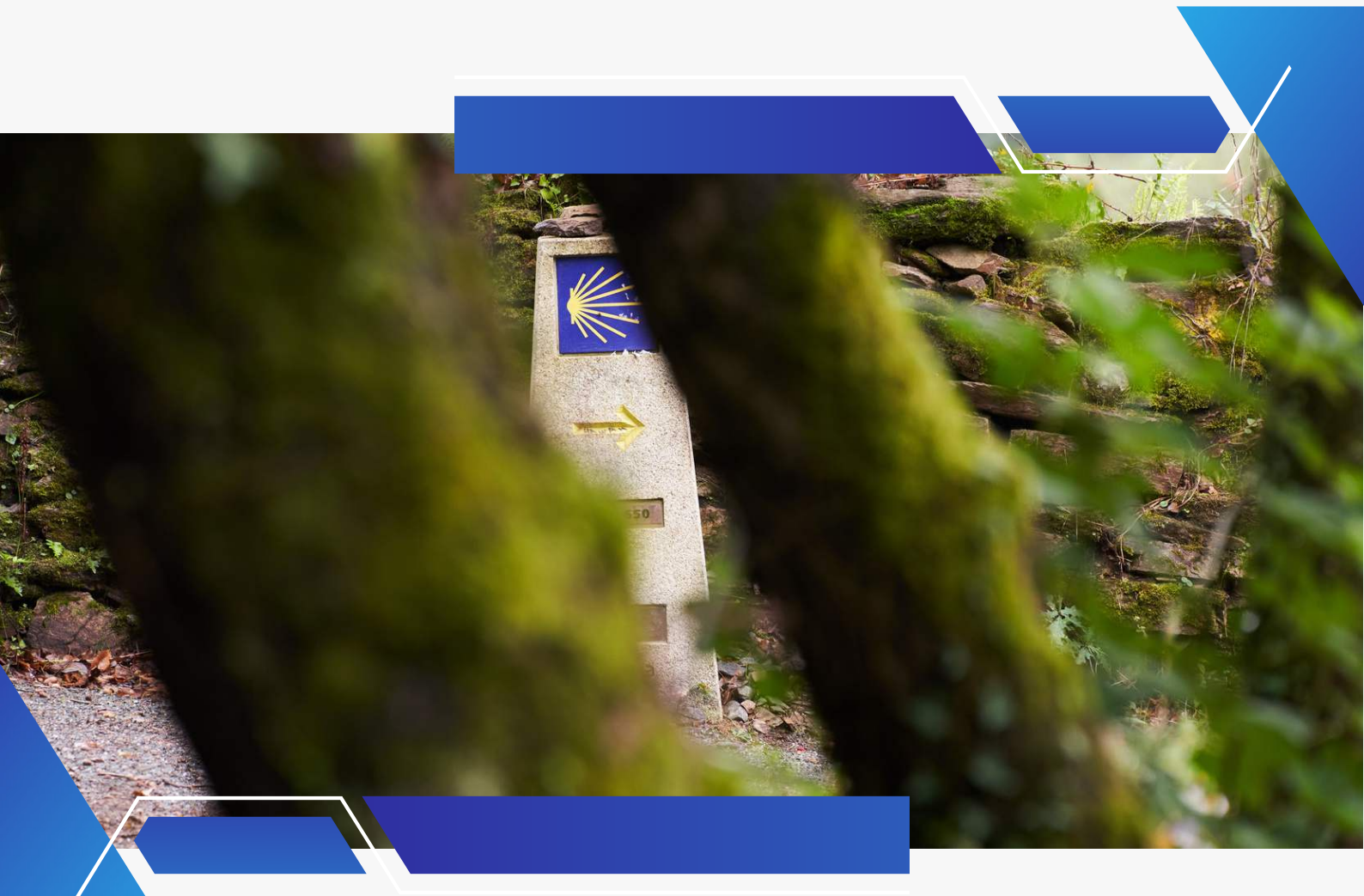


# SUSTAINABLE TOURISM POLICY 2026

Updated from the 2024 edition





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# Sustainable **2026** TOURISM POLICY

## Introduction

Follow the Camino is a travel company operating since 2006, with a strong presence in Spain and Ireland. We have established ourselves as a leading operator promoting and facilitating journeys along the Camino de Santiago, Spain's iconic pilgrimage route.

