



SELECTIVE ASIA

Sep '22 - March '24
IMPACT REPORT

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Personally designed, exceptional journeys that
champion a passion for travel with care for
community connections and the planet.

We're taking travel to a better place.

SELECTIVE ASIA
MISSION STATEMENT

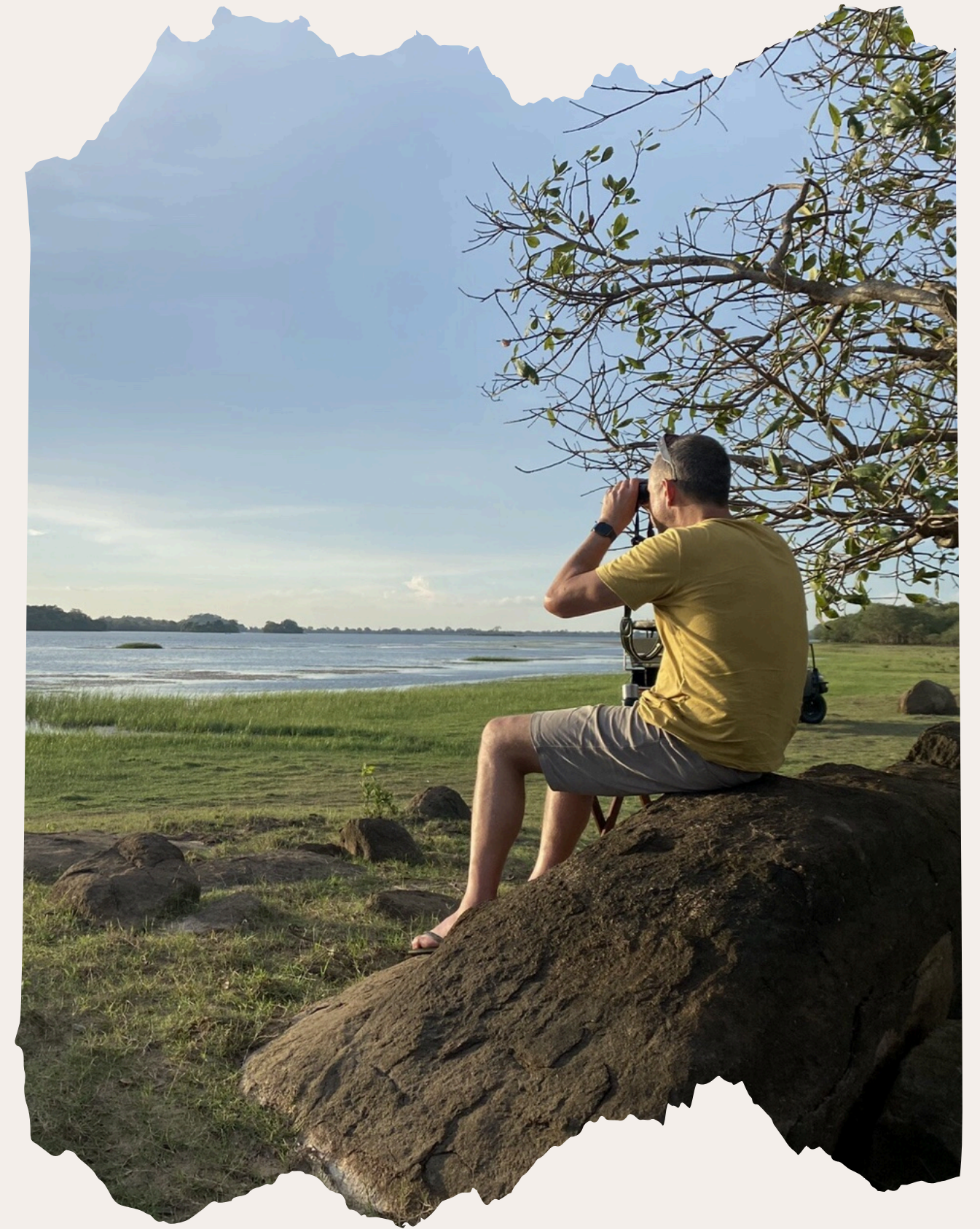


Selective Asia
Unfollow the herd

ABOUT SELECTIVE ASIA

In May 2021 we became B Corp certified, and are proud to be amongst the first specialist tour operators in the UK to achieve the certification. We are a founding member of Tourism Declares and our founder, Nick, sits on the executive board of Travel by B Corp: a collective of B Corp-related travel organisations with the simple aim of helping UK consumers to travel better by choosing B Corp certified operators.

