

Virtuoso Impact Report SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL 2025



Third Annual Virtuoso Sustainability Study 2025

590 PARTNERS REPRESENTED

FROM OVER 85 COUNTRIES

To capture the incredible work and efforts of our partners, to **elevate this impact, celebrate collective success and recognize individual impact**

203 MEMBERS SHARED INSIGHTS

FROM ALL REGIONS OF VIRTUOSO'S GLOBAL NETWORK

To understand the role of advisors, **explore views on sustainability, and identify opportunities to enhance support from Virtuoso and preferred partners in promoting sustainable tourism**

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Virtuoso Impact Report
SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL 2025:
Partner highlights

Virtuoso Partners have
over 7,200 initiatives
currently in place

49%

Are efforts to
Protect the
Planet



21%

To support Local
Economies



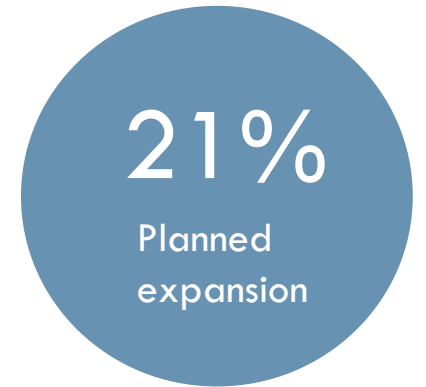
29%

Are efforts to
Celebrate and honor
Cultures



21%

Planned
expansion



Sustainability as a Strategic Business Priority

Sustainability initiatives are a high priority for most of Virtuoso Partners, with **7 in 10 recognizing sustainability as a driver of business profitability.**

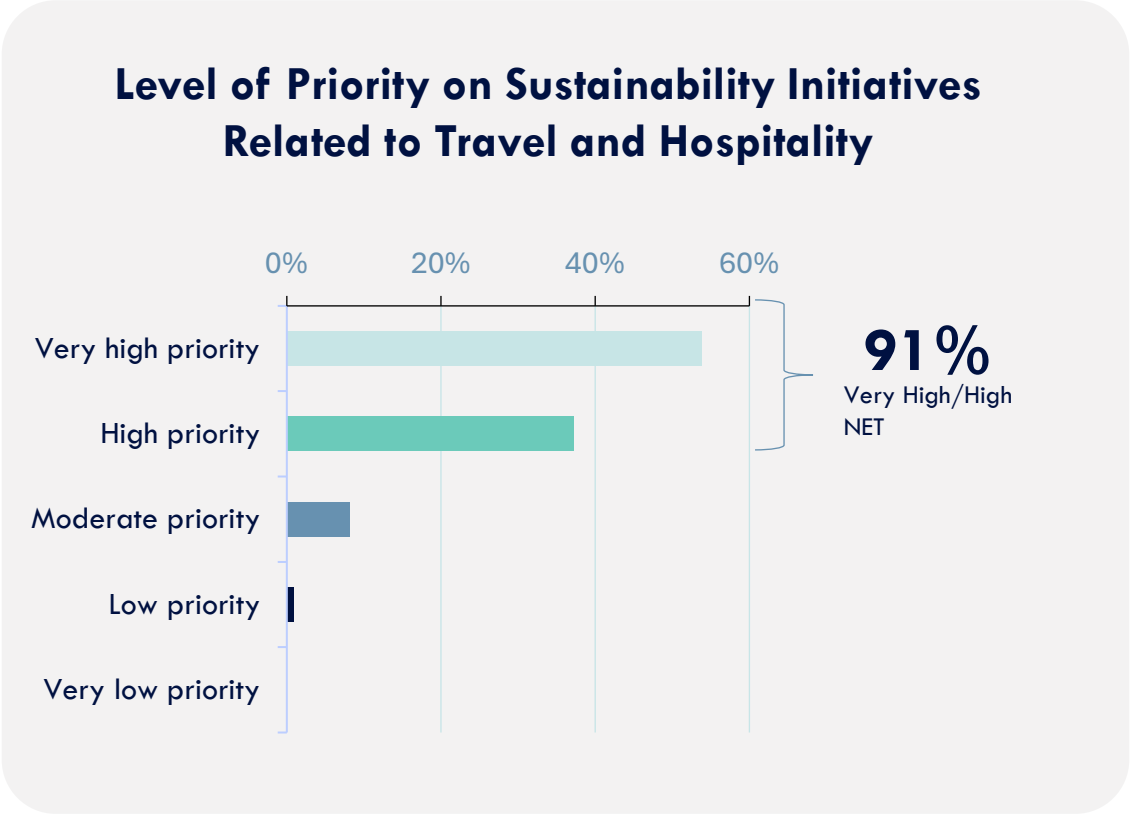
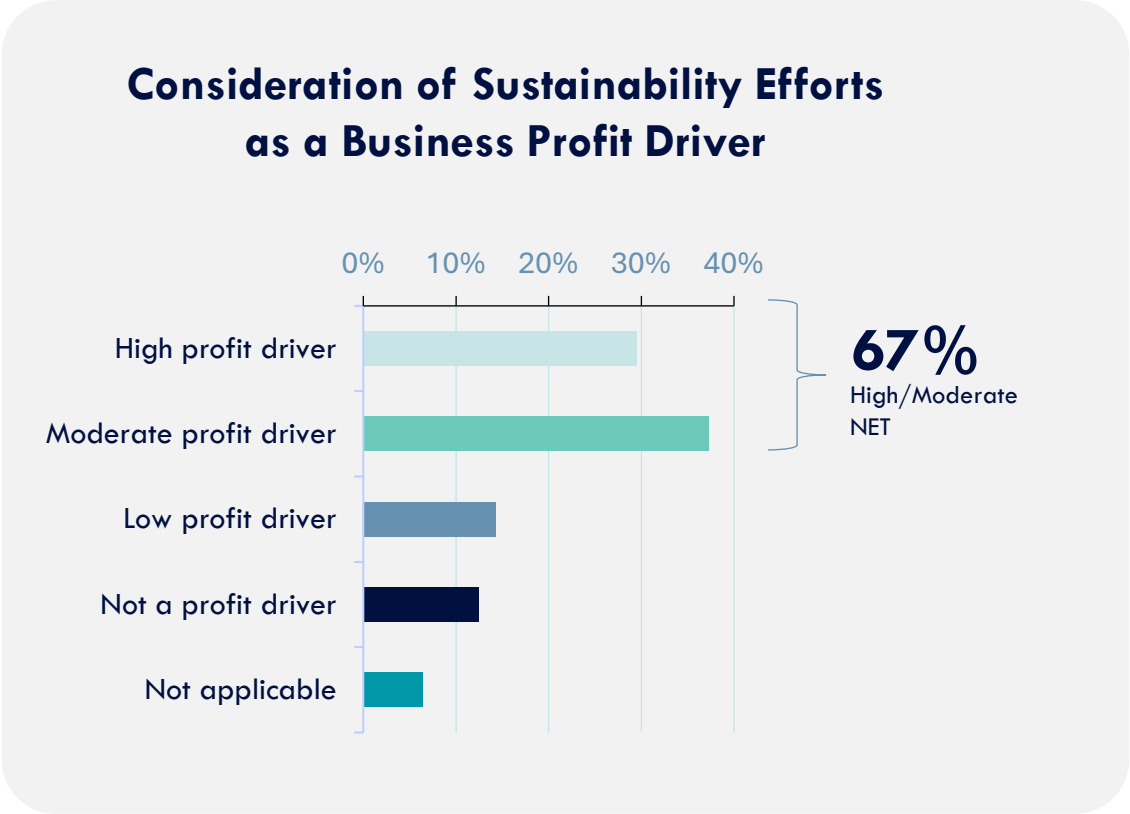
- A substantial number of Virtuoso Partners maintain one or more sustainability certifications, underscoring their commitment to responsible travel practices.
- More than half are actively engaged in philanthropic efforts, either through establishing their own foundations or by partnering with existing organizations.
- Nearly all Virtuoso Partners have appointed a dedicated individual or team to lead their sustainability initiatives.

Sustainability practices are widely adopted among Virtuoso Partners, with waste management and support for local businesses standing out as the most prevalent efforts.

- A range of environmental conservation initiatives are actively underway, aimed at protecting land, marine ecosystems, wildlife habitats, and air quality.
- Over half of the partners have implemented regenerative practices, reflecting a shift toward restoring and revitalizing natural and cultural resources.
- Support for local economies is multifaceted—ranging from guest spending and financial contributions to charitable donations. In addition, recruitment efforts largely prioritize hiring from within local communities.

Sustainability Initiatives

Sustainability initiatives are of high priority to most Virtuoso Partners; ~7 in 10 perceive it to be a profit driver for the business



Base Virtuoso Partners - Those Answering (587).
4. To what degree does your company consider your sustainability efforts to be a profit driver?
Base Virtuoso Partners - Those Answering (454).
6. How would you rate the level of priority your company places on sustainability initiatives related to travel and hospitality?

Sustainability Certifications

The majority of Virtuoso Partners have one or more sustainability certifications



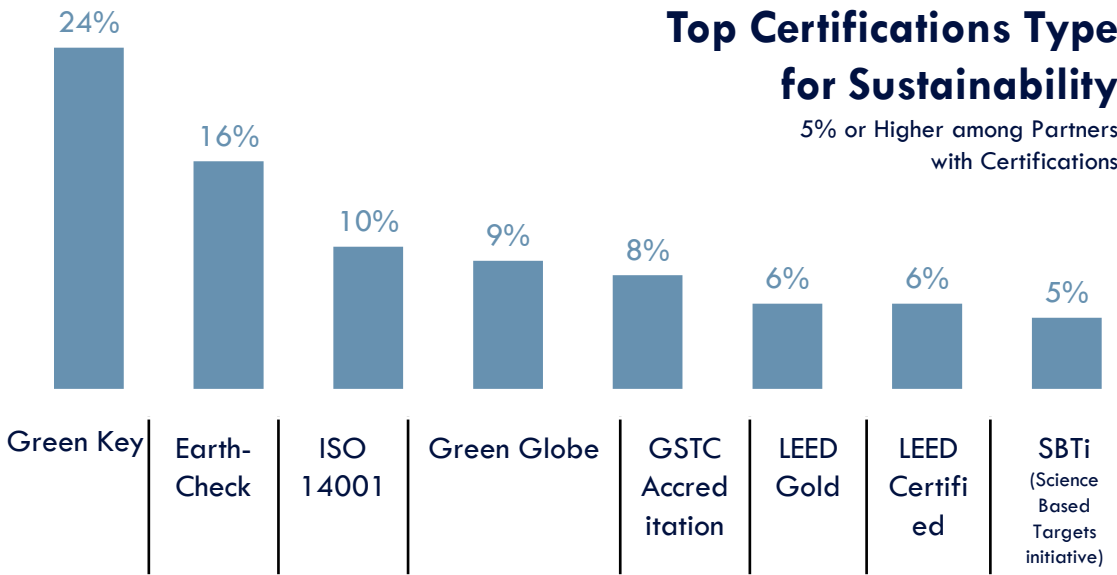
66%

of Virtuoso Partners have a Sustainability Certification(s)



550+

Total Certifications achieved across Virtuoso Partners



Base Virtuoso Partners - Those Answering (587).
16. Which sustainability certifications have you achieved?

