

GHT Trekker Impact REPORT NEPAL

JULY 2024 - JUNE 2025

61
TREKKERS



US\$63,100

SPENT IN REMOTE VILLAGES

Average of US\$1000+ per trekker

559
DAYS TREKKING



50
STAFF EMPLOYED



28%*



GHG EMISSIONS REDUCED BY EATING LOCAL MEALS

*Benchmark GHGe = 7,490kgCO2e. By eating local meals without imported ingredients GHGe = 5,409kgCO2e



66%*

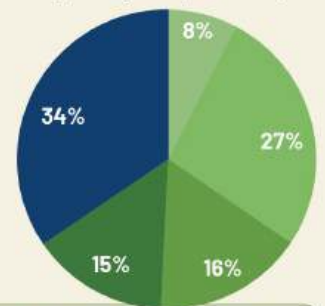
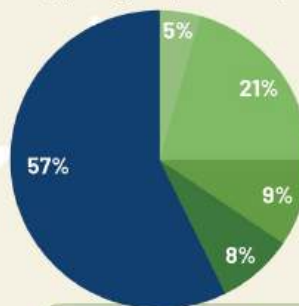


GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS REDUCED BY REDUCING WASTE

*Benchmark waste created 7.6kg/trekker/day. By only relying on locals products, meals and services GHT trekkers create 2.5kg/trekker/day

NEPAL BENCHMARK
Trekking GHG emissions
Total GHGe = 35,931 kgCO2e
(9,534 kgCO2e per trekker)

GHT REDUCED
Local GHG Emissions
Total GHGe = 20,274 kgCO2e
(5,563 kgCO2e per trekker)



Legend: Shelter (light green), F&B (medium green), Flights (dark green), Land Transport (blue-green), Waste 1 (dark blue)



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IMPACT REPORT

Great Himalaya Trail 2024-25





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PEOPLE & PLACES

STEPPING FORWARD

GHT a Force for Good

Over the years we have come to learn that the Impact of your GHT can genuinely be a force for good. Every GHT can help host communities and their guests, come together and cooperate in protecting and regenerating what we all love most, the Himalaya.

For the last 10 years we have been calculating the greenhouse gas emissions (GHGe) of treks and working out social impact assessment systems. We think we have a pretty good feel for both the good and the bad of tourism. This report is an update to signing the Glasgow Declaration in 2023, see Annex 1 for reference. Since our initial social impact surveys in 2020, we have focused on developing GHT Check-In Points that positively impact 6 key areas: Visitor Satisfaction, Social Participation, Ratio of Visitors: Locals, Contribution of Resources, Waste Management, and Workers' Conditions.

In each of these areas we have made progress to generating more positive outcomes for both communities and their heritage.



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There is no doubt that making local choices for food and services has much lower negative and more positive impacts in remote areas:

- *Relying on local services increases income for remote communities.*
- *Relying on local services increases female empowerment in remote communities as most teahouses are owned and operated by women.*
- *Eating meals made with locally sourced ingredients distributes income through remote communities.*
- *GHT Check-In Points receive sustainability and hygiene training, which benefits households and is shared with others in the community.*

Key GHT social impacts for the year July 2024 to June 2024 can now be accurately assessed. Results show a huge benefit through localisation and this provides clear proof that developing GHT Check-In Points that are supported with sustainability training is essential for reducing environmental

- ✓ *Total GHT trekkers = 61, who spent a total number of days trekking = 559*
- ✓ *Total local staff employed = 50*
- ✓ *Total money spent in Remote Villages = US\$63,100 (average of US\$1000+ per trekker)*
- ✓ *Total Waste reduced = 311kg* (*benchmark waste created 464kg. By only relying on locals products, meals and services GHT trekkers create 152kg)*

GHT Check-In Points

To really get to grips with impacts, make the GHT safer, improve accessibility, lower negative environmental impacts and promote positive social impacts, we have started making GHT Check-In Points. These are teahouses along the GHT routes, where you can be sure to find dried foods, fuel (gas and kerosene), a registration book and phone recharging. It's going to take us time to roll out the 100+ that we want to make as we need to negotiate individually with each teahouse owner, but it should be finished mid-2026.



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The Check-In Points are strategically located along trails to support various trekking styles, so we can begin to create positive outcomes for every community and trekker.