We put a great deal of resources into exploring new ways that we, and our partners across Asia, can have a positive impact in the destinations we love. We strive to only work with partners and suppliers that demonstrate meaningful levels of support for their local economies, and we ensure that each trip we create gives back to relevant social and environmental causes.



WHAT WE DO

Selective Asia specialises in designing & delivering bespoke, one-of-a-kind journeys throughout Asia.

We are a multi-award winning tour operator with a long-standing commitment to responsible travel, with a primary focus on community and the social impact of the trips we operate.



WHO WE ARE

At the heart of Selective Asia you'll find a passion for meaningful travel - the kind that stops you in your tracks and stirs your soul.

We travel beyond the ordinary and, while we love many of Asia's most well-known places, we'll also take you further. We focus solely on Asia, which has allowed us to gain a deeply detailed understanding of our destinations over the years. This means appreciating the subtler cultural nuances, feeling the rhythms of each place and learning how (and when) to see the highlights from fresh perspectives, alongside discovering new ones. This approach enhances your experience and, in turn, helps to reduce your contribution to over-tourism.



PURPOSE & VALUES



(We like to)
Keep it slow

Great things are never rushed, whether we're carefully considering the design of your holiday, or encouraging you to slow the pace to ensure that every moment of each trip truly counts.



(It's crucial that we all)
Tread with care

This planet is just a little bit important to us, as are the cultures we learn from and the communities we visit. We're always striving to keep our footprint light and make sure that travel is a force for good and positive.



(Respect boundaries, but)
Explorers at heart

We're always seeking fresh paths and new opportunities for cultural connections. We take a considerate approach in this, ensuring we always put communities and cultures before profit.



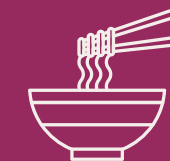
(We are)
Adaptive

We work differently. Following our ingrained kaizen philosophy, we're a closely connected, small team of experienced and resilient individuals working efficiently and effectively together. No departments or sluggish bureaucracy - just smart synergy and progressive thinking.



(Take pride in)
Mutual respect

We might be pleased with the awards we've won (they are always nice) but we're proud to be part of the team we've built, in Brighton and overseas; of the care we put into our work, and the lengths we go to deliver truly exceptional travel.



(We are always)
Hungry

Whether it's aromatic banh xeo on a bustling Hanoi side street or the savoury steam of momos on the Tibetan Plateau, we love to let our stomachs take the lead on our adventures, and you can always depend on us to recommend a perfect little spot for lunch...

LETTER FROM NICK, OUR FOUNDER

This is our first annual impact report and we're excited to be able to share how we're continuing to take positive steps. We are proud to be playing our small part in leading the industry towards meaningful solutions to some of the most significant global challenges faced today.

Whilst this inaugural impact report is well overdue, its publication now does in fact, feel like appropriate timing. With just a year of reliable trading under our belt since the Covid pandemic, it's only now that we can grade our responsible travel performance in tandem with an active trading environment. There's no avoiding the fact that, in many ways, the environment experienced many benefits from the break from travel. However, the economic value that responsible travel operators like ours can bring to local communities, and by extension their environmental and conservation efforts, is also undeniable and was greatly missed.

Whilst this has been our first full year of being fully operational and thriving since the pandemic, the work the team did during the previous three years laid the foundations for the strategies and structures we are now operating.

The entire Selective Asia team showed incredible resilience throughout the pandemic period and demonstrated unrelenting commitment to 'coming back better and with a clearer, higher purpose'. This involved us stripping back layers of operational band-aids that had been applied over the years, and rebuilding from the ground up with improved clarity about the type of responsible operator we were striving to be. We came to understand ourselves far better.