Other Certifications (4% or Lower)

Biosphere Responsible Tourism Standard	4%	Green Tourism Active Standard	1%
Green Key Eco Rating	4%	TourCert Destination Criteria	1%
ISO 50001	4%	Green Destinations Standard	1%
LEED Silver	4%	GreenStep Sustainable Tourism Destination Standard	1%
B-Corporation	4%	TourCert Industry Criteria	1%
BREEAM	4%	GREAT Green Deal Certification	0%
Travelife Standard for Hotels & Accommodations	4%	Other	36%
Green Growth 2050 Standard	3%		
EarthCheck Community Standard	3%		
WTTC Sustainability Basics	3%		
LEED Platinum	3%		
Carbon Neutral Company by Natural Capital Partners	2%		
Travelife Standard for Tour Operators & Travel Agents	2%		
GreenStep Sustainable Tourism Standard	2%		
Preferred by Nature Sustainable Tourism Standard for Accommodation	1%		
US Green Building Council	1%		
Green Seal	1%		

Other Specified Mentions Include:

- Blue Flag Certification
- Forbes Travel Guide Verified - Sustainable Hospitality Badge
- Swisstainable
- VERIFIED™ Responsible Hospitality Certification
- Green Hospitality
- GSTC (Global Sustainable Tourism Council)
- ISO 21401 Sustainability Management System for Accommodation Establishments
- Leading Hotels of the World Sustainability Leader

Foundation Ownership / Partnership



56%

Over half of Virtuoso Partners
either have their own foundation or
collaborate
with an established foundation

Base Virtuoso Partners - Those Answering (587).

15. Does your company have a foundation or a foundation you partner with?

Dedicated Team for Sustainability



Nearly 9 in 10 of Virtuoso Partners have a designated individual or team responsible for sustainability efforts.

88%

of Virtuoso Partners have a person or team dedicated to their sustainability efforts

Median Team Size: 6



Base Virtuoso Partners - Those Answering (587).

14. Does your company have a person or team dedicated to your sustainability efforts?

Partner highlights

Sustainability Initiatives in Action

Current and Potential Sustainability Efforts

Sustainability efforts are widely implemented amongst Virtuoso Partners with waste management and supporting local businesses being the most common efforts currently in place



Top 3 Sustainability Efforts currently in place	Waste Management and Recycling	84%
	Local Businesses: Support and/or promote local and independent businesses	83%
	Local Products/Handicrafts: Promotes, supports, and/or facilitates purchases of local products/handicrafts	79%
Top 3 Sustainability Efforts to be implemented within the <u>Next Year</u>	Carbon Emissions: Offset carbon emissions and/or has a comprehensive carbon reduction plan	25%
	Renewable/Sustainable Energy: Usage or implementation of sustainable and renewable energy	20%
	Waste Management and Recycling	14%
	Water and Sanitation: Sustainable management of water and sanitation	14%
Top 3 Sustainability Efforts With High Interest among Travelers / Clients	Local Products/Handicrafts: Promotes, supports, and/or facilitates purchases of local products/handicrafts	51%
	Local Businesses: Support and/or promote local and independent businesses	48%
	Waste Management and Recycling	46%
	Wildlife: Protect, restore, and/or promote the conservation of native and/or local wildlife	46%

Base Virtuoso Partners - Total (590).
1. Do you have sustainability efforts in place or through partnerships you facilitate?
2. Please select which sustainability efforts you have in place.
3. Of those you do not currently have in place, which of the following are you developing or planning within the next year?
5. Please select which of the following efforts travel advisors and travelers/clients show interest in or more consideration for.

Current Sustainability Efforts

Top 3
Sustainability
Efforts
currently
in place

Waste Management and Recycling	84%	Wildlife: Protect, restore, and/or promote the conservation of native and/or local wildlife	48%
Local Businesses: Support and/or promote local and independent businesses	83%	Renewable/Sustainable Energy: Usage or implementation of sustainable and renewable energy	46%
Local Products/Handicrafts: Promotes, supports, and/or facilitates purchases of local products/handicrafts	79%	Children and Youth: Supports and/or promotes programs aiding children and youth	46%
Gender Equality: Supports gender equality and empowerment of women and girls	77%	Peaceful Societies: Support and/or promote peaceful and inclusive societies	44%
Sustainable Consumption and Production: Implement or support sustainable consumption and production	69%	Local Culture Education: Provide guest education on respectful interaction with local culture	44%
Water and Sanitation: Sustainable management of water and sanitation	68%	Carbon Emissions: Offset carbon emissions and/or has a comprehensive carbon reduction plan	43%
Environmental Education: Promote, support, and/or provide environmental education and awareness for staff	59%	Food security: Programs to end hunger, achieve food security, and improve nutrition	38%
Sustainable Agriculture: Promotes, supports, or implements sustainably agriculture practices	57%	Land Conservation: Protect, restore, and/or promote terrestrial land ecosystem conservation	38%
Environmental education for guests: Promotes, supports, and/or provides environmental education and awareness for guests	55%	Cultural Restoration: Implement or aid in cultural restoration projects	35%
Education Opportunities: Provide education, training, and/or apprenticeship	54%	Water and Marine Resources	34%
Equality: Ensure or support equal representation of peoples across various racial, ethnic, regional, or tribal distinctions	51%	Sustainable infrastructure: Promote, support, and/or establish resilient and sustainable infrastructure or industrialization	33%
Education: Ensure inclusive, equitable, and quality education and/or lifelong learning opportunities	48%	Indigenous Cultures: Promotes and/or supports indigenous people and communities	32%

Base Virtuoso Partners – Total (590).
2. Please select which sustainability efforts you have in place.

Planned Sustainability Efforts

Top 3
Sustainability
Efforts to be
Implemented
within the
Next Year

Carbon Emissions: Offset carbon emissions and/or has a comprehensive carbon reduction plan	25%	Education Opportunities: Provide education, training, and/or apprenticeship	10%
Renewable/Sustainable Energy: Usage or implementation of sustainable and renewable energy	20%	Food security: Programs to end hunger, achieve food security, and improve nutrition	10%
Waste Management and Recycling	14%	Children and Youth: Supports and/or promotes programs aiding children and youth	9%
Water and Sanitation: Sustainable management of water and sanitation	14%	Environmental Education: Promote, support, and/or provide environmental education and awareness for staff	9%
Local Businesses: Support and/or promote local and independent businesses	12%	Local Culture Education: Provide guest education on respectful interaction with local culture	9%
Sustainable Agriculture: Promotes, supports, or implements sustainably agriculture practices	12%	Water and Marine Resources	8%
Wildlife: Protect, restore, and/or promote the conservation of native and/or local wildlife	12%	Sustainable infrastructure: Promote, support, and/or establish resilient and sustainable infrastructure or industrialization	8%
Sustainable Consumption and Production: Implement or support sustainable consumption and production	12%	Land Conservation: Protect, restore, and/or promote terrestrial land ecosystem conservation	8%
Environmental education for guests: Promotes, supports, and/or provides environmental education and awareness for guests	11%	Peaceful Societies: Support and/or promote peaceful and inclusive societies	7%
Local Products/Handicrafts: Promotes, supports, and/or facilitates purchases of local products/handicrafts	11%	Education: Ensure inclusive, equitable, and quality education and/or lifelong learning opportunities	7%
Cultural Restoration: Implement or aid in cultural restoration projects	11%	Equality: Ensure or support equal representation of peoples across various racial, ethnic, regional, or tribal distinctions	6%
Gender Equality: Supports gender equality and empowerment of women and girls	10%	Indigenous Cultures: Promotes and/or supports indigenous people and communities	5%
		None of the above	21%

Base Virtuoso Partners – Total (590).
3. Of those you do not currently have in place, which of the following are you developing or planning within the next year?

Client Interest in Sustainability Efforts

Partner perspective on top 3 Sustainability Efforts With High Interest among Travelers / Clients	Local Products/Handicrafts: Promotes, supports, and/or facilitates purchases of local products/handicrafts	51%	Water and Marine Resources	26%
	Local Businesses: Support and/or promote local and independent businesses	48%	Land Conservation: Protect, restore, and/or promote terrestrial land ecosystem conservation	25%
	Waste Management and Recycling	46%	Equality: Ensure or support equal representation of peoples across various racial, ethnic, regional, or tribal distinctions	24%
	Wildlife: Protect, restore, and/or promote the conservation of native and/or local wildlife	46%	Indigenous Cultures: Promotes and/or supports indigenous people and communities	22%
	Sustainable Consumption and Production: Implement or support sustainable consumption and production	38%	Environmental Education: Promote, support, and/or provide environmental education and awareness for staff	19%
	Renewable/Sustainable Energy: Usage or implementation of sustainable and renewable energy	37%	Cultural Restoration: Implement or aid in cultural restoration projects	19%
	Carbon Emissions: Offset carbon emissions and/or has a comprehensive carbon reduction plan	36%	Children and Youth: Supports and/or promotes programs aiding children and youth	18%
	Sustainable Agriculture: Promotes, supports, or implements sustainably agriculture practices	34%	Food security: Programs to end hunger, achieve food security, and improve nutrition	17%
	Gender Equality: Supports gender equality and empowerment of women and girls	33%	Peaceful Societies: Support and/or promote peaceful and inclusive societies	14%
	Water and Sanitation: Sustainable management of water and sanitation	32%	Education: Ensure inclusive, equitable, and quality education and/or lifelong learning opportunities	14%
	Environmental education for guests: Promotes, supports, and/or provides environmental education and awareness for guests	32%	Sustainable infrastructure: Promote, support, and/or establish resilient and sustainable infrastructure or industrialization	13%
	Local Culture Education: Provide guest education on respectful interaction with local culture	29%	Education Opportunities: Provide education, training, and/or apprenticeship	12%
			Other	3%

Base Virtuoso Partners – Total (590).
5. Please select which of the following efforts travel advisors and travelers/clients show interest in or more consideration for.

