustralia even more rewarding.

GLOBAL CONTEXT

Climate systems are changing rapidly as a result of human activity, primarily from burning fossil fuels. Record high temperatures and more frequent extreme weather events are occurring in Australia and all around the world. Much of the world's progress has been powered by economic growth which has come with a heavy environmental price tag attached and we are now stretching the earth's resources to breaking point.

The United Nations 2018 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Report shows that **we have at most till 2030 to radically and rapidly reverse course on greenhouse gas emissions to avert catastrophic climate change.** If we are to meet the targets of the Paris Agreement (limiting average global temperature rise to 1.5°C since pre-industrial times) we need to cut the amount of carbon emitted by every person in the world each year to just 2.3 tonnes. The average person globally actually contributes 4.5 tonnes and the figure for Australia is one of the highest per person in the world at over 20 tonnes.*³

YOUR ACTIONS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

You might worry that what you do won't count for much but collective action quickly mounts up and can help tip the scales towards a better balance for the health of our planet. Taking small steps to tackle climate change can give you the satisfaction of knowing you are making a difference and, importantly, contributes to building a broader consensus around the need for change.

*¹ https://www.theworldcounts.com/themes/our_environment

*² <http://www.ecolife.com/define/carbon-emission.html>

*³ <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/> and www.climate-transparency.org/g20-climate-performance/g20report2018



BEFORE YOU GO

Tip 1

FINDING THE LOWEST CARBON FLIGHTS

Travelling abroad from Australia inevitably means flying, but you can minimise your carbon emissions by booking a direct route with the most energy efficient airline. The **Atmosfair Airline Index**^{*1} is a useful online resource that can help you make a more informed decision on which airline to fly with for your overseas experience, based on their climate impact ranking.

Carbon offsetting can be a useful way of compensating for your travel by supporting projects that reduce an equivalent amount of emissions, for example through reforestation or renewable energy projects^{*2}. You can offset your flights in a variety of ways: directly with many airlines when you book, through the United Nations carbon offset platform^{*3} or by using an organisation like Fifteen Trees^{*4} which plants trees all over Australia and keeps you updated on the progress of the trees you contributed to planting. They have a rough rule of thumb that is easy to remember: one tree should be planted for every 1 hour in the air!

Many people prefer to compensate for their travel emissions in a more personal way by volunteering with or supporting sustainability initiatives at home or in the country they are travelling to. Finding out about what organisations are active in your chosen destination is also a great way of getting to know people and making new friends around the world.



^{*1} https://www.atmosfair.de/en/air_travel_and_climate/atmosfair_airline_index

^{*2} *Reliable offsetting schemes will meet at least one and preferably both of the two international certification standards: the Clean Development Mechanism and the Gold Standard.*

^{*3} <https://offset.climateutralnow.org>

^{*4} <https://15trees.com.au>



SUSTAINABLE VOLUNTEERING ABROAD PROGRAMS

Did you know that CISaustralia also offers programs with a focus on sustainability and environmental conservation? These experiential service-learning projects have been specially designed to give you the opportunity to work with local communities in exciting, enriching and incredibly meaningful ways that can make a real and positive impact.

These programs cover everything from protecting sea turtles in Costa Rica to community development programs in Fiji and Zambia, or rainforest conservation in Peru. CISaustralia believes strongly in supporting volunteer initiatives across the world that promote sustainable and long-term societal, environmental and economic change to benefit and empower local communities. Volunteers contribute to rewarding projects to assist the local people, fauna and the environment, and leave a positive legacy! Visit the CISaustralia website for more information.

“If we can’t even talk about climate change, we certainly will never be able to fix it.”

Dr. James McClintock, Professor of Polar and Marine Biology, Univ. of Alabama at Birmingham

10 ENVIRONMENTAL & CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

- ✓ Big Five Wildlife Management and Conservation in South Africa
- ✓ Community Development and Environmental Change in Peru
- ✓ Community Development and Environmental Change in Zambia
- ✓ Environmental Sustainability in New Zealand
- ✓ Marine Conservation and Dolphin Research in Tanzania
- ✓ Marine Conservation in Belize
- ✓ Rainforest Environmental Conservation in Peru
- ✓ Sea Turtle Conservation in Costa Rica
- ✓ Wildlife Conservation and Rhino Research in Uganda
- ✓ Rural Community Development in Nepal

BEFORE YOU GO

CUTTING WASTE AND SAVING RESOURCES: REMEMBER THE FIVE 'R'S; REFUSE, REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE, ROT



Refuse, say no to single use plastics and items that will immediately go to landfill.