We spent time unpicking the relationship between sustainability and travel, what it means to be a responsible traveller and where, as a tour operator, we can have the most meaningful impact. We have individually learned a great deal and, as an organisation, have strengthened our commitment in many areas

What are the objectives of this report?

I hope that this inaugural report is beneficial to all stakeholders, internal and external. Not only do we aim to honestly grade our responsible travel performance over the past 18 months, but also to set out meaningful and quantifiable targets for the 12 months ahead.

We recognise that transparency, clarity of communication, the setting of targets and not being afraid to fail are all imperative to achieving our goals.

Momentum over perfection

Writing this report now has been fulfilling and worthwhile, helping us to fully appreciate what we have achieved to date and setting out clear goals for our immediate future.



JOURNEY TO B CORP

Certified



Challenging ourselves to become a certified B Corp was a straightforward decision for Selective Asia, as we could clearly see how well the structure of the certification process would help us add a stronger shape and thoughtful external accountability to our existing strategy and intentions. Our values and ethos already aligned well with other B Corp companies we knew and respected. We also liked the fact that there are ongoing assessments to keep us accountable and ensure our actions match up with our promises.

We began the application process in late 2020, building up to full project status in early 2021, through to May of that year when we completed the application. The project team was made up of volunteers from across the organisation, and the entire team participated in the decision making and restructuring required. This helped us ensure that the certification process was understood and ‘felt’ by all members of the organisation.

In May 2022 we became a B Corp with a score of 89.6



Since joining the B Corp community, we have found many opportunities to collaborate with a number of like-minded businesses (both in and outside the travel industry), learning from their journeys and them, hopefully, also learning from ours. In September 2022, Nick was elected by the membership to sit on the Executive Board of Travel by B Corp.



OVERALL B CORP SCORE



20.9

GOVERNANCE



37.3

WORKERS



19.4

COMMUNITY



7

ENVIRONMENT



4.7

CUSTOMERS



89.6

B CORP IMPACT AREA PLANS AND PROGRESS

Governance

Workers

Community

Environment

Customers

Disclaimer: Many of the objectives set out within the Impact Area plans and progress section are written in hindsight rather than having been part of a clear strategic plan from when we were certified back in 2022, as the trading situation and accompanying uncertainty made developing one at that time a counterproductive process.

GOVERNANCE

WHAT WE SAID WE'D DO

Put responsible travel and sustainability at the heart of our mission statement & operation.

Issue share options to all PAYE employees

Further improve financial transparency

WHAT WE'VE DONE

Published in late 2023:
Personally designed, exceptional journeys that champion a passion for travel with care for community connections and the planet. We're taking travel to a better place.

EMI share options issued in January 2023

Groundwork in place for participatory budgeting.
Continue to share company financials and make budgeting available and clear.

STATUS



GOVERNANCE

WHAT WE SAID WE'D DO

Increase our working relationships with other B Corp businesses.

Restructure our performance reviews, introducing individual performance and wellbeing focused metrics.

WHAT WE'VE DONE

Design and PR agency partnerships formed in 2023. Became member of Travel by B Corp in summer of 2022 with Nick voted onto the Exec Board later that same year.

Objective in progress.
Laid foundations for adapted performance review going forwards.
Further development planned for 2024

STATUS



GOVERNANCE

NEXT STEPS

Launch participatory budgeting structure & introduce the company profit share.

Update our formal organisational chart and written job descriptions.

Further enhancements to our performance reviews planned for 2024.



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CUSTOMERS

WHAT WE SAID WE'D DO

Provide meaningful opportunities for our clients to benefit the communities and habitats they visit

Enhance our client care, safety and strengthen the overall customer experience.

Strengthen client connection with communities in each destination via facilitating contribution to charitable and social economic organisations.

WHAT WE'VE DONE

Set up a Planet, Community & Conservation fund. A contribution is included in every bookings. Increased % of CBT and inclusions of social economic projects in our products.