Environmental Conservation Efforts

Numerous environmental conservation initiatives are currently underway to safeguard land, marine ecosystems, and wildlife



Land Conservation

19.6M hectares

48.3M acres

Total land in active conservation efforts



Marine Area Protection

(square kilometers)

98,529

Average Impact

9,064,700

Total marine area in active protection



Wildlife Preservation

(# supported/conserved)

50

Median

441,241

Total species in protection

Base Virtuoso Partners - Those Provided Valid Numeric Responses to Each Question

13. You stated that you have efforts in land, water/sea, wetland conservation, approximately how much area do you help conserve?

14. You stated that you have efforts in wildlife conservation. Using the space below please tell us more about the species and the approximate amount of wildlife you support?

Carbon Offsetting Efforts

There is significant contributions in carbon setting
among Virtuoso Partners



Carbon Offset

(metric ton)

59,414

Average offset

3,564,436

Total metric tons
in carbon offset

**Equivalent to 110.5 Million
trees:**

To offset one metric ton of carbon
dioxide (CO₂),
it takes between 31 and 46 trees

Base Virtuoso Partners - Those Provided Valid Numeric Responses to Each Question
15. You stated that you have a carbon offsetting program, please use the questions below to tell us approximately how much carbon you offset. Answer to the best of your ability, approximations are ok.

Net Zero Goals

A fifth of partners planning to be Net Zero by next year

Net Zero Projections

Among Sustainability Partners with a Net Zero Date (rolling %)

22%

Now or by next year

44%
By 2030

57%
By 2040

100%
By 2050

Regenerative Practices in Place

More than half of Virtuoso Partners have implemented some form of regenerative practices.



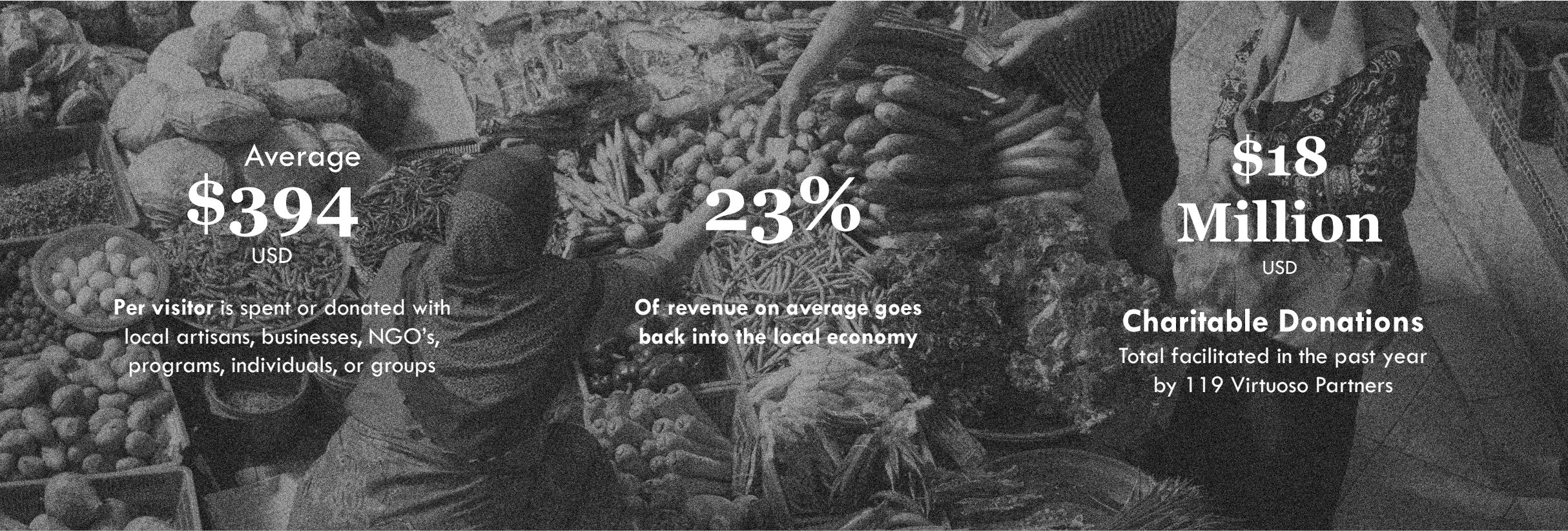
55% of Virtuoso Partners have
regenerative practices in place
(any type)

“The Inn was built using **regenerative design principles**... rainwater collection, solar panels, greywater treatment, and sourcing from local suppliers. It **supports local fisheries, avoids fossil fuels, and maintains a zero-waste kitchen**. Lighting is minimized to preserve the natural darkness for humans and wildlife.”

“Rewilding some **40 hectares of farmland** with **native species** and resort-wide reduced cutting sessions in all areas. Two **wetlands areas** constructed for the **support of wetland birds and aquatic life** and also to aid in our **carbon capture**.”

Supporting Local Economies

Virtuoso Partners support local economies in a variety of ways, including guest spend, revenue contributions, as well as donations



Base Virtuoso Partners - Those Answering (116).
22. Approximately how much do you estimate your guests are spending or donating (per person) with local artisans, businesses, NGOs, programs, individuals or groups of people (in USD)?
23. Approximately, what percentage of your revenue goes back into local communities?.

Base Virtuoso Partners - Those Answering (132).
24. What is the total amount of charitable donations your company facilitated in the past year (in USD)?

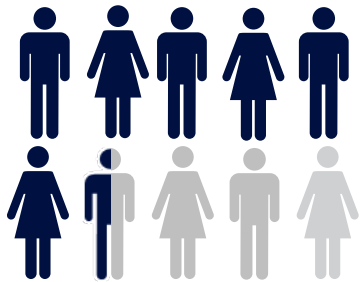
Creating Local Jobs Opportunities

Virtuoso Partners hiring efforts is primarily focused locally with career development supported through structured training programs

Total Number of Employees: 774,371

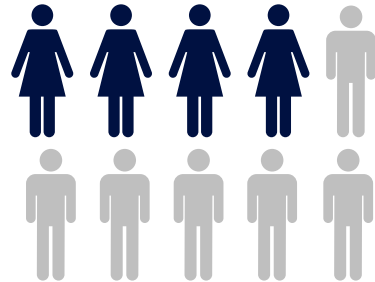
67%

are from
the local
community



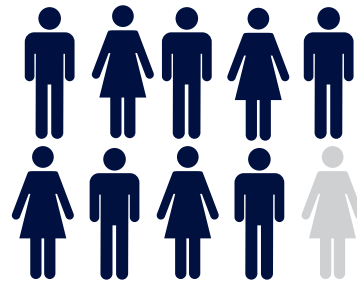
40%

are **women**
(average within business)



93%

create training and upward
mobility opportunities for their
staff:



- “We offer management **trainee programs** and always look to promote within the company so employees can advance their career while **maintaining their benefits** and **existing relationships** with colleagues in various departments.”
- “Our staff is **encouraged to pursue higher education, educational certificates**, and certifications through platforms like **colleges, private programs** and **destination management organizations**.”

Base Virtuoso Partners – Total (590).

38. What is your total number of employees?

39. Approximately what number of your employees are women?

40. Approximately what number of your employees are from the local community?

41. Do you create training and upward mobility opportunities for your staff?

42. If yes, please briefly describe these programs and opportunities.

Partner highlights

Role of Technology / AI in Advancing Sustainable Tourism

Leveraging Technology in Sustainability Efforts



35%

of Virtuoso Partners have partnered with or developed a tech tool or innovation in association with their sustainability efforts

“We use Foodprint Group and Conserve platforms to **track, monitor, analyze, derive insights and execute sustainability actions plans** for our sustainability programs.”

“**Technology plays an important role** in our sustainability efforts, enabling us to **track and minimize** our environmental impact with **greater accuracy**. We’ve partnered with Trace, a female-founded tech company, to enhance our **greenhouse gas accounting and emissions reduction strategies**.”

“We make use of an **early warning alert system** that is able to send SMS messages to a **database of cattle farmers** every time **wildroaming lions** get within a specified proximity of the village. The technology makes use of **satellite collars** attached to problem lions and a communication system creating these alerts every time these collared lions move through a **virtual geo-fence**.”

Base Virtuoso Partners – Total (590).

33. Have you partnered with or developed a tech tool or innovation in association with your sustainability efforts?

Base Virtuoso Partners – Those who partnered with or developed a tech tool or innovation (209).

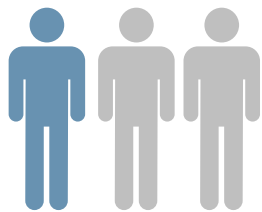
34. If yes, can you tell us more about this tech tool or innovation?

Role of AI in Sustainable Tourism



80%

of Virtuoso Partners
believe that AI plays a role in the
field of sustainable tourism



1 in 3

Have used AI to further
their sustainability work

“We use Winnow solutions to aid us in **identifying and reducing food waste** in the hotel. This is a **computer system with cameras and a weighing scale** on each food bin. It's all AI and it continuously learning and updating its **recommendations based on what is input into the bins** each day. As a collection, it has been instrumental in aiding us to reduce our food waste by over **26% in the past 2 years alone.**”

“AI is playing an **increasing role** in our sustainability initiatives, helping us **track and reduce our environmental impact**. AI also assists in managing greenhouse gas emissions by improving **data accuracy** and supporting reduction strategies.”

“AI helps hotel to be more **eco-friendly** by saving energy, water, and reducing waste. Smart system **controls lights and air conditioning** to use less power. AI tracks food waste and helps hotel buy only what is needed. **Chatbots give information to guests without using paper**. AI also helps to **check wildlife, measure carbon footprint, and plan green tourism**. **This makes hotel more sustainable and better for nature.**”

Base Virtuoso Partners - Those answering (454).

35. Do you believe that AI plays a role in the field of sustainable tourism?

Base Virtuoso Partners - Those who have used AI to further sustainability work (150).