Reduce, reduce the amount of general waste you produce.



Reuse, choose sustainable alternatives to replace disposable products. Say yes to reusables!



Recycle, after you refuse, reduce, and reuse, recycle properly.



Rot, support compost stations in larger cities (usually found in cafes and grocery stores) to increase customer demand. Your personal consumer choices can cut the amount of waste you generate as an individual and contribute to a larger shift in resource and waste management, as companies will respond to customer demand.

“We used to be hunter-gatherers, now we’re shopper-borrowers.”

Robin Williams, Actor and comedian

We all know that plastic is a huge problem: manufacturing plastic creates billions of tonnes of greenhouse gases and it also takes a very long time to break down – at least 400 years for a nappy or plastic water bottle– so much of it ends up in landfills, in our oceans or inside birds, fish and marine mammals.

Plastic is just one part of a much wider problem however, as much of the resources we consume in our modern lifestyle generates greenhouse gas emissions which cause climate change. Consider the fashion industry as an example - the raw materials required for textiles and the vast amounts of water used (2,700 litres per single t-shirt) generate an estimated 1.2 billion tonnes of greenhouse gases per year. One truckload of ‘fast’, disposable fashion is incinerated or sent to landfill every second.



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Did you know?

Climate change has an economic impact!

The cost of global warming has been estimated to around **AUD \$19 Billion**, and some estimates are even higher. The longer we wait to act, the more it will cost - the price keeps going up...

There is a growing movement away from the traditional linear economy, which has a 'take, make, dispose' model of production to a circular economy: a shift in approach that focuses on minimising waste and making the most of existing resources.

You support the circular economy every time you get your broken appliances mended rather than throwing them away, when you use a car share service rather than buying your own or when you buy vintage clothes instead of new.

Saving resources such as water and electricity is also important: simple things you can do include turning off appliances, lights and AC when not in use, taking shorter showers and reusing towels and sheets.

When we think about how to lessen our footprint, recycling should be seen as just one part of our eco-toolkit. It is important to focus on changing our daily consumption habits in a variety of impactful ways by following the five R's: refuse, reduce, reuse, recycle, rot.

"When Alexander Parkes, the British inventor created the world's first plastic in 1855 he had no inkling we would develop a dangerous 448-million tonne addiction to the stuff."

Max Veenhuizen, from 'What the Australian Food Industry is doing to fight the war on plastic'^{*1}

Did you know?



Around 40 percent of the world's plastic is designed to be used once then thrown away.

^{*1} <https://www.goodfood.com.au/eat-out/news/what-the-australian-food-industry-is-doing-to-fight-the-war-on-plastic-20180607-h1131s?btis>

BEFORE YOU GO

Tip 2

PACKING LIGHT AND MINIMISING WASTE

Packing light is a great first step to lightening your footprint when you travel. The more luggage you bring, the more fuel it takes to fly your plane and the more emissions it generates. We recommend packing basic items that you can wear multiple times and top your wardrobe up with different accessories or buy some small extras once you reach your destination - that way you also contribute to supporting the local economy. If you need to purchase new travel gear, make sure you choose items that can be re-used for future adventures or in everyday life.

Taking your own essential items that you can throw in your bag and re-use, such as a water bottle and a light shopping bag that you can fold up and keep with you will also help you avoid or reduce the amount of single-use plastic you use. See if you can last your whole experience abroad without using a single disposable water bottle!