We introduced a customer support department.

Inclusions in our products and through repeat and referral booking community focused incentives.

STATUS



CUSTOMERS

WHAT WE SAID WE'D DO

Deliver on our promise of providing ‘inspiring travel experiences with a positive impact’.

WHAT WE'VE DONE

All signature city tours are currently under redevelopment with social economic project visits incorporated into each. Many destinations complete, some still underway.

STATUS



CUSTOMERS

NEXT STEPS

Set formal targets for customer satisfaction (service, overall experience, commitment to responsible travel).

Set targets for achieving 'positive impact' in all trips: % of trips that include support for social economic projects, community based tourism projects and conservation projects.

Identify a larger network of community partners. More Community Based Tourism projects and products are in the process of being incorporated into all our journeys.



WORKERS

WHAT WE SAID WE'D DO

Provide further structure & guidelines to help the team members understand expectations and fulfill roles.

Introduce support roles and an improved support structure.

Create new remote working positions & flexi-hours roles, including roles suitable for new parents returning to work

WHAT WE'VE DONE

Introduction of an open-source playbook.

Support roles added in sales and finance, and tech developments to streamline processes.

New positions created: Sales Support (1 x ft and 1 x pt), Product (1 x pt), Human Resources (1 x pt), Finance support (1 x ft)

STATUS



WORKERS

WHAT WE SAID WE'D DO

Create further upskilling opportunities and provide personal development opportunities.

Enhance team benefits.

WHAT WE'VE DONE

Two governmental funded apprenticeship schemes attended in 2023, and management development course offered to all employees (30% uptake)
Added a rotating sales champion role to help develop broader leadership skills.

Maternity/paternity benefits enhanced from pandemic period reductions.

STATUS



WORKERS

NEXT STEPS

Develop a travel policy which incentivises more responsible travel to work.

Further the conversation on trialing a reduced hour week / seasonal working.

Further benefits (ie medical benefits, volunteer days & self-improvement allowance) under consideration for 2024/25.

Introduce volunteer and self-improvement days and financial allowance.



COMMUNITY

WHAT WE SAID WE'D DO

Create employment opportunities in lower income countries or regions, including improving our remote workforce opportunities.

Further our advocacy role in advancing social responsibility matters.

WHAT WE'VE DONE

Two positions filled in Sri Lanka.

Membership and a leadership role within Travel by B Corp.
Nick has contributed to several podcasts and live talks.

STATUS



COMMUNITY

NEXT STEPS

Introduce formal volunteer days.

Meet the necessary levels of contribution to join 1% for the Planet.

Comprehensively audit the diverse ownership at all layers of our supply chain.



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ENVIRONMENT

WHAT WE SAID WE'D DO

Reduce our UK office-based carbon impact.

Ensure that all clients travelling with Selective Asia are making in-built contributions to environmental, conservation and social economic funds through our PCCF

Further our advocacy role in advancing environmental matters.

WHAT WE'VE DONE

Selection of small office space and location to reduce carbon footprint (Scope 1 & 2) of office considering team transportation impact. A fully hybrid working arrangement.

In November 2023 we launched our Planet, Community & Conservation Fund, including an automatic contribution with every booking.

Membership and a leadership role within Travel by B Corp.
Nick has contributed to several podcasts and live talks.