The tourism industry accounts for a significant and growing share of global carbon emissions, estimated between 5–8% when including aviation, accommodation, and associated supply chains.<sup>1</sup> This reality makes it essential that travel companies take meaningful responsibility for their environmental impact. Follow the Camino has taken steps to measure and manage its environmental impact, including operational changes, supply chain engagement, and customer education.

This document sets out the policies and commitments that guide Follow the Camino's approach to sustainable tourism, covering our four strategic goals and our Climate Action Plan. Our aim is straightforward: to grow as a business while supporting local communities and informing our clients about responsible travel in the destinations where we operate.

<sup>1</sup> Lenzen, M. et al. (2018). The carbon footprint of global tourism. *Nature Climate Change*, 8, 522–528.



## II. Vision and Values

At Follow the Camino, our mission is to organise meaningful and seamless active holidays that our clients love — creating fulfilling memories while supporting the communities we travel through and contributing to the future of responsible and inclusive travel.

We are a business with its own constraints. While conventional business models prioritise growth above all else, we want to explore other possibilities — ones that balance the realities of a changing climate with ordinary people's access to meaningful travel.

We measure and take responsibility for the environmental footprint of the trips we organise, work with locally-owned accommodations and transport providers, and encourage our clients to eat at independent restaurants, buy locally-made products, and participate in local experiences. We ask our clients to travel with care, respecting local communities, minimising waste, and leaving the route as they found it. We hold ourselves accountable through independent certifications and regular policy reviews, and we are transparent about both our progress and our limitations.

Follow the Camino earned its B Corp certification in September 2023 with a score of 89.1. We are currently undergoing recertification, which requires us to demonstrate continued progress across social and environmental performance, accountability, and transparency.



### III. Carbon Disclosure

Follow the Camino is committed to transparency in reporting its environmental performance. The company recorded annual carbon emissions of 1,445 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> during the 2025 calendar year. The month with the highest emissions, accounting for customer volume, was September, totalling 367.57 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. The average for the lowest-activity months (November to February) was approximately 2.45 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per month.

Since 2015, we have calculated the carbon footprint of every customer trip — from airport transfers and hotel stays to luggage transfers and meals. This long-standing practice underpins our ability to measure, offset, and manage our footprint over time.

Between 2020 and 2023, we invested in carbon offsetting through First Climate, purchasing 3,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> credits across gold-standard projects: wind power generation in Karnataka, India; the Spouts safe drinking water initiative in Uganda; and a solar PV plant by AEPL, India. From 2024, our offsetting partner is DGB Group, through the Hongera Cookstoves programme in Kenya — an efficient cooking stove initiative that reduces demand for unsustainable fossil fuels in Kenyan households.

#### **Carbon offset certificates are publicly available:**

2020

2021

2022

2023

2024

*Offsetting for 2025 onwards is currently in progress, and updated certificates will be published as they are finalised.*



## IV. Climate Action Plan

Follow the Camino is committed to supporting the global ambition to limit global warming to 1.5°C, in line with the Paris Agreement. As a B Corp certified tour operator, we recognise our responsibility to measure, manage, and where possible reduce the environmental impact of our operations and supply chain. This plan covers the period 2026–2029 and will be reviewed and updated at least every 36 months.