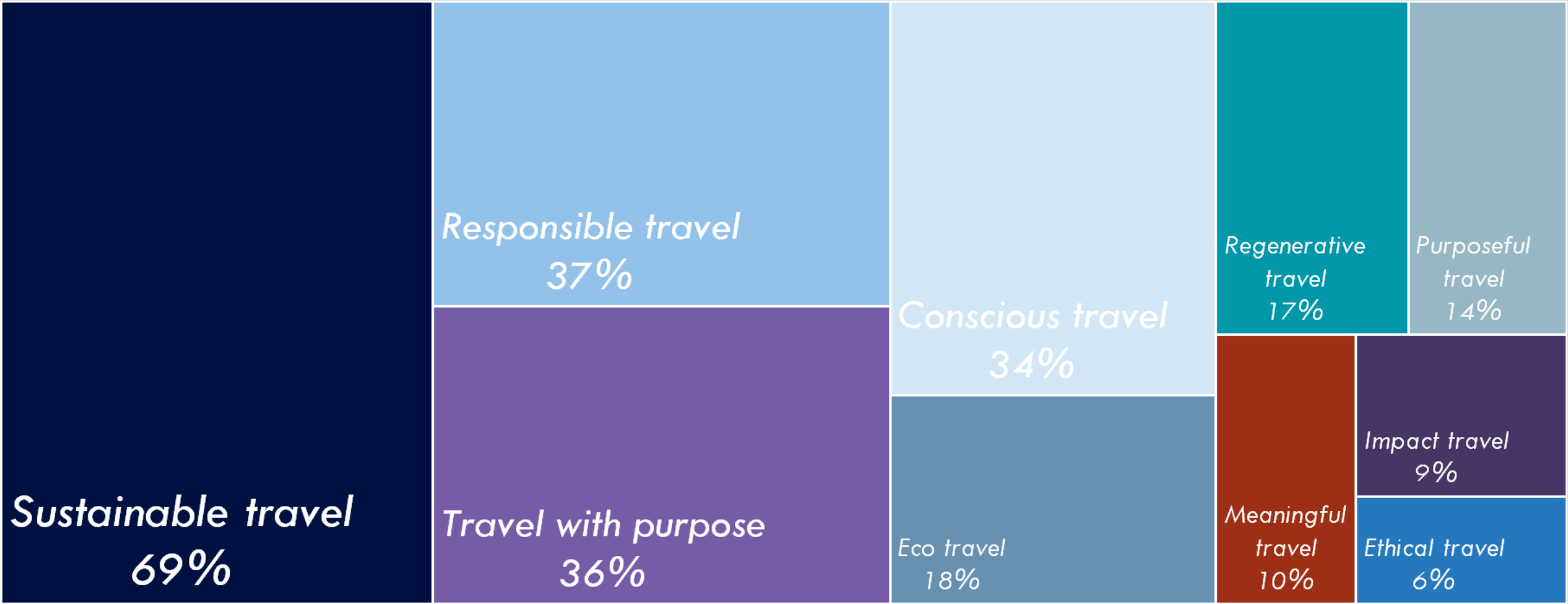
36. Have you used AI to further your sustainability work? / 37. Please elaborate.

Partner highlights

Marketing and Communications Strategies for Sustainable Tourism

Common Terms Used for Sustainable Travel

“Sustainable travel” is the most popular term used when discussing sustainable travel to guests

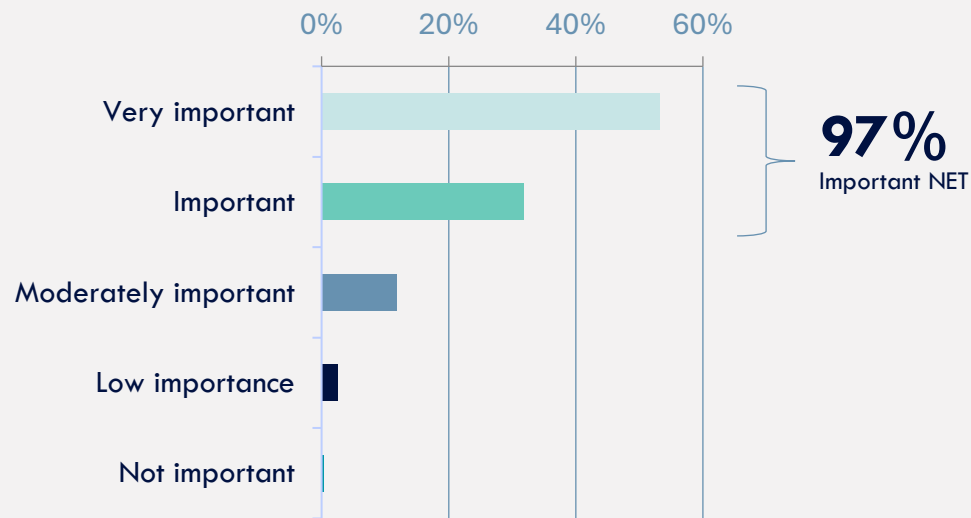


Base Virtuoso Partners – Total (590).
51. Which of the following terms do you prefer when communicating sustainability efforts or initiatives to guests?

Sustainability as Part of Marketing Strategy

For Virtuoso Partners, sustainability is a key component of their marketing strategy. Preferred sustainability-related consumer marketing typically include email campaigns, digital advertising, and sponsored editorial or video content.

Importance of Sustainability as Part of Marketing Strategy



Preferred Types of Efforts (Media) for Consumer Sustainability Marketing

Email	65%
Digital ads	50%
Sponsored editorial or video	48%
Print	17%
None of the above	7%

Base Virtuoso Partners – Total (590).
53. Which types of sustainability-related consumer marketing efforts would you be most likely to participate in and would like more information about?
Base Virtuoso Partners – Those Answering (229).
54. How important is sustainability as part of your marketing strategy?



Virtuoso Impact Report
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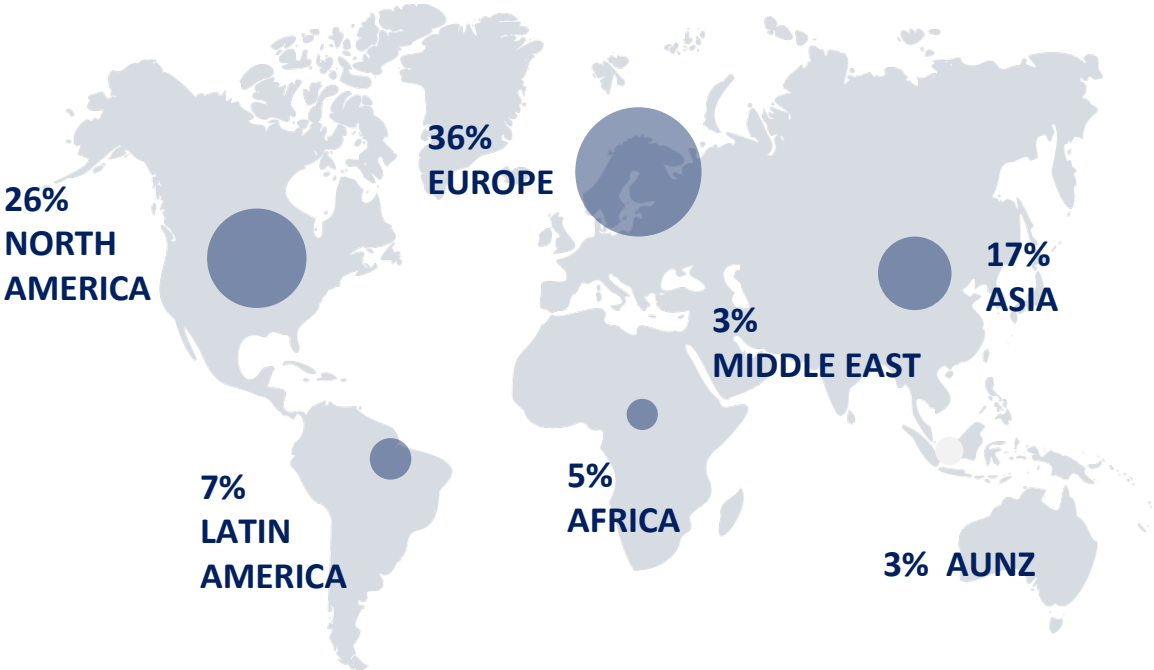
2025 Member Sustainability Study

OBJECTIVES

- Understand the role of travel advisors in promoting sustainable tourism
- Explore the perceptions of sustainability among luxury travel advisors and travelers
- Identify opportunities for Virtuoso and its Preferred Partners to enhance support for travel advisors on their sustainable travel journeys

METHODOLOGY

- Online survey response from **203 Total Virtuoso Members**
- Global representation across member type (sample mix %):



Advisor Type	
Agency owner/manager	33 %
Advisor	60 %
Agency staff (non-advisor)	7 %
Total	100 %

