

# CUTTING THE COST OF HOLIDAYS - RISE IN DEMAND FOR ALTRUISTIC TRAVEL

Submitted by: EPM Communications

Tuesday, 10 March 2009

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There was a time when volunteering holidays were the domain of only the most intrepid travellers. But as we all tighten our belts and mull over the fact that a luxury holiday, is perhaps not the best form of travel in the face of a recession, altruistic holidays have become a very real holiday option, with volunteer company, [www.ecoteer.com](http://www.ecoteer.com), seeing a 46 per cent increase in demand since January 2009 alone.

With unemployment figures rising and job security declining, volunteering has now become a realistic holiday option, with volunteer networking website, [www.ecoteer.com](http://www.ecoteer.com), seeing a marked increase in demand, since its inception in 2005, from people keen to generate valuable work experience abroad and make a difference to a local community. Furthermore, since the economic downturn took hold, [www.ecoteer.com](http://www.ecoteer.com) has seen a noticeable shift in the demographics of its typical volunteer. It is no longer solely the domain of the under or post graduate (55.4 per cent), with 44 per cent of Ecoteer's volunteers aged 30 years and above, seeking to gain valuable work experience, including those recently made redundant and silver travellers.

Access to international volunteer programmes in conservation, ecotourism, teaching and community development could never be easier, thanks to [www.ecoteer.com](http://www.ecoteer.com). The site specialises in cheap volunteer work holidays and volunteer jobs abroad, by directly linking volunteers with projects from Argentina to Zambia.

Ecoteer offers a new approach to volunteering abroad, putting volunteers directly in touch with grass root organisations, cutting out the expensive handling costs, often charged by other organisations. Volunteers simply need to become members of [www.ecoteer.com](http://www.ecoteer.com), paying just £10 annual membership, which then gives them direct access to organisations in need of support. Volunteers can then simply expect to pay travel expenses, with food and accommodation costs included in many cases.

According to website founder, 26 year old Daniel Quilter:

"In a global recession spending less on holidays can really pay off for both volunteers and local communities. Many people are now looking beyond the glossy travel brochures and considering more altruistic travel options, whether for a brief two week stint or a 12 month sabbatical. Not only does volunteering abroad offer travellers the opportunity to help their host countries during their stay, but perhaps more importantly in the current economic climate, it can provide invaluable work experience and a cheap holiday alternative.

"Volunteering can have very real benefits to career development, in terms of improved communication skills, problem solving, leadership skills, confidence and contentment, all of which could prove invaluable in the work place and in an interview scenario."

Ecoteer founder, Daniel Quilter, is testament to the benefits of volunteering have spent eight months working at an ecolodge in Borneo which then led him to become a marine conservation project manager in Malaysia. Since setting up the website in 2005, after struggling to initially secure his own volunteer placement, Daniel has helped over 1,000 people link up with volunteer projects.

The site currently has over 150 projects listed, so members can gain access to a spectrum of opportunities from ecotourism in Malaysia, conservation in Argentina, teaching in Ecuador to humanitarian research in Uganda, farming in India and community development in South Africa. All the projects are thoroughly vetted by Ecoteer volunteers on the ground, are ethically responsible and ecologically sound, with travellers being met at airports and transferred to the projects. There are no prerequisites required for those wishing to volunteer. All that Ecoteer asks for is some enthusiastic people willing to make a difference in the world.

For further information on Ecoteer visit [www.ecoteer.com](http://www.ecoteer.com).

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Notes to editor:

Ecoteer was set up in 2005 by Daniel Quilter, offering a solution for cheap volunteering and working abroad.

Ecoteer is a unique volunteer opportunities agency - offering a directory of cheap volunteer work opportunities, volunteer jobs abroad and working holidays. The volunteer opportunities are cheap because the middleman has been eliminated, slashing the price to volunteer abroad for gap years, career breaks and working holidays. Ecoteer is leading the way in a new type of volunteer work opportunities abroad and is changing the volunteer and working holiday industry back to what it used to be – benefiting both the volunteer and the volunteer project.

Individual case studies are available on request.