

Thomson and First Choice Demand Travel Industry takes Firmer

Submitted by: TUI UK

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Companies also announce they have set a Travelife Milestone

Thomson (<http://www.thomson.co.uk>) and First Choice (<http://www.firstchoice.co.uk>), has called for the travel industry to immediately adopt full and transparent carbon reporting.

Parent company, TUI Travel PLC's sustainable development report (<http://sd2008.tuitravelplc.com/tui-sd/pages/home>)* released in July 2009 and which includes specific targets for Thomson and First Choice, revealed that the Group reduced its carbon emissions by 8% in the 2007/08 financial year (against a baseline of 2007/08). In addition, the Group has committed to a carbon reduction target of 6% by 2013/14 and has set 70 targets to achieve this year.

Today, TUI Travel has also been commended by the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) and has been included in the Carbon Disclosure Leadership Index (CDLI) for being within top-scoring 10% of FTSE350 companies, for the second year running. The Carbon Disclosure Project represents investors with \$55 trillion in assets under management, for the quality of its carbon data and understanding of how climate change affects the company.

Dermot Blastland, managing director of Thomson and First Choice, explains: "It is rare within our industry to set carbon targets that stretch a business and which they have to report against clearly, in order for stakeholders and customers to understand. Outside pressure is known to improve performance. If companies do not set objectives that they are accountable for then they are not going to work as hard to achieve them."

Dermot is challenging all travel companies, particularly airlines, to develop and publish carbon efficiency targets that visibly illustrate their total carbon footprint and their carbon emissions per passenger. Progress against these targets should then be reported annually.

Dermot continued: "It shouldn't just stop there. Once full and transparent reporting has been achieved, businesses need to commission independent professionals to assess their performance against their targets and provide assurance to consumers and stakeholders that targets have indeed been met.

"If the climate change challenge is not tackled now, we may not have an industry by 2050. Travel companies need to put the right objectives in place, measure their impact on the environment and set targets that they want to achieve and be judged against. One of the goals of Tourism 2023** is to set industry-wide objectives and measures for sustainable development. TUI Travel fully supports this aim, and is proud to be a founding member of the initiative."

Dermot is also calling on the UK Government to incentivise and reward good performance when setting environmental taxes – something which the current Air Passenger Duty (APD) fails to do.

Travelife

Thomson (<http://www.thomson.co.uk>) and First Choice (<http://www.firstchoice.co.uk>) have also announced today that over 100 hotels in their Travelife audit programme have achieved a Travelife award (<http://www.firstchoice.co.uk/greener-holidays>). This means that the companies have now helped more hotels achieve Travelife awards than all other UK tour operators put together.

The travel company actively encourages all its hoteliers to use the Travelife Sustainability System, which provides hotels with strict social and environmental criteria. Top performers are awarded a Gold, Silver or Bronze Travelife award for their commitment to the environment, employees and local communities. Tour operators can promote these achievements through brochures and websites to allow consumers to make an informed choice when booking a holiday.

Thomson (<http://www.thomson.co.uk>) and First Choice (<http://www.firstchoice.co.uk>) has reached this significant target by training more than 90 team members to qualify as Travelife auditors, who have conducted over 600 supplier sustainability audits over the past few years. It also has a dedicated Sustainable Product team to oversee the implementation of environmental management processes throughout its flagship properties.

-ENDS-

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* Report available at <http://sd2008.tuitravelplc.com/tui-sd/pages/home>

** Tourism 2023, coordinated by sustainable development charity Forum for the Future and supported by Defra (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) is a collaborative project to help the UK outbound travel and tourism industry to anticipate and plan for its future. It sets out a clear vision of a profitable and successful future supported by an effective industry strategy. See ABTA press release for further details.

TUI Travel's carbon reporting: In TUI Travel PLC's sustainable development report this year, it showed its airlines emitted just over 6m tonnes of CO₂ in 2007/2008 at an average of 77.9kg per revenue passenger kilometre (CO₂/RPK). TUI Travel compares very favourably against other airline, with its analysis of other airline data showing scheduled airlines range from 98-133 CO₂/RPK and low cost airlines based in the UK and Ireland perform at around 88-96 CO₂/RPK .

TUI Travel makes an annual submission to the Carbon Disclosure Project, an investor coalition representing 475 signatory investors and combined assets of \$55 trillion. Each participating company's submission is scored and benchmarked with respect to its approach to managing climate change risk and opportunity. TUI Travel's Carbon Disclosure Project submissions for 2008 and 2009 can be found at www.tuitravelplc.com/sustainabledevelopment

TUI UK & Ireland and Travelife: This year TUI UK is on track to conduct 400 Travelife audits and is committed to ensuring all its flagship properties have achieved Travelife Gold. TUI UK & Ireland is also

working with Atlantica Hotels on the development of First Choice's new Holiday Village Rhodes to ensure that sustainable design and construction considerations are integrated into the new property.

For more information on how Thomson and First Choice are seeking to make all areas of their operations fairer and greener please visit:

<http://www.firstchoice.co.uk/sustainabletourism>

<http://www.thomson.co.uk/sustainabletourism>