#ZEROWASTETRAVEL CHECKLIST

- ✓ Plastic-free toiletries
- ✓ USB or solar rechargeable portable torch
- ✓ Insulated water bottle
- ✓ Reusable coffee cup
- ✓ Zero-waste dining-out kit including reusable cutlery, food storage container, straw and a cloth napkin
- ✓ Sleeping mask
- ✓ Ear plugs
- ✓ Headphones
- ✓ Reusable shopping bag
- ✓ Bamboo toothbrush
- ✓ Solar battery charger
- ✓ Pack snacks for the flight to avoid food wrapped in single-use plastic
- ✓ Go paperless for boarding passes & itineraries



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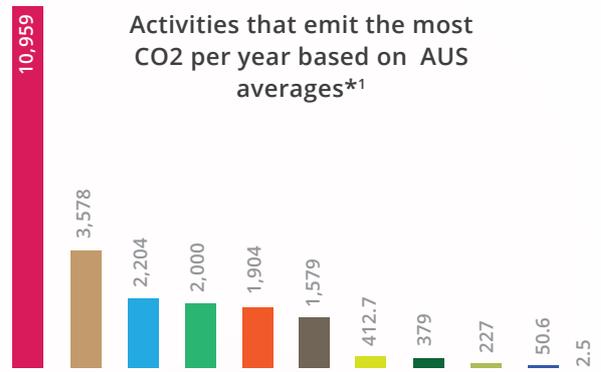
Tip 3

MEASURING YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

It's important to understand what your carbon footprint is made of in order to reduce it. We all generate emissions simply through everyday activities like eating, heating or cooling our homes and getting from A to B. Measuring your ecological footprint with this easy to use Global Footprint Network calculator is a great first step to see where you might be able to make some positive, impactful changes. www.footprintcalculator.org

Bonus Tip: Remember to hang onto your results so you can compare them once you have come back from your travels to see whether your experience has changed any aspects of how you live.

Activities that emit the most CO₂ per year based on AUS averages*¹



LBS. of CO₂ emitted per year

- Driving a car
- Eating Meat
- Flying in a plane
- Using the refrigerator
- Running the air conditioner
- Turning on the lights
- Having a beer
- Using the dishwasher
- Running the dryer
- Drinking coffee
- Reading the newspaper



*¹ <https://statisticbrain.com/activities-that-emit-the-most-co2-statistics>



ONCE YOU GET THERE



GETTING AROUND: WALKING AND CYCLING

Most CISAustralia programs include accommodation within walking distance or close proximity to public transport to get you to your program location. If you decide to do some extra travel before or after your program and you have a choice of where to stay, try to choose somewhere close to where you will be spending most of your time so you can walk or use public transport to get around. We also recommend researching hotels and tours that are committed to low-waste travel. Waste-conscious operators will offer their own sustainable alternatives and initiatives to make it easy for you to commit to the cause.

If you are travelling to a country with good roads and a developed transport system, cycling can often be a cheap and effective option. In many parts of the world, particularly across Europe, you can easily hire a bike once you get there and the cycling infrastructure may even be better than it is at home.



GETTING AROUND: CARS AND RIDE-SHARING

If you do have to go by car, try to carpool with other people you know or use the pool option on local ride-share apps. If driving by car yourself is the only option, try to pick electric vehicles (EV) or hybrids if they are available when renting/hiring.

Did you know?

88 percent of all trips in the US are made in single occupancy cars.



GETTING AROUND: PUBLIC TRANSPORT

If walking or cycling is not an option then public transport is the next best choice – in any case, doing like the locals do can be a great way of connecting with people and understanding more about your new temporary home. Depending on your travel destination, public transport might mean cyclos, tuk tuks, trams, buses, trolleybuses, subways, jeepneys or suburban trains. Whatever method of public transport you use it is likely to be better for the environment than travelling by car.

Did you know?

A full bus can take
40 cars off the road.

Tip 4

MAKING THE MOST OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Do your homework. It is much easier to navigate a new public transport system if you have checked out the lay of the land in advance. Arm yourself with local maps, schedules and information about the best and safest forms of transport and how the ticket or payment system operates.

If you can't find what you need through a straight search, try posting your questions via online travel forums such as TripAdvisor or Lonely Planet. Once you've found the information you need, save it to your phone so you can access it even offline. It is also a good idea to purchase digital tickets whenever you can.

Give yourself extra time to get where you need. It often takes a little longer at first when you don't know your way around a new place but if you don't rush and you've done your prep, using public transport can really add to your travel experience.

