

“On Holidays, I Forget Everything... Even My Ecological Footprint”: Sustainable Tourism through Daily Practices or Compartmentalization as a Keyword?

Link to the article :

<https://doi.org/10.3390/su11174731>

This article investigates the paradoxical behavior of environmentally conscious individuals who abandon their sustainable habits during holidays. Through qualitative interviews with 27 young adults in Belgium who report leading eco-friendly lifestyles, the research reveals that many tend to compartmentalize their holiday experience as a time of exception and reward, disconnected from their usual values. The study highlights a psychological process of "justification" where individuals rationalize unsustainable vacation choices—such as long-distance air travel, overconsumption, or excessive waste—as temporary and deserved. Anciaux argues that this compartmentalization undermines broader goals of sustainable tourism, suggesting that sustainable behavior cannot be promoted solely by increasing awareness or individual responsibility. Instead, systemic changes and collective policies are needed to make sustainable holiday options more accessible and appealing. The article contributes to the understanding of tourism's role in environmental impact and calls for reframing ecological holidays as both enjoyable and ethically consistent with one's daily life values.