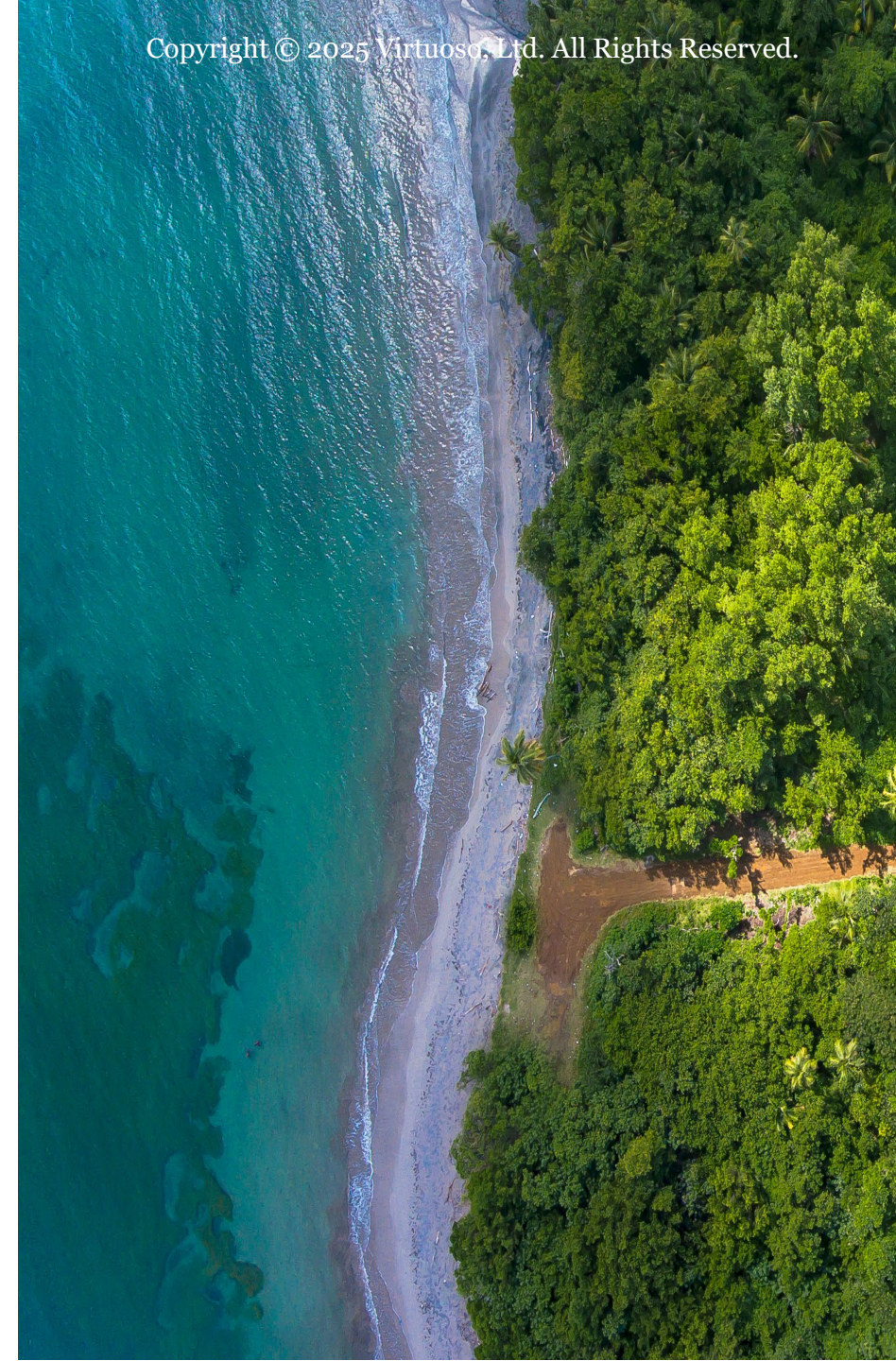
Sustainable Travel as a Business Opportunity

The vast majority of Virtuoso Members view sustainable travel as a valuable business opportunity.

- Top sustainability initiatives by Members include community engagement, social work, and volunteer programs, followed by office sustainability standards and sustainable travel training.
- Wildlife conservation, support for local businesses, and responsible use of water and marine resources are key factors that both Virtuoso Members and their clients consider when selecting partners.
- Knowledgeable staff, credible certifications, compelling data, and videos are impactful to inspire confidence in partners and destinations' commitment to sustainable travel.

Luxury travel clients show increasing interest in sustainable travel, with support for local economies rising to the top as the most widely embraced pillar of sustainability.

- There is an opportunity to improve client awareness of the sustainability initiatives undertaken by partners and destinations.
- Virtuoso Members believe that cost is the factor most likely to be compromising when prioritizing sustainable travel, and they anticipate their clients to share this view.
- Many Virtuoso Members report that their clients are increasingly open to visiting alternative destinations or traveling during off-peak seasons as a way to mitigate climate impacts and combat overtourism.

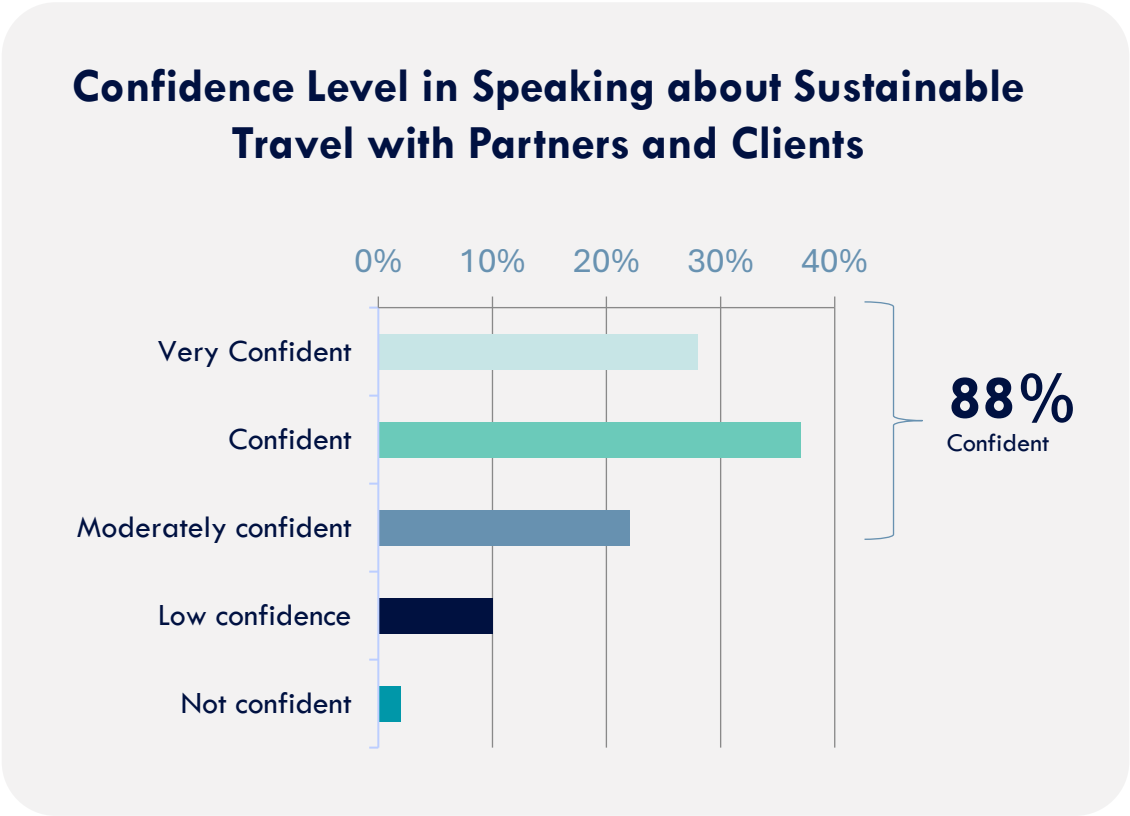
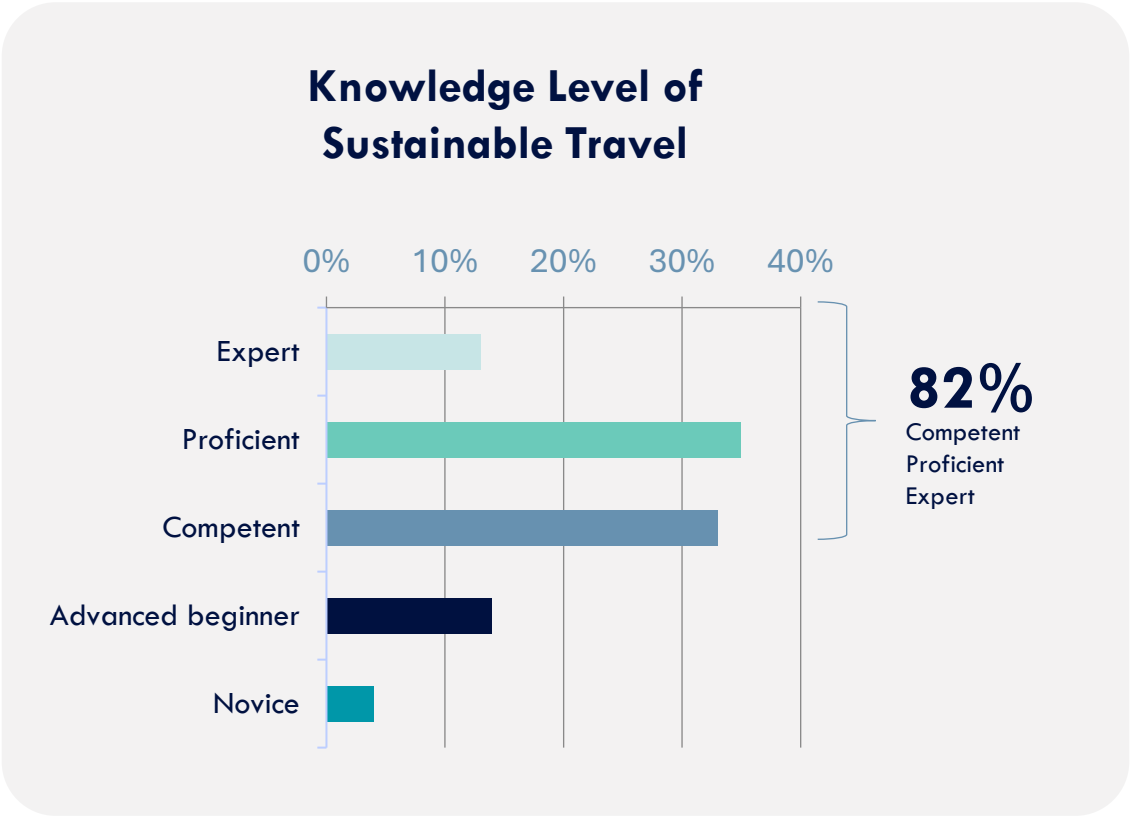


Member highlights

Sustainable Travel as a Business Opportunity

Knowledge and Confidence in Sustainable Travel

Most members feel confident in speaking about sustainable travel with their partners and clients

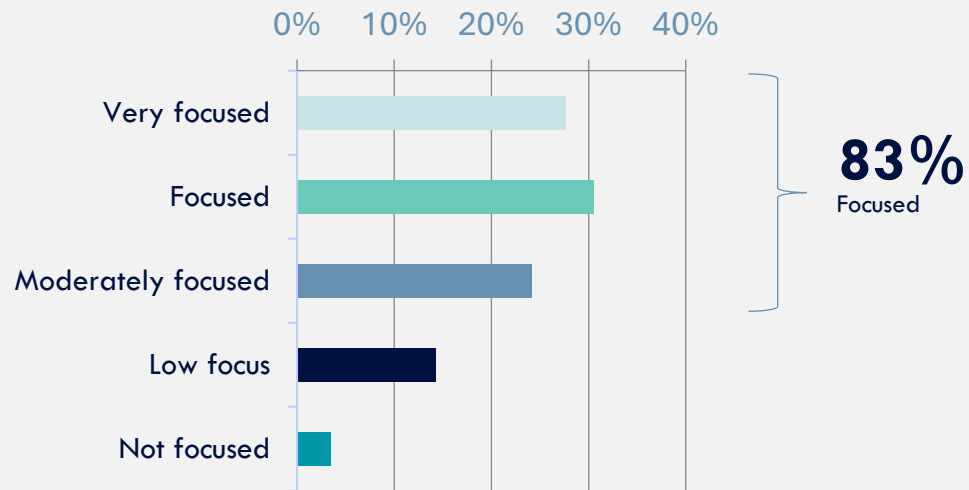


Base Virtuoso Members – Total (203).
1. Please rank your level of sustainability knowledge.
2. Please rank your level of confidence in terms of talking about sustainability with partners and clients.