Photo courtesy: Kristy and Mike Dixon



Photo courtesy: Cécile Carnimolla Mailhos



Photo courtesy: Narayan Poudel

As part of their contracts, the Check-In Point owners promise to stock foods and fuel for trekkers, display the Go Green posters and aluminium GHT sign, as well as to keep a registration book that is provided each year so we can substantiate claims that folks have completed a GHT trek.

The posters, registration book and Check-In Point signs are made and distributed by Local Operators. From 2026 we will also begin sustainability training programs hosted and paid for by Local Operators in Kathmandu.



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GHT and the Nepal Tourism Board (NTB)

We're hoping the Nepal Tourism Board will also help support the GHT Check-In Point a sustainability and hygiene training program in the future.

Photo: Robin handing over a GHT Check-In Point sign to Mr Deepak Joshi, CEO of NTB



GHT Education Initiatives

There are also basic needs that need to be met; rubbish management, food and water supplies, energy needs, etc that protect and enhance the precious resource of the Himalaya. So, we designed some information posters that are being given to every GHT Check-In Point and that we hope help will establish meaningful priorities for hosts and guests. So far we have printed 50 of each poster, thanks to Map House for donating them.





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What have impacts got to do with your trek and the Great Himalaya Trail?





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VISITOR SATISFACTION

In 2023, we decided that to combat misinformation and to establish realistic expectations to update information on the GHT website with trekking companies that have proven sustainability integrity. So now we only work with selected trekking companies who clearly inform their clients about ground realities.

In our 2025 assessment, we believe that based on the feedback that we have received from trekkers, we have made a positive contribution to visitor satisfaction.

2020 Score: 5/5

2024 Score: 5/5

2025 Score: 5/5

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

In 2020, we found that there were a number of opportunities to further engage with communities and build a stronger bond between them and their guests. There were two key areas that we wanted to work on:

- 1. Co-creating itineraries – this is especially true when using homestays and smaller teahouses and involves identifying new trail options and places to stay.*
- 2. Highlighting new places to stay – this helps to spread the benefits of tourism.*

In 2025, the development of GHT Check-In Points significantly elevates participation between Local Operators and Communities.

2020 Score: 4/5

2024 Score: 4.5/5

2025 Score: 5/5

RATIO OF VISITORS: LOCALS

In 2020, we found that the Everest region in particular was suffering from over-tourism with a ratio of 6:1 in the peak season. Accordingly, our efforts have concentrated on two areas:



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1. *Encouraging trekkers to visit areas away from the main trails in peak season.*
2. *Encouraging trekkers to visit popular areas outside of peak season.*

In 2024-25, there was only 1 trekker from 61 who only visited the Everest region. All other trekkers were dispersed across Nepal and we now regularly see GHT attempts throughout the year!

2020 Score: 2/5

2024 Score: 3/5

2025 Score: 4/5

CONTRIBUTION OF RESOURCES

In 2020, visitor spend in communities was being reduced as trekkers and, more importantly, trekking companies, were purchasing items from Kathmandu and taking them into the mountains.

Creation of GHT Check-In Points direct local payments into communities will enhance incomes. In 2024-5, average spend in communities has risen to 40% of average trek payments, with 61 trekkers contributing to an estimate US\$63,100 to remote communities – that's over US\$1000 per trekker!

2020 Score: 3/5

2024 Score: 4/5

2025 Score: 4/5

WASTE MANAGEMENT

In 2020, waste management was identified as the single greatest problem for communities and the environment. This is a complex problem, involving many stakeholders and cultural norms, making improvement a serious challenge.

One of the areas that generates waste is food packaging and this has been our first priority as it links with several other indicators. Purchasing food locally reduces reliance on imported packaged goods, including snacks like chocolate bars, potato chips and soft drinks, which all come in plastic.



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Creation of GHT Check-In Points reduces packaging waste as guests are encouraged to purchase local meals and avoid plastic-wrapped snacks and drinks.

2020 Score: 1/5

2024 Score: 2/5

2025 Score: 3/5

WORKERS' CONDITIONS

In 2020, we had not included worker conditions in our community survey as they are tied to the trekking companies rather than trekkers or external stakeholders. But as our relationship with Local Operators improves, we have now included them. Our efforts concern keeping loads within prescribed regulation limits and ensuring full training for health and safety.

