

New study attests caravanning a good climate balance

Institute for energy and environmental research analyses greenhouse gas emissions of different types of vacation

Dusseldorf, 4 September 2020

The ifeu, an institute for energy and environmental research, attests caravanning a good climate balance. In a new study, the Heidelberg researchers have analysed the greenhouse gas emissions of various forms of vacation. According to the study, vacationing with a caravan or motor caravan sets less climate damaging emissions free than air travels and hotel accommodations. Even rail travel does not necessarily have a much better climate balance. The ifeu confirms, thereby, the findings of earlier studies conducted by the Öko-Institut.

Not only since the supporters of the "Fridays for Future" movement around Greta Thunberg have regularly taken to the streets worldwide to demonstrate for more climate protection has the topic of greenhouse gas emissions entered people's consciousness. Travel is increasingly being viewed critically. And ever more vacationers think about the effects of their journeys on the environment and the climate. The ifeu, an institute for energy and environmental research, examined the emission of climate damaging CO₂ of different modes of vacation in a new study. Result: Caravaning has a comparatively good climate balance. Two studies by the Öko-Institut, a leading independent research organisation working for a sustainable future, had already come to similar conclusions in 2007 and 2013. In each case, the following components of a vacation trip were analysed: Arrival and departure, accommodation and meals as well as local mobility. The ifeu study additionally takes into account the production process (material balance, energy requirements for production, maintenance) and the disposal of the leisure vehicles.

Less CO₂ than car plus hotel – hardly worse than travel by train

The study is based on a journey of two persons to the island of Rügen. In this case, the caravanning vacation results in a more favourable climatic balance than this would be the case with a journey with a passenger car and an overnight accommodation in a hotel. It is true that motor caravans and combinations of passenger car plus caravan emit more greenhouse gases on arrival and departure due to their size and mass. However, this is more than compensated for by the lower CO₂ emissions of the accommodation – in this case a campsite or motor caravan pitch. This is because hotel accommodation releases up to ten times as many CO₂ equivalents per person a stay on a campsite or motor caravan pitch. The shorter the journey to and from the hotel and the longer the stay, the more favourable