### SMART Targets (2026–2029)

Area	Action	Target	Timeline	Responsible
Supply Chain	Annual sustainability survey sent to all accommodation partners	100% of active hotels contacted	Ongoing — next survey June 2026	Operations
Supply Chain	Working with accommodation partners to install water dispensers and reduce single-use plastic	3 hotels	In progress, 2026	Operations
Customer Travel	Leave No Trace principles communicated on every trip	100% of trips	Ongoing	Operations
Customer Travel	Customers guided to eat at independent restaurants, buy locally-made products, and participate in local experiences	100% of trips	Ongoing	Operations
Internal Operations	Carbon footprint calculated for every trip and all office operations	100% of trips, since 2015	Ongoing	CEO
Internal Operations	Employees encouraged to choose train and bus over flights where possible ( <a href="#">Slow Travel Policy</a> )	All staff	Ongoing	CEO
Internal Operations	<a href="#">Internal Sustainability Guide</a> developed and shared with all employees (Zoho internal system)	All staff	Every year - last review 2026	Operations
Governance	Share Climate Action Plan with all employees and collect feedback via consultation survey	All staff	Q3 2026	Operations
Governance	Incorporate employee feedback into plan at each review cycle	—	Every 36 months	CEO & Operations
Governance	B Corp recertification	In progress	2026	CEO & Operations
Governance	Plan reviewed and re-approved by CEO	—	Every 36 months, next review 2029	CEO

## Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder	Engagement Mechanism
Employees	Team meetings, 1:1s, and annual employee consultation on this plan
Customers	Post-trip surveys, trip documentation, and Leave No Trace guidance
Suppliers	Annual sustainability survey
Local communities	Directing customers to locally-owned businesses along the Camino routes
Environment	Carbon measurement and offsetting; Sustainable Tourism Policy

### Feedback Integration

Feedback collected through the annual employee consultation and supplier survey is reviewed annually and used to inform updates to this Climate Action Plan at each 36-month review cycle.

### Resource Allocation

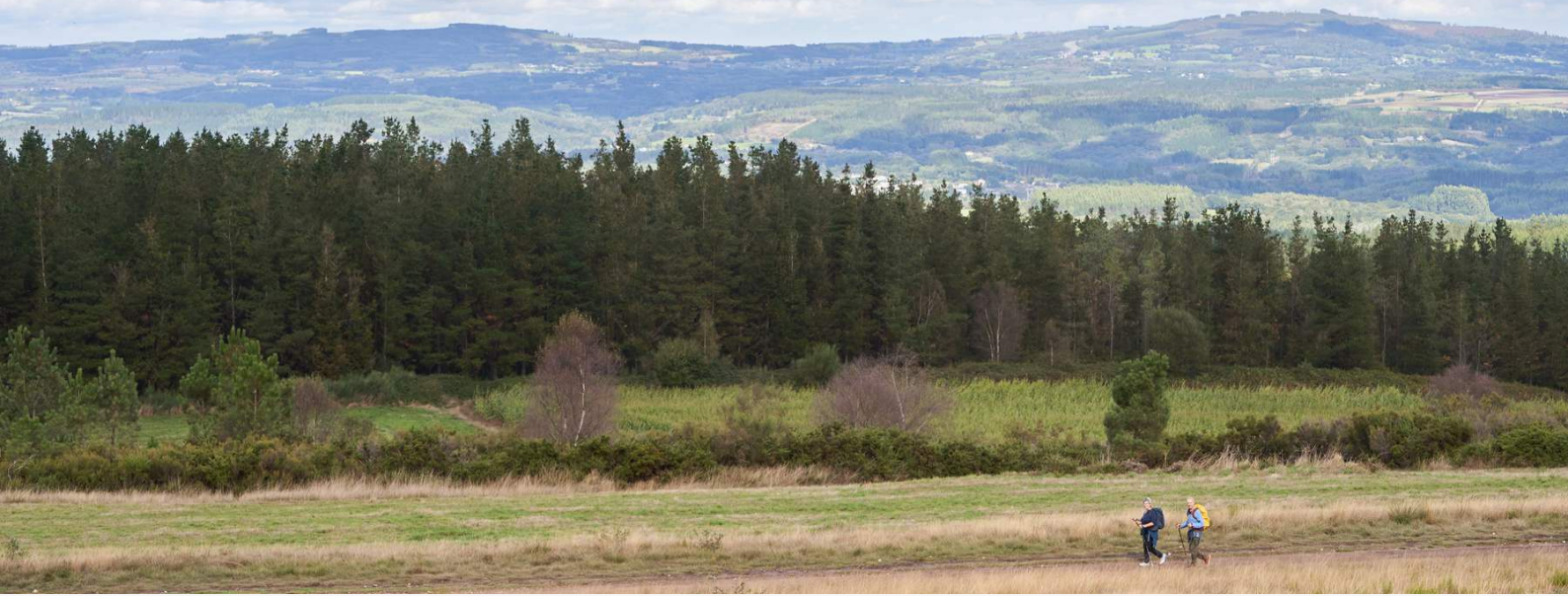
Sustainability at Follow the Camino is led by Umberto Di Venosa, CEO and Founding Director, supported by dedicated operations staff. Resources including carbon calculation tools, supplier management processes, and customer communication channels are allocated to embed sustainability at every touchpoint. Costs for certification, supplier engagement, and reporting are incorporated into the annual operating budget.