STATUS



ENVIRONMENT

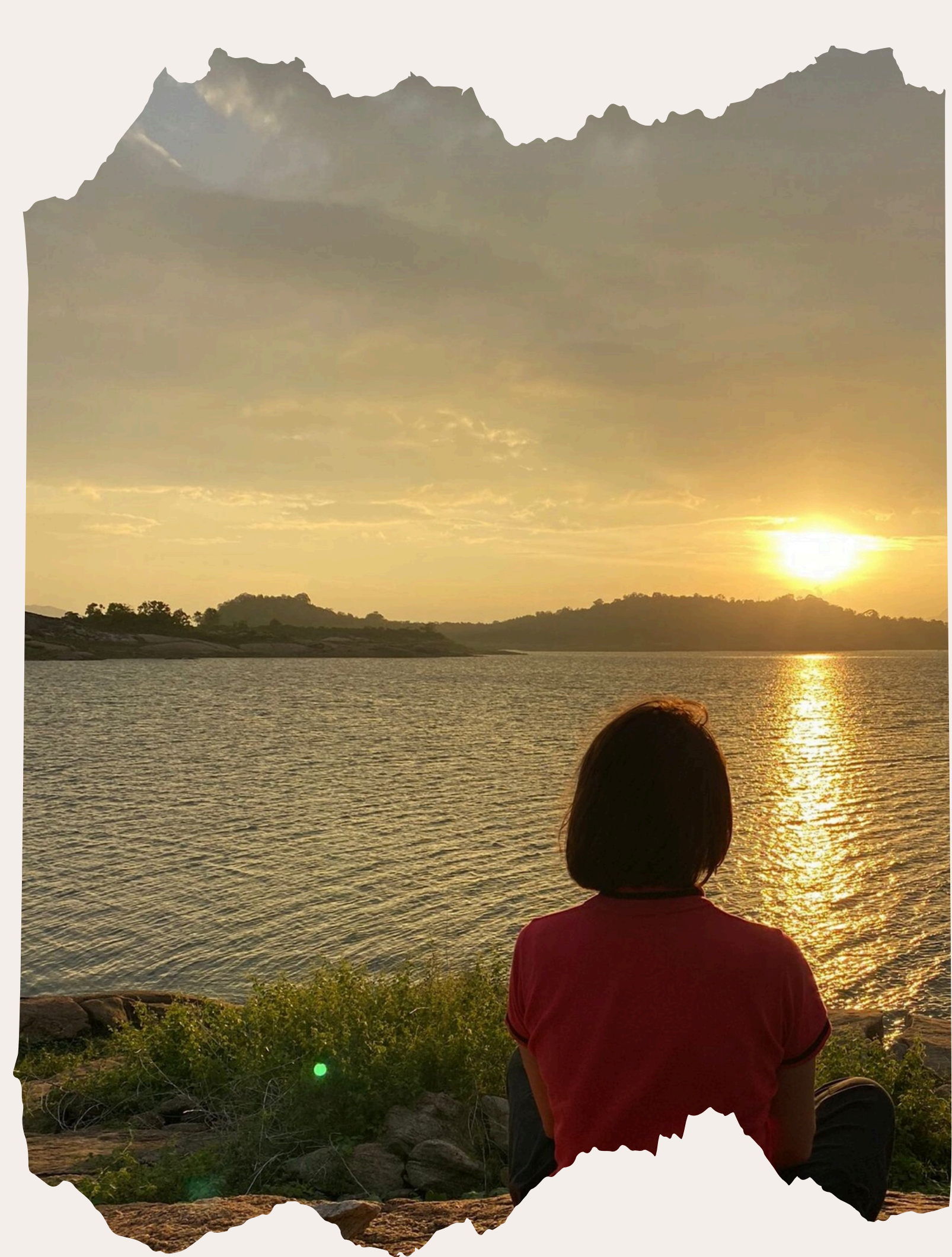
NEXT STEPS

Publish a list of social and environmental sustainability action points and make commitments to deliver them within set time periods.

Supply chain focused - this does not sit within the current B Corp framework but is of vital importance.

Set client-focused environmental sustainability satisfaction targets.

Publish a detailed travel carbon efficiency plan.



Our Key Strategic Objectives '24-'25

1. Controlled growth, bigger and better over higher booking numbers.
2. Fight over-tourism and have a positive impact on our destinations.
3. Manoeuvre our brand to become synonymous with being the operator that travels further, taking clients beyond the ordinary and providing a depth of experience that others don't.

We have identified over 50 actions to achieve these goals. The following slides expand upon 3 of them in focus.

IN FOCUS: POSITIVE IMPACT

As a responsibly-focused long-haul tour operator, we recognise the importance of ensuring that our journeys make as positive an impact as possible, especially in areas of social and environmental focus.