In 2024-5, we provide financial support for GHT 3 guides to do advanced Wilderness First Aid training (through KEEP). In 2026, we will be updating the website to reflect Worker's Conditions that trekkers need to monitor.

2020 Score: 0/5

2024 Score: 3/5

2025 Score: 3/5



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CLIMATE & PLANET

AIMING 4 ZERO

Our first attempt to measure the GHGe footprints of treks has evolved into a through system that incorporates international emission calculations methodologies. To reflect our focus on in-country emissions we have created a GHT GHGe calculator that is going to be hosted on the website – see the Impact section: www.greathimalayatrail.com/impact

During 2024-25, we have focused on reducing our administration footprint as much as possible as hard data was not available in 2023. We also encourage GHT Trekkers and Local Operators to make greener choices by highlighting impacts – see the Impact of Your Trek on the website for more information. We have made progress with energy consumption through net-zero online hosting and email, as well as hydroelectricity for office power. Unfortunately, we are unable to change from gas heating in our shared office space, but we also remain paper and plastic free.

There is no doubt that making local choices for food and services has much lower negative and more positive impacts in remote areas:

- *Eating meals made with locally sourced ingredients avoids using imported foodstuffs.*
- *Eating meals preferred by locals reduces energy consumption required to cook multiple different recipes.*



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- *Eating locally sourced ingredients and meals reduces food and packing waste.*
- *Avoiding carbonated and imported drinks reduces plastic, tin and glass waste that cannot be locally recycled.*

Research¹ shows a significant reduction in food and other waste when ingredients and meals are localised. Feedback from Tour Operators and the first GHT Check-In Posts confirms that there is a strongly positive impact from ingredient and recipe localisation.

We are planning to make meals and ingredients a feature of using GHT Check-In Points by featuring:

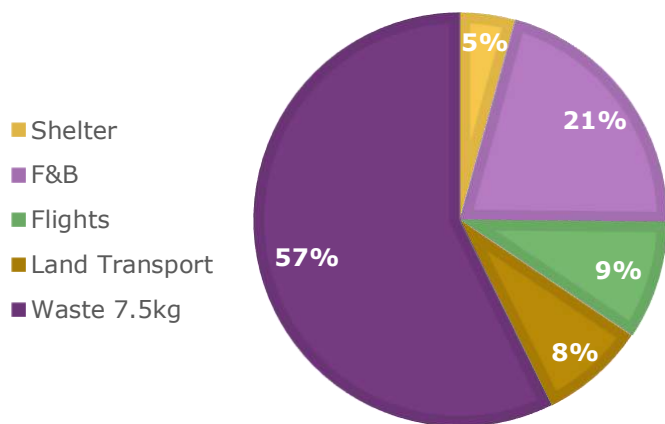
1. *Eat Local – organic ingredients grown nearby.*
2. *Take home a recipe – learn how to make your favourite on-trail meal.*

By highlighting the value of local knowledge, we hope to build stronger relationships between hosts and guests (trekkers) and have a direct impact on Greenhouse Gas emissions associated with food and waste. Our data research this year shows that GHT associated greenhouse gas emission results for trekkers July 2024 to June 2024 were:

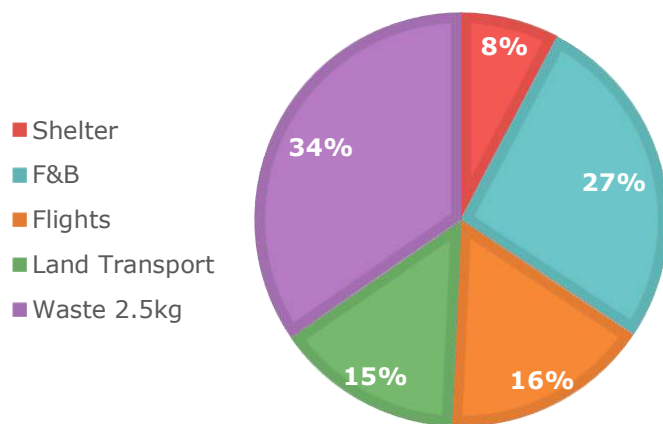
- ✓ *Total GHGe reduced by eating local meals = **-28%** (against benchmark GHGe = 7,490kgCO₂e. By eating local meals without imported ingredients GHGe = 5,409kgCO₂e)*
- ✓ *Total GHGe reduced by reducing waste = **-66%** (against benchmark waste created 7.6kg/trekker/day. By only relying on locals products, meals and services GHT trekkers create 2.5kg/trekker/day)*
- ✓ *Total emissions reduction for 61 trekkers from 35,931kgCO₂e (Nepal benchmark) to 20,274kgCO₂e = **-44%** reductions*