### Accessibility

This Climate Action Plan is freely accessible to all stakeholders as part of the Follow the Camino Sustainable Tourism Policy, published on our website.

### Approval

*This Climate Action Plan has been reviewed and approved (June 2026) by Umberto Di Venosa, CEO and Founding Director of One Foot Abroad Ltd t/a Follow the Camino.*



## IV. Goals

This policy framework is aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular goals 8, 11, 12, 13, 15, and 17. It also reflects the principles of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (GCET) developed by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), and the Paris Agreement (UNFCCC) on climate change.

The following four Goals underpin this policy framework and guide its structure:

### Goal 1: Governance & Workers

Ensure strong leadership and management to guide the sustainable development of the activities carried out by our company.

#### **The Role of Women in Our Organisation**

It is important to create and maintain an environment where women can thrive in tourism careers. At Follow the Camino, over 75% of employees are women, and 50% of managerial positions are held by women (excluding the Founding CEO). We are committed to continuing to promote gender-inclusive career pathways and to supporting the visibility of women-led businesses in the tourism sector.

## **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion**

At Follow the Camino, we believe the Camino should be accessible to everyone, regardless of background, identity, or circumstance. We are committed to fostering a culture of Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) across everything we do — from how we hire and support our team, to how we design experiences for travellers, and how we engage with communities along the routes we serve.

We are committed to respecting human rights in line with internationally recognised frameworks, including the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the International Labour Organization's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. Accountability for this commitment is assigned to the CEO, who reports progress to the executive team on a regular basis. *For our full JEDI Commitment Statement, visit [followthecamino.com](https://www.followthecamino.com).*

## **Employee Development & Wellbeing**

To better understand the experience of our employees and support their professional growth, we conduct regular surveys on employee satisfaction, quarterly performance reviews, and provide ongoing training and development opportunities. Good employment data supports better decision-making and helps us build a workplace where people thrive.



## **Goal 2: Environment**

**Understand and manage the environmental impact of our operations, and raise awareness of that impact with our staff, suppliers, and customers.**

### **Sustainable Mobility**

Promoting sustainable transport among our visitors is a core commitment. We encourage the use of shared transportation and lower-emission vehicles, and collaborate with transport providers to increase the use of electric vehicles for luggage transfers along the Camino.

Our Slow Travel Policy encourages staff to choose trains, buses, cycling, and walking over flights where practical, reducing the environmental impact of business travel and fostering deeper connections with the places we work in.