Heritage

Any product where we pay to enter, or make a financial contribution to, a heritage site, landmark, temple or museum to help support and maintain the site.

Conservation First

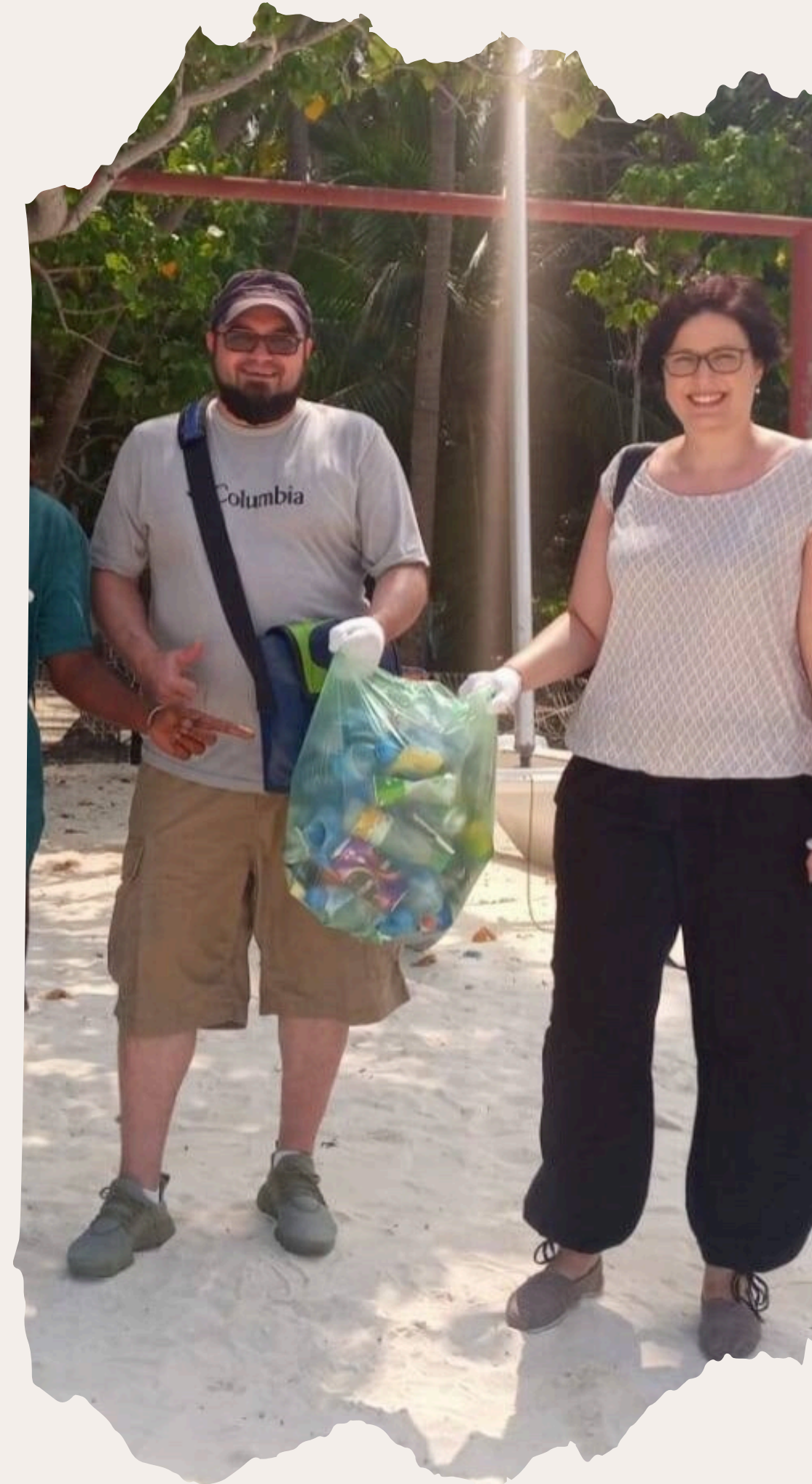
Any project or tour that makes a financial contribution to help the preservation or rehabilitation of the wildlife or environment, to the best of our knowledge. The experience should leave a light footprint, be educational and genuine, with a primary benefit to the environment and wildlife.