Remember to check out whether there is a rail link or bus link from your arrival airport as that can save on emissions and cash!

ONCE YOU GET THERE

SUSTAINABLE EATING

One of the great joys of travel is trying out the food and drink in a new country. Luckily, you can still enjoy sampling the local delights while bearing in mind these tips on how to reduce your food's footprint from paddock to plate. Opting for locally produced food means it has less distance to travel which reduces the amount of fuel, air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions involved and has the added benefit of supporting local farmers. For the same reasons it is always preferable to eat food that is in season where you are, and to opt for wholefoods rather than processed foods which require less energy and resources to produce. Organic options also help keep chemical fertilisers and pesticides out of local waterways and are better for your health.

Eating meat is a major contributor to emissions as farm animals require a great deal of space (around 30% of the planet's land surface is used to produce animal-feed) and emit methane, a potent greenhouse gas. Every time you choose a plant-based meal rather than eating meat or dairy you save water and protect the land from deforestation, overgrazing and pollution.

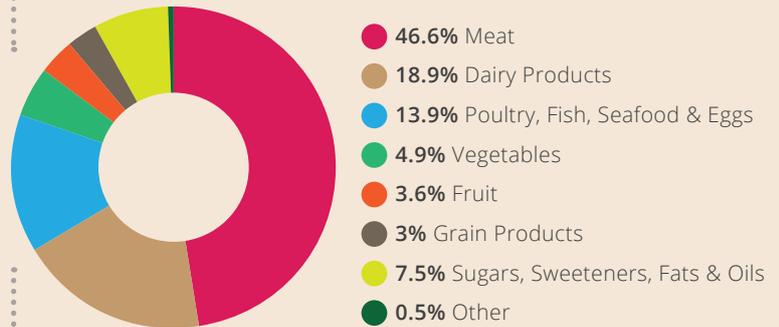
A recent study showed that vegetarians have roughly half the food-related carbon footprint of meat eaters but even cutting back on the amount of meat you eat can shrink your diet's emissions by as much as a third ^{*1}.

There are also some excellent apps to download and websites to visit to assist in combating food waste (and can even save you money!). Check out Too Good To Go, No Food Wasted or ResQ to purchase meals and groceries at discounted prices from local supermarkets and restaurants around the world so excess food doesn't go to waste.

Did you know?

A third of all food that we raise or grow never makes it onto our plates. Waste accounts for around 8 percent of global emissions.

Greenhouse Gases from Average Food Consumption^{*2}



^{*1} Scarborough, P., Appleby, P.N., Mizdrak, A. et al. *Climatic Change* (2014) 125: 179. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10584-014-1169-1>

^{*2} Center for Sustainable Systems, University of Michigan. 2018. "Carbon Footprint Factsheet." Pub. No. CSS09-05.

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Did you know?

Eating locally grown food for one year could save the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) equivalent of driving 1,600 Kilometres, while eating a vegetarian meal one day a week could save the equivalent of driving 1,860 Kilometres.



Tip 5

HOW TO EAT SUSTAINABLY

- ✓ Plan your shopping list in advance to minimise food waste.
- ✓ Opt for locally produced, seasonal and organic food. Farmers markets are a great way to support local farms.
- ✓ Buy fair trade foods to support improving the working conditions of farmers and hold farms accountable for the environmental standards they must comply with.
- ✓ Shop for bulk items to avoid packaging waste and food waste.
- ✓ Reduce the amount of meat and dairy you eat and increase the proportion of plant-based foods.
- ✓ Choose wholefoods over processed foods.
- ✓ Prepare for larger portion sizes in select countries, such as the U.S. Share a meal, plan to use leftovers for a second meal, or order an entree versus a main.
- ✓ Consider food that is MSC (Marine Stewardship Council) -certified, free-range and fair trade.



ONCE YOU GET THERE

UNDERSTANDING LOCAL CLIMATE ISSUES

The effects of the changing climate and attitudes to environmental action will vary depending on the climate zone, whether you are in an urban or rural area, and, importantly, whether you are in an industrialised country or a developing nation.

Many wealthy countries focus on trying to reduce or prevent the emission of greenhouse gases, for example by transferring to renewable energy sources or making energy use more efficient. This is known as **climate change mitigation**.