Sustainability in the Travel Business

The majority of Virtuoso Members (travel agencies and advisors) see selling sustainable travel as a business opportunity

Level of Focus on Sustainability in the Business Context



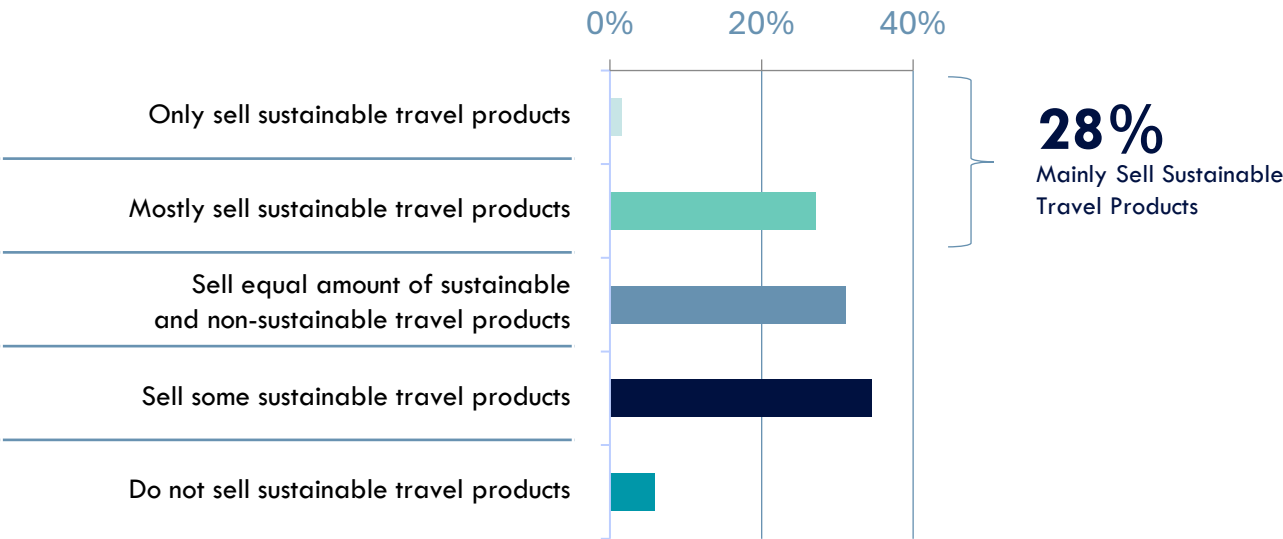
88%

of members
see selling sustainable
travel
as a **business
opportunity**

Sustainable Travel as a Business Opportunity

While sales of sustainable travel products / destination isn't yet the core offering, there's universal interest in selling more of them

Q. Are you already intentionally selling sustainable travel products/destinations?

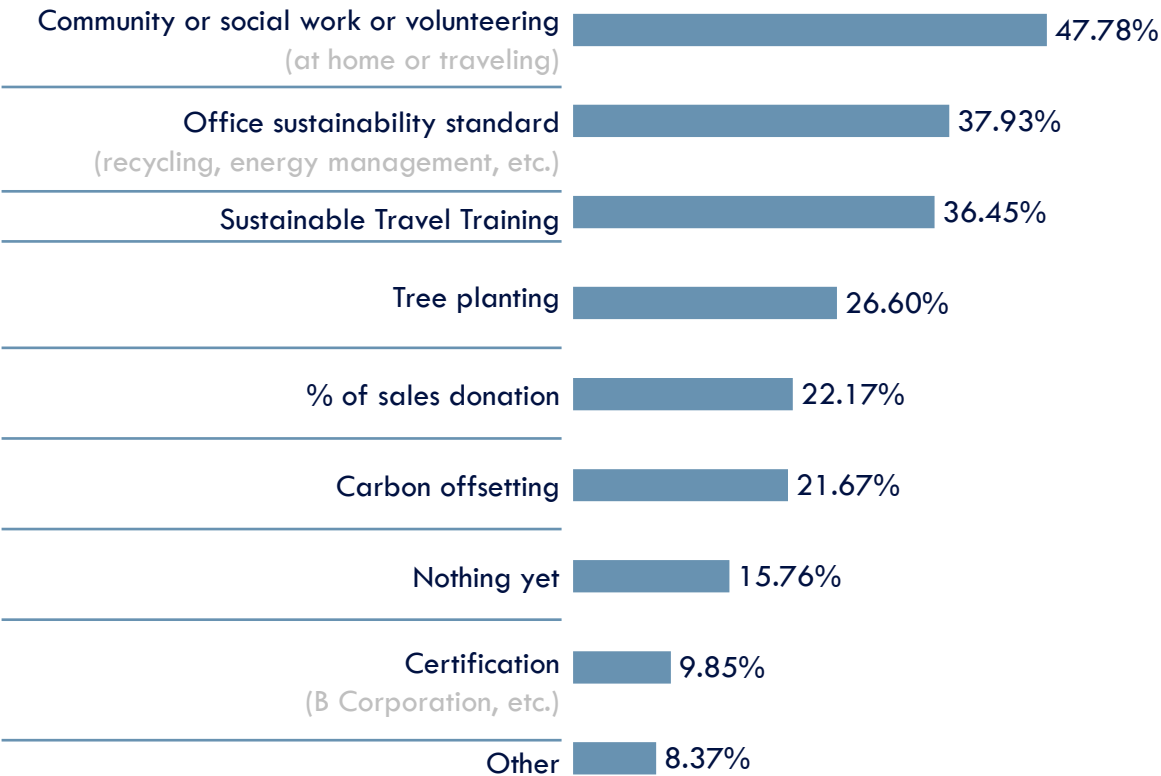


98% of Members are **interested in selling more** sustainable travel products / destinations

Base Virtuoso Members – Total (203).
4. Are you already intentionally selling sustainable travel products/destinations?
5. How interested are you in selling more sustainable travel products/destinations?

Current Sustainability Programs

Community or social work or volunteering is the most common sustainability program in place by Member Agencies, followed by office sustainability standards and sustainable travel training programs



Other Response Include:

Educational content

- “I have written well-received **educational blogs** on sustainable travel for business and leisure travel.”

Tree planting and habitat restoration

- “I volunteer with a local organization to help with **tree planting, restoring habitat.**”

Partnering with local, minority-, and women-owned businesses

- “Actively hiring **local travel suppliers** that are LGBTQ owned or operated.”

Reducing single-use plastics and waste

- “We are currently trying to **eliminate plastic waste, packaging & non-biodegradable items** that are generally barely used or used once and discarded.”

Internal sustainability committees and marketing sustainable partners

- “We also established a **Sustainability Committee** with team members to exchange ideas, create and implement initiatives, and engage the entire team.”

Sustainable client gifting and reusable items

- “**Client gifting give back donations** and planning fee give backs.”

Base Virtuoso Members - Total (203).
10. What sustainability programs do you have in place?
11. If you selected other – please write in other sustainability programs you have in place.

Evaluating Impact of Sustainability Programs

Members utilize various approaches to measure the impact of sustainability programs, such as:

Tracking & Data Collection

- “By **carbon footprint report** measurement.”
- “We quantify the **carbon emissions** of their flights and offer for them to purchase offsets.”
- “**Data tracking** (energy consumption, carbon footprint, waste management, water usage, sustainable procurement)”

Supplier Assessment

- “Review **supplier sustainability policy**.”
- “I **personally assess** hotels, tour operators, and experiences to ensure they align with fair labor practices, local investment, and environmental responsibility. Certifications are a bonus, but I look beyond labels to verify **true impact**.”

Client Engagement & Feedback

- “We like to **follow up with clients** on the impact of the trip profit donation we make to local non-profits in their travel destination.”
- “**Travelers and on-the-ground partners** provide invaluable insights. I actively gather feedback to confirm that experiences deliver on their sustainability promises.”

Third Party Verification

- “We compare our performance against **EarthCheck** benchmarks and industry best practices to ensure alignment with global sustainability standards.”
- “We work with a sustainability consultancy called **Futureproof** to help us evaluate the sustainability of our partners and our own operations.”

Efforts to Minimize the Impact of Travel

Bringing reusable bags and water bottles, prioritizing spending with local businesses, restaurants, and artisans are the most common efforts being done to minimize the impact of personal travels.



Base Virtuoso Members – Total (203).
13. What do you do to personally minimize the impact of your travel?

To minimize the impact of my travel, I...