¹ A sustainable solid waste management plan for Sagarmatha (Mt Everest) National Park and Buffer Zone, Nepal. Mountain Research and Development, 40(3). <https://doi.org/10.1659/MRD- JOURNAL- D- 20- 00018.1>

NEPAL BENCHMARK TREKKING GHG EMISSIONS



GHT REDUCED LOCAL GHG EMISSIONS



For the 2024-25 period, total GHT-related GHG emissions were reduced by a massive 80% reduction:

| | Scope 1&2 | Scope 3 | Total per Trekker | % Change |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|---------------|
| 2024-2025 | 506.25kgco2e | 5,564kgCO2e | 99.5kgCO2e | -80.2% |
| 2023-2024 | 150kgco2e | 10,388kgco2e | 502kgco2e | +6.8% |
| Baseline Year 2020 | Unknown | 7,023kgco2e | Est 468kgCO2e | - |

In 2020, we were unable to calculate administrative-based emissions and Scope 3 emissions are estimated for 15 trekkers.



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In 2023-24, our total Scope 1 and 2 emissions did not include office heating, which were unavailable at the time of reporting. Scope 3 emissions were based on GHT trek estimates provided by one local operator.

In 2024-25, we were able to source data for office heating and expanded Scope 3 to include two local operators. Although higher overall, the per trekker emissions are 502kgCO₂e.

Moving forward, our aim is to help local operators reduce Scope 3 emissions through use of EVs in Kathmandu, more efficient cooking methods in the field (replacing old stoves), and less reliance on porters by sourcing more fuels and foods locally through GHT Check-In Points.

BIODIVERSITY

In 2024-25, GHT trekkers contributed **US\$1,500** to biodiversity projects through the purchase of National Park and Conservation Area entry fees.



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OUR GOVERNANCE OPENNESS IS KEY

As a volunteer-based organisation our overheads are very small and covered by commissions from the sale of books and maps, with additional donations.

Since moving web and email to Hetzner, our total monthly bills have been stable at Euro50.81, although average declining sales are a concern driven by decreasing demand for printed products and our lack of resources to digitise content for use on phones. Operating expenses include the website, email, couriers and postage.

We are now attempting to rebuild cash reserves, with the goal of having 24 months operational expenses on hand. We also plan to boost revenue by improving distribution and we are seeking to build affiliate relationships with travel insurance companies.

Our overall scorecard result indicates little improvement from our baseline year of 2020.



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OPERATING PROFIT YE:30-06-2025

| | 2020 | 2024 | 2025 |
|--------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| REVENUES | \$2,885.00 | \$2,245.00 | \$1,977.20 |
| DONATIONS RECEIVED | \$0.00 | \$42.00 | \$10.00 |
| OPERATING EXPENSES | \$2,810.32 | \$1,680.24 | \$1,522.72 |
| DONATIONS PAID | | \$550.00 | \$350.00 |
| OPERATING PROFIT | \$74.68 | \$56.76 | \$114.48 |
| DEPRECIATION | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| INTEREST | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| NET PROFIT | \$74.68 | \$56.76 | \$114.48 |
| TAX | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| PROFIT AFTER TAX | \$74.68 | \$56.76 | \$114.48 |
| | | | |
| OPENING BALANCE | \$634.68 | \$26.40 | \$83.16 |
| CHANGE IN CASH | \$74.68 | \$56.76 | \$114.48 |
| CLOSING BALANCE | \$709.36 | \$83.16 | \$197.64 |

In conclusion, we have made a good start to assessing and monitoring the impact of the GHT, but there is a long way to go and we must do more.

“Striving to do better”



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