## **Five Pillars of Supplier Environmental Engagement**

We engage with accommodation partners on sustainability practices aligned with the Paris Agreement. Our approach is structured around five core pillars: food management, waste management, water management, energy efficiency, and collaboration. These pillars guide us in identifying practical steps that our accommodation partners can take to manage their environmental impact — from installing solar panels and LED lighting to obtaining sustainability certifications. To support this engagement, we conduct an annual sustainability survey across our full network of active accommodation partners. Our most recent survey (June 2026) found that 89% of respondents measure energy use, 80% measure water consumption, 94% recycle, and 94% use LED lighting. Carbon footprint measurement remains low across the network and is an area we are actively monitoring through ongoing supplier engagement.

## **Responsible Food Practices**

As part of our commitment to sustainability and promoting local produce, we have developed a series of videos featuring recipes prepared by a local chef, highlighting fresh ingredients and culinary techniques native to the Camino. We encourage the hotels and restaurants we work with to adopt these recipes for their menus, promoting local and seasonal ingredients. Since 2023, we have been encouraging clients on our Guided Tours to have at least one vegetarian meal during their trip.

## **Operations**

We operate as a digital-first, fully remote business with team members across multiple countries. We use online meetings to minimise business travel and keep our operations as paperless as possible, including digital walking notes and maps in use since 2011.

## **Carbon Offsetting**

As noted in our Carbon Disclosure (Section III), we invest in carbon offsetting through First Climate across three gold-standard projects.

## **Team and Sustainability**

Follow the Camino supported employees in completing a Carbon Literacy certification programme in partnership with Irish sustainability consultancy Earthology in 2023. This initiative helped staff make more informed decisions around carbon in both their professional and personal lives. To support ongoing staff engagement with sustainability, we also developed an Internal Sustainability Guide, shared with all employees and reviewed annually.

### **Responsible Water Use**

We encourage responsible water usage through our communications with travellers and accommodation partners, highlighting options with strong water conservation practices and promoting habits that minimise consumption.

### **Responsible Consumption & Production**

We seek to minimise waste through responsible procurement and operations, including minimal-packaging holiday packs, digital walking notes and maps in use since 2011, and a preference for local and sustainably sourced suppliers for both internal and customer-facing purchases.



## **Goal 3: Community**

### **Support and respect culture and heritage along the Camino routes.**

Cultural and intangible heritage are key elements of the tourism industry in the places where Follow the Camino develops its activities. It is vital to ensure that the everyday life and culture of local people is shared with visitors in an appropriate fashion that is informed by the community itself.

Where cultural heritage sites are linked to the tourism experience, they require protection, maintenance, and interpretation — and tourism can play an important role in assisting to fund such sites.

### **UN World Food Programme**

At Follow the Camino, we are committed to making a positive impact beyond our own operations. Since 2014, we have donated €10 per employee per month to the UN World Food Programme (WFP), supporting its vital work in fighting hunger and providing food assistance to communities in need around the world. This contribution reflects our commitment to global social responsibility and our belief in supporting initiatives that make a significant difference in people's lives.



## Goal 4: Customers

**Seek to connect our customers with local people and places, and support them to travel responsibly.**

### **Leave No Trace**

Follow the Camino is a Bronze member of Leave No Trace Ireland. We educate our clients about Leave No Trace principles on all our local training walks, and communicate these principles to all customers as part of their trip materials. This commitment aligns with our efforts to take responsibility for our environmental impact and preserve the Camino routes for future generations.

### **Sustainable Travel Guidance**

We inform our travellers about their environmental impact and how to make more responsible choices throughout their journey — from choosing local food over imported goods and considering plant-based meals, to understanding how their travel decisions affect the communities they visit. We point customers to the ATR Travellers' Ethical Charter as a further resource for responsible travel.

### **Accessibility**

Enhancing accessibility for visitors with disabilities is an important factor in building a more inclusive tourism sector. Follow the Camino recognises this as an ongoing area of development and is committed to exploring ways to make the Camino experience more accessible to people with a range of physical, hearing, and visual needs.