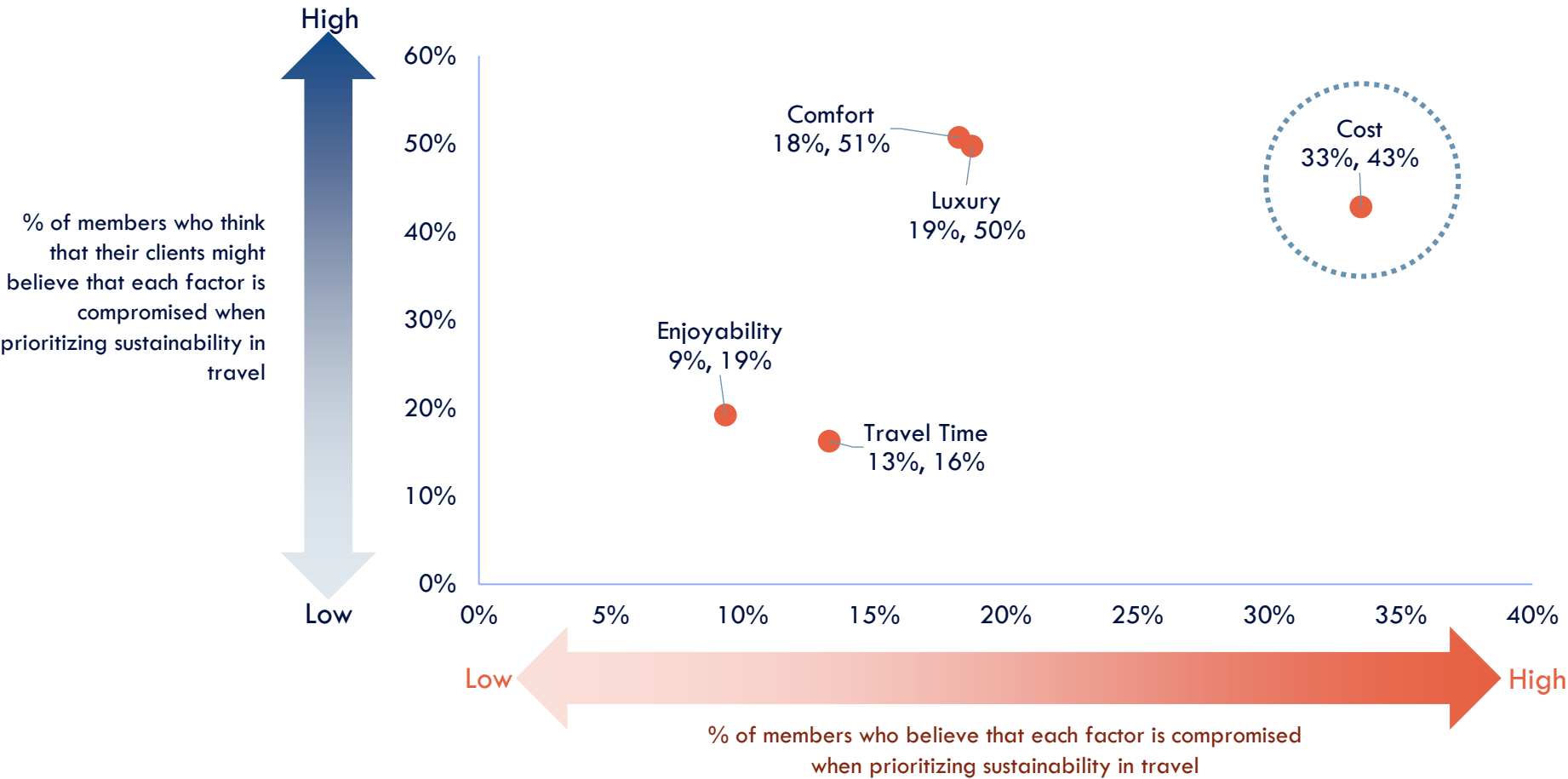
88%	Bring reusable bags, water bottles, etc.
84%	Prioritize spending with local businesses, restaurants, artisans
77%	Consider traveling off-season to mitigate overtourism
75%	Look for opportunities to engage and support local communities
44%	Assess the carbon impact of transportation choices (ex: train vs. flying when possible)
24%	Travel only with partners who have sustainable practices in place
24%	Offset my carbon emissions

Member highlights

Advisor's Perspective
on Clients' Preferences
for Sustainable Travel

The Trade-Offs of Sustainable Travel

Members and clients believe cost is most often compromised when prioritizing sustainable travel; Enjoyability and travel time are not major concerns



Base Virtuoso Members – Total (203).
8. What do you believe is compromised when prioritizing sustainability in travel?

9. If you selected other – please write in what you believe is compromised when prioritizing sustainability in travel.
17. What do clients believe is compromised when prioritizing sustainability in travel?



Evolving Sustainability Mindset among Clients

Clients show a growing interest in sustainable travel with supporting local economies emerging as the top pillar supported by clients

Shifting Client Interest in Sustainable Travel Booking

Member’s Observation on Preference now **vs. 5 Years Ago**



77% of Members have observed that their clients are **more interested in booking sustainable travel** than 5 years ago

Resonating Pillar of Sustainability

Most Supported by Clients – **Top 3**



Base Virtuoso Members – Those Answering (100).
20. In the last 5 years, have you observed a shift in your client’s interest in booking sustainable travel?
Base Virtuoso Members – Total (203).
22. What pillar of sustainability do you see your clients more inclined to support?

Client Awareness on Sustainability Efforts

There is room to enhance clients' awareness of partner/destination's sustainability efforts, highlighting the need for ongoing communication

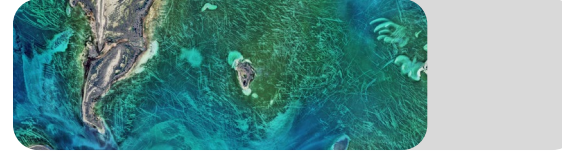
Clients' Awareness on Partner/Destination's Sustainability Efforts



64%

of Members feel their clients are informed about a partner or destination's sustainable practices and projects

Preference for Explicit Sustainable Elements



75%

Of Members Believe that Those Who Prioritize Sustainability Prefer Trips With Explicit Sustainable Elements

Client's Willingness to Spend on Sustainable Travel



64%

cite that their clients are willing to spend more **if they know about** a partner or destination's sustainable practices and/or projects

Base Virtuoso Members – Total (203).

19. Are your clients willing to spend more if they know about a partner or destination's sustainable practices and/or projects?

21. How informed are your clients about a partner or destination's sustainable practices and/or projects?

25. Do your clients who prioritize sustainability prefer trips with explicit sustainable elements (like eco-lodges or community/environmental activities) or, are they satisfied knowing that their travels are conducted responsibly?

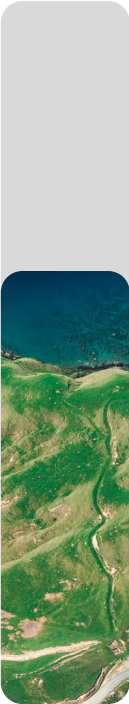
Client Knowledge in Sustainable Travel

According to members, clients are aware of their positive and negative impact;



68%

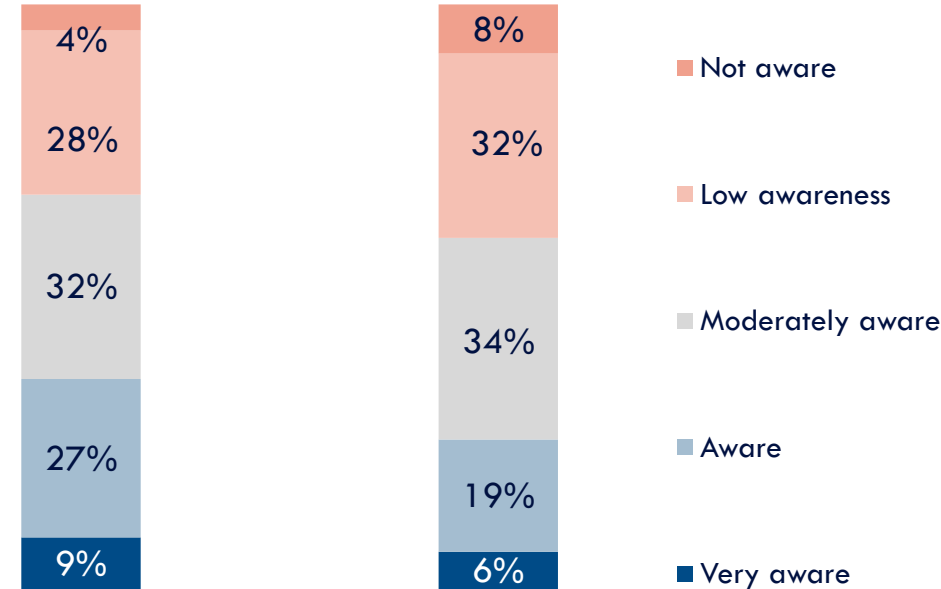
of Members feel their clients are aware of the potential positive impact of their travel choices



60%

of Members feel their clients are aware of the potential negative impact of their travel choices

Client Awareness of Positive / Negative Impact of the Travel Choices



Positive Impact

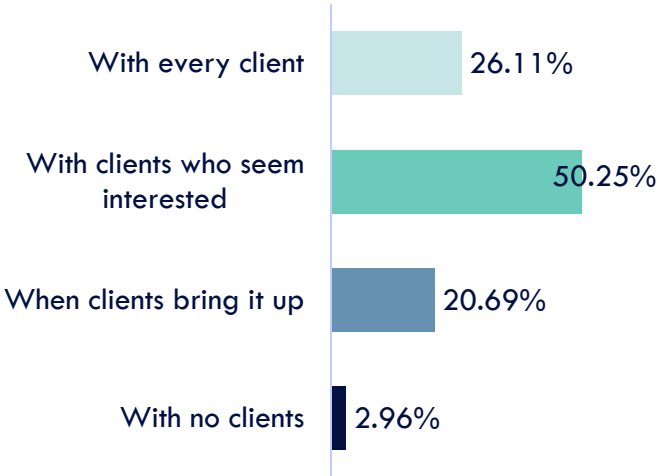
Negative Impact

Base Virtuoso Members - Total (203).
26. How aware are your clients of the potential positive impact that their travel choices have?
27. How aware are your clients of the potential negative impact that their travel choices have?
29. What portion of your clients offset the carbon emissions of their travel?

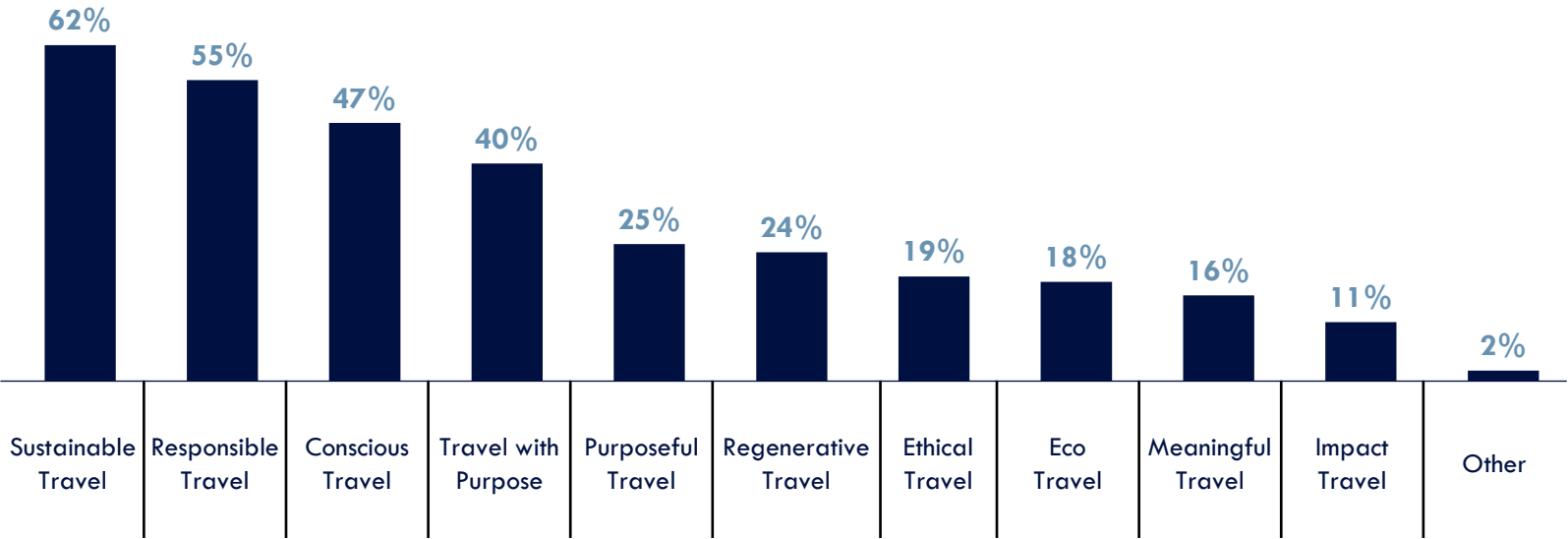
Conversations on Sustainable Travel with Clients

The majority of conversations around sustainable travel occurs if client is interested. Commonly used terms include “**sustainable travel**” and “**responsible travel**,” followed by “**conscious travel**” and “**travel with purpose**.”