In lower-income countries **climate change adaptation** is often more relevant as people try to reduce the impact of natural disasters or other climate change induced events, for example by building flood defenses or even moving populations to safer ground.

Many of the countries most affected by climate change have contributed least to its causes and benefited least from the associated economic growth; it is important to be aware of this issue of **climate justice**, especially if you will be studying in a low-income country.

Asking questions about ecological issues and the concerns of the local community can help you understand a lot about the culture of a place. You could offer to help and get involved in local environmental projects. Supporting these initiatives shows respect for your hosts and can be a great way to build connections which will enrich your learning abroad experience.

There are lots of fantastic online resources where you can find information and check climate facts, such as:

Skeptical Science^{*1} which includes climate FAQs in more than 20 different languages

The Climate Action Toolkit^{*2} from The Climate Council

The Lazy Person's Guide to Saving the World from the United Nations^{*3}.



^{*1} <https://skepticalscience.com>

^{*2} <https://www.climatecouncil.org.au/actions/download-your-climate-action-toolkit>

^{*3} <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/takeaction>

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Tip 6

CLIMATE AS A WAY TO CONNECT

Climate change can be a great conversation starter to find out more about local conditions and culture.

You could start by asking questions about local issues and sharing the results from your own carbon footprint.



Tip 7

GET INVOLVED

Volunteer with a local climate action initiative, take part in one of the many rewarding CISaustralia volunteering programs, or join an online challenge such as the Drawdown EcoChallenge*⁴ to take action on the solutions to global warming.

*⁴ <https://drawdown.ecochallenge.org>





ONCE YOU COME HOME

HIGH IMPACT WAYS TO TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE

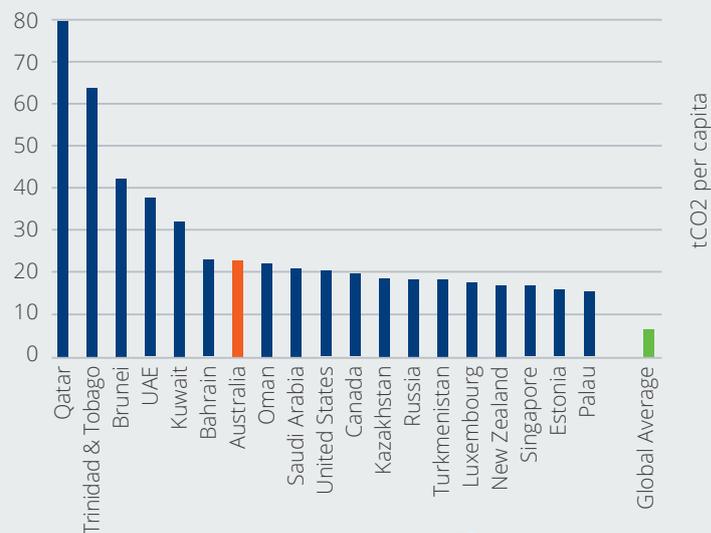
Most of the solutions we have touched on so far concern individual actions you can take while you are traveling. This next section looks at some of the ways you can continue to make a difference once you return home.

If you'd like to learn more about the most effective ways to tackle climate change, Project Drawdown ^{*1} has ranked the top 80 most substantive solutions to global warming. Bringing together a team of top scientists over many years they have analysed the data to build a picture of which existing, proven technological and behavioural solutions will do the most to reverse the build-up of atmospheric carbon within the next thirty years. Included in the top solutions are reducing food waste, adopting a plant-rich diet, family planning, and solar electricity. Some of the other results might surprise you!

Climate change is the perfect platform to practise the useful skill of impact assessment: working out where to focus your efforts to be as effective as possible as there are so many potential ways to take action. Whatever you want to do in life, understanding how to maximise your impact – how to use the knowledge, networks, skills, and personality traits that make up your personal changemaker capability - and working out how you can best contribute is a great place to start.