CBT - Community Based Tourism

Any product that has a direct positive impact and financially benefits the wider community through tourism to the best of our knowledge. The community also has a say in how the money is spent.

SEP - Social Enterprise Project

Any project that has a direct positive impact on social and environmental issues. Where the project invests profits into enhancing the lives of those communities and creating a better environment for those living within it to the best of our knowledge.



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IN FOCUS: POSITIVE IMPACT

We have identified the number of positive impact days incorporated within the trips we operated over the past 3 (relevant) trading years: 2019, 2023 & 2024*.

We have then used this data to set ourselves meaningful growth targets for the year ahead.

*2024 figs are only those booked by 1st June 2024, estimates made to provide departure figures for the entire year

	2019	2023	2024 (as of 1st June)	Estimate 2024 (all)	2025 target
Community Based Tourism	19	163	157	189	217
Conservation Project	8	312	258	309	355
Heritage focus	55	1055	999	1198	1377
Social Enterprise Project	14	130	122	147	169



IN FOCUS: POSITIVE IMPACT

WHAT NEXT?

1. Introduce a **local focus** category to recognise products that take clients away from tourist hotspots and direct their spend into communities that usually see little or no tourism footfall. Reducing over tourism and spreading the income.

Local Focus

Any experiential product which benefits the community, brings tourism to new areas of a country and supports the local economy through employment, mainly rural in locations. The product should give the visitor an enhanced immersive experience and leave a positive impact on the community.

2. Consider scoring each category as a % of overall days with the objective of increasing the density of positive impact days within our trips regardless of how many trips we sell.



IN FOCUS: CARBON REDUCTION

In 2023 we took the decision not to automatically include the cost of carbon mitigation, or offsetting, for any flights included within our trips, as we feel that the science of the benefits of mitigation is less than conclusive. We also feel that including mitigation costs by default may give travellers a misplaced reassurance in their flying habits.

Our focus is on carbon reduction and travelling in a more responsible manner. We believe that it is imperative that people travel less often and actively look to reduce their air miles, choosing lighter carbon modes of transport where possible.

At the time of writing, we are in the process of obtaining necessary scope 3 carbon impact data from travel we arranged in (2023 and early 2024).

This data will then be used to set ourselves meaningful reduction per booking targets (average miles per booking) by September 24 for our 24/25 financial year.



IN FOCUS: CARBON REDUCTION

WHAT NEXT?

- Set carbon reduction targets and help our clients better understand the specifics of the carbon impact of their trip.
- Develop similar reduction data based objectives for other scope 3 carbon.
- Pull out the data outlined below to inform our reduction targets:

Flights booked by Selective Asia

Short Haul miles flown (intra Asia):

Economy class:

Business class:

Train journeys arranged by Selective Asia

Total miles travelled (not inc Japan):

Total miles travelled (inc Japan):

% of bookings with 1 or more train journeys (not inc Japan):

% of bookings with 1 or more train journeys (inc Japan):

Ratio of train journeys v's domestic (in country) flights:



IN FOCUS: SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

We're taking travel to a better place.

At the heart of our plans over the coming year is the need to take all possible steps to spread the load of tourism in our destinations (i.e. reduce over-tourism) and ensure that we are creating as much positive benefit through our operations as possible. This includes visiting and highlighting the work of CBT projects, spreading the tourism spend to little-visited communities, and supporting conservation and social enterprise initiatives.

We have always loved to work with individuals that are close to the ground, and local people who understand each place's rhythms and challenges. We now want to further this and ensure that we are maximising the benefit opportunities through our business operations.



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IN FOCUS: SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

WHAT NEXT?

In order for us to achieve these ambitions we need to ensure that we are aligned with, and partnering, the right operators and DMC's in each of our destinations, not just at country level but also regional.

We will carry out detailed, extensive, destination-specific supply chain audits, and then make recommendations as to where changes need to be made or additional relationships need to be built.



MOMENTUM OVER PERFECTION

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