Frequency of Discussing Sustainable Travel Choices with Clients



Common Terms Used When Discussing Sustainable Travel



Base Virtuoso Members – Total (203).
28. How often are you talking to your clients about sustainable travel choices?
40. What terms do you use when talking about sustainable travel?
41. Please write any additional terms you use when talking about sustainable travel.

Climate-Driven Shifts Shaping Travel Plans

Climate significantly influences travel plans. Most members observe that their clients are increasingly open to exploring alternative destinations or considering off-season travel in response to climate conditions.

“I am seeing that quite a few destinations temperatures as what we have seen in previous years are not consistent with current conditions. As an advisor, **this does complicate our process** with choosing alternative destinations based on the extreme weather, earthquakes, rainy, season, as well as the extreme heat that we are seeing in multiple destinations.”



79%

agree that changing climate and/or extreme weather events and conditions **affects** travel planning and choices



80%

report that their clients **are open to travel at off-season/off-peak times** due to the climate.



55%

report that their clients **are choosing to travel at off-season/off-peak times** due to the climate.



79%

report that their clients **are open to exploring alternative destinations** due to climate.



49%

report that their clients **are traveling to alternative destinations** due to climate.

Base Virtuoso Members – Total (203).
30. Is changing climate and/or extreme weather events and conditions affecting travel planning and choices?
31. Are your clients choosing to travel at off-season/off-peak times due to the climate?
32. Are your clients open to travel at off-season/off-peak times due to the climate?

33. Are your clients traveling to alternative destinations due to climate?
34. Are your clients open to exploring alternative destinations due to climate?
35. If you have any additional comments about climate and client behavior, feel free to share below.

Impact of Overtourism on Travel Plans

Overtourism is another factor influencing travel decisions, often prompting travelers to seek alternative destinations



88%

report that their clients **are open to exploring alternative destinations** due to the overtourism.



78%

report that their clients **are traveling to alternative destinations** due to the overtourism.



68%

report that their clients **are avoiding certain destinations** due to the overtourism.

"Slovenia/Croatia instead of Italy; **Scandinavia** instead of Mediterranean Europe."

"We focus on sending clients to more popular destinations "off-season" to avoid excessive demands on the community, or **offer travel "dupes"**. For example, recommending **Emilia-Romagna** instead of higher-traffic destinations in Italy; **Northern Spain** instead of higher-traffic Southern Spain, etc. I also regularly propose destinations such as **Sri Lanka** which rely on tourism dollars and are still largely unvisited by many American leisure travelers."

Member highlights

Sustainable Travel as a Factor in Partner Selection

Desired Sustainability Efforts in Partner Selection

Wildlife conservation, support for local businesses, and consideration of water and marine resources are important in partner selection

Top 10 Sustainability Priorities for Each Group	Top Sustainability Priorities for Members In Partner Selection	Top Sustainability Priorities for Travelers In Partner Selection
Wildlife	80%	77%
Local Businesses	78%	61%
Water and Marine Resources	75%	55%
Local Products/Handicrafts	74%	51%
Waste Management and Recycling	72%	41%
Land Conservation	71%	48%
Indigenous Cultures	69%	49%
Gender Equality	65%	32%
Water and Sanitation	64%	30%
Environmental education for guests	63%	24%
Renewable/Sustainable Energy	62%	39%
Environmental Education for Staff	62%	19%
Local Culture Education	59%	35%

Other items	Members	Clients
Sustainable Agriculture	58%	28%
Equality	56%	27%
Sustainable Consumption and Production	55%	28%
Education	55%	29%
Children and Youth	55%	27%
Cultural Restoration	54%	29%
Food security	52%	25%
Sustainable infrastructure	51%	21%
Education Opportunities	51%	18%
Peaceful Societies	43%	24%
Carbon Emissions	36%	24%
Other	4%	6%
None of the above	3%	0%

Base Virtuoso Members Those who Answered the Question (102).
15. Which sustainability efforts of partners do you look for when selecting partners for your or your client's travels?
23. Which sustainability effort of partners do your clients care the most about?

Expectations for Sustainable Travel Suppliers

Key expectations include support for local businesses and information on efforts to mitigate impact on local environments and ecosystems



What Destinations Can Offer to Help Members Learn, Plan, and Sell

“I think it's important for destinations to **TELL the stories!** Have in their hotels or sustainable restaurants the story of origin but also how they are **making an effort** to be sustainably together.”

“What **sustainable practices** in tourism are they implementing that best serve their people.”

What Partners (hotels, cruise lines, tour operators, on-sites) Can Offer to Help Members Learn, Plan, and Sell

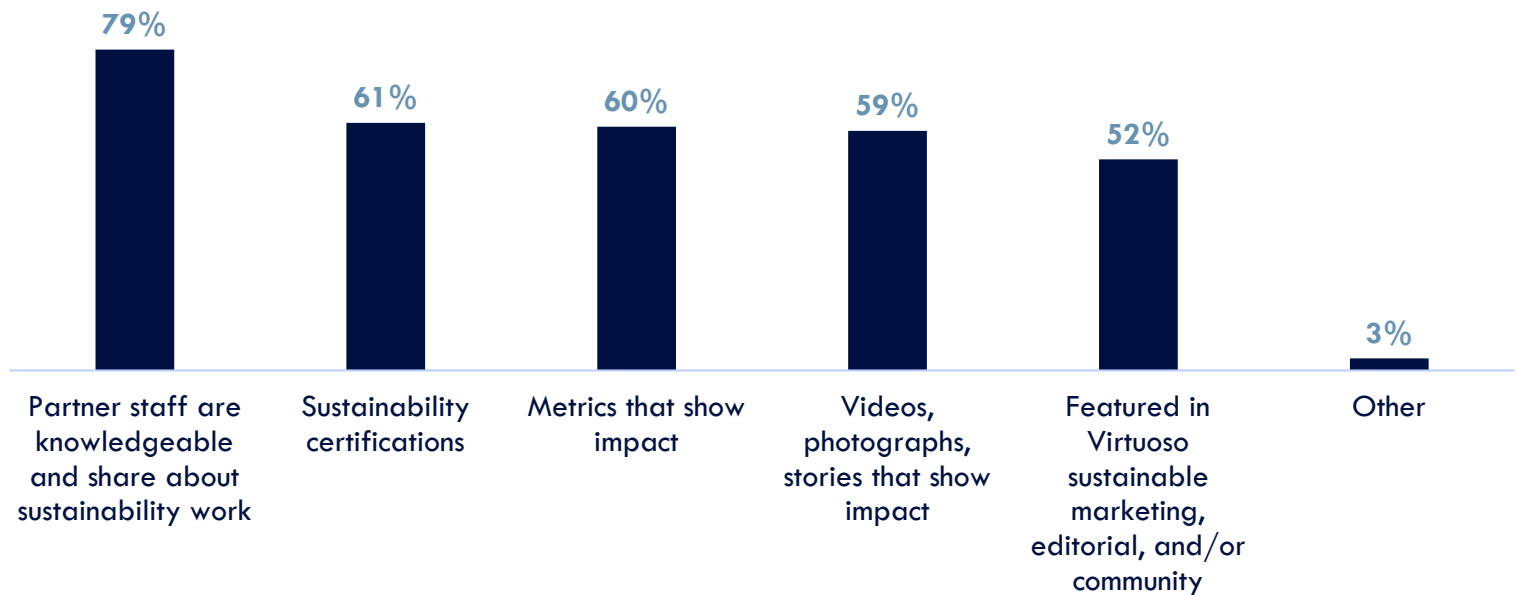
“**Marketing materials.** Thoughtful language around sustainable practices for their companies. Please make sure it is not all "green washing" statistics.”

“**Data data data.** Staff who can talk the talk and explain efforts with some enthusiasm and knowledge.”

Base Virtuoso Members – Total (203).
42. Because sustainability covers so many aspects of business, what are the mandatory things that you expect from “sustainable” travel suppliers?
45. What would you like to see from destinations to help you better learn, plan, and sell those destinations as sustainable destinations?
46. What would you like to see from hotels, cruise lines, tour operators, on-sites, or service providers to help you better learn, plan, and sell their sustainable products?

Building Trust in Sustainable Travel

Knowledgeable staff, certifications, data, and videos are factors that could inspire confidence in partners and destinations’ commitment to sustainable travel.



In their own words...

- “Expert knowledge from all staff members to accommodate and inform vegan guests of the offerings that are suitable (i.e. difference between vegan and vegetarian, which is a limitation of many luxury properties).”
- **“Hotels - Show me sustainability before you show me the bathrooms in your presentations.”**
- “More opportunities to experience it for ourselves so we can really see what they are doing and better promote and educate our clients. It will also help with selling.”

Base Virtuoso Members – Total (203).
 47. What helps you trust that preferred partners and/or destinations are truly sustainable?
 48. If you selected other – please write in what helps you trust that preferred partners and/or destinations are not simply greenwashing.

To learn more about Virtuoso and our partner's sustainability efforts, visit:
[Sustainable Travel for Virtuosos](#) and sign up for our newsletter.
Or contact us at sustainability@virtuoso.com

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