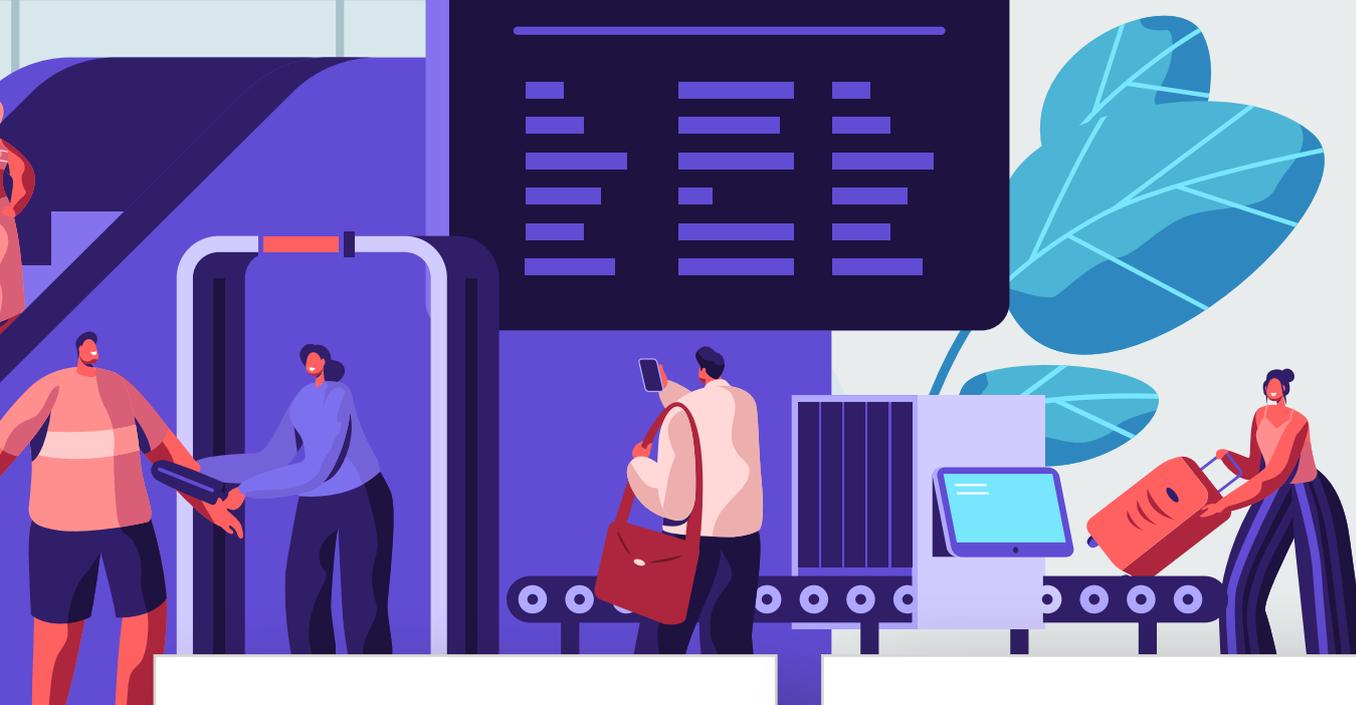
^{*1} <https://www.drawdown.org/solutions>

Emissions per capita - Top 20 Countries



Did you know?

Supporting education for girls and access to family planning services in low and lower-middle income countries collectively rank as the 6th and 7th most impactful solution to climate change.



Tip 8

MAKE SUSTAINABLE CHOICES

Switching your power supply, bank and super accounts to renewables/funds with sustainable investment policies can make a big impact.

These sites weigh up which bank, superannuation and power companies are the most eco-friendly.

Power companies
www.greenelectricityguide.org.au

Banking
www.marketforces.org.au/info/switch-banks

Superannuation
<http://superswitch.org.au>

Tip 9

PRACTICE YOUR ELEVATOR PITCH

What skills, knowledge and connections have you developed by engaging with environmental issues?

Practice articulating these skills in a 1-minute 'elevator pitch' that you can use to demonstrate your strength in problem-solving, teamwork and creativity to prospective employers and to inspire others to make a change.



ONCE YOU COME HOME

CHANGE-MAKING SKILLS AS A CAREER BOOST

Studying abroad can develop many valuable transferable skills that can't easily be taught in the classroom. It gives a deeper understanding of how different perspectives and cultures shape policy and decision-making. It strengthens communication skills and helps to build empathy for people in other countries through the friends and connections you make.

Engaging with climate issues while abroad adds an extra dimension to this skillset: the climate challenge is a complex problem whose solutions require skills in creative problem solving and lateral thinking as well as the ability to work in teams across different disciplines. These just happen to be the top three attributes needed for a successful career which most employers say graduates lack, according to a recent survey of employers for the **World Economic Forum Future of Jobs***1.

So, thinking about everything you've learnt and using it to show the world (and prospective employers) your amazing new skills can give your career prospects a real boost!

SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES AND KEEP LEARNING

Your awareness of environmental issues can be more powerful than you realise. Sharing it with others not only educates them but will also help you sharpen your own understanding. There are so many ways to stay informed or get involved: check out local meet-ups and follow environmental organisations on social media or ask your university's sustainability office for tips.

Why not organise a movie night with friends or other students to talk about climate issues? You could encourage your friends to measure their carbon footprint and commit to making changes together.

Studying abroad is not an end in itself - it just opens the door to a new way of experiencing and learning about the world. What you do with your knowledge and skills once you're back home comes down to you but for many people it marks the start of a new journey of life-long learning.

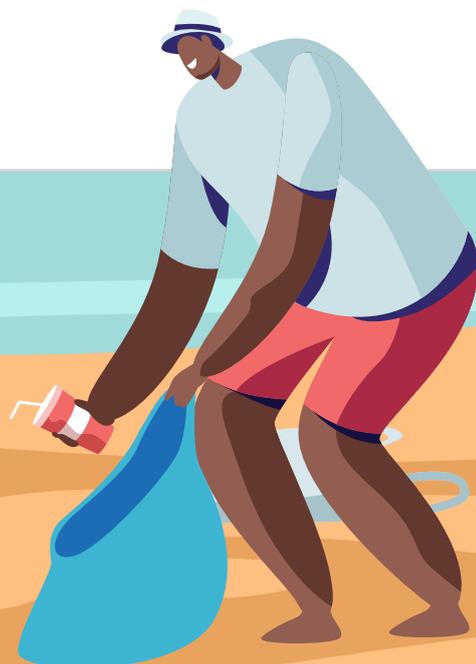
Here are some recommendations for great movies or TED talks you could use:

Movies

- Climate Change: The Facts by David Attenborough
- An Inconvenient Truth by Al Gore
- 2040 by Damon Gameau
- Chasing Coral by Exposure Labs

TED Talks

- Greta Thunberg School strike for climate - save the world by changing the rules | Greta Thunberg
- Per Espen Stoknes Avoiding Apocalypse Fatigue, Injecting optimism and Options for Practical Action
- Tshering Tobgay, former PM of Bhutan: This country isn't only carbon neutral - it's carbon negative
- Why I Live a Zero Waste Life; Lauren Singer, Lauren is an Environmental Studies graduate from NYU and former Sustainability Manager at the NYC Department of Environmental Protection, and the amount of trash that she has produced over the past three years can fit inside of a small glass jar.



*1 <https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-future-of-jobs-report-2018>



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Tackling the world's complex social and environmental problems in relation to climate change will take unprecedented levels of international collaboration and leadership so our future rests on developing the right skills and mindset in people today.

Thanks to your sustainable learning abroad experience, you will be well placed to pick up this challenge if you wish. It has never been more important for the world to have people who have a global perspective. By deciding to study abroad and learning more about your impact and the solutions to climate change, you have taken a great step towards becoming the kind of person our world needs just when our world needs you most.

HAPPY TRAVELLING!

“Study abroad probably is the single most important kind of travel that people can be doing.”

Bill McKibben, author, educator, environmentalist

Tip 10

SHARE WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED

Other people can now learn from you. Use your experience and new insights to inform other students, or friends and family about climate issues.

Write a blog, start a podcast, host a climate themed event and share this Green Book!



Creating Opportunities *Changing Lives*



LET'S TALK ABOUT YOU.
GET IN TOUCH.

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This booklet is produced using sustainable and renewable resources, all within a family owned Australian factory. This publication is made from FSC accredited pulps and is totally chlorine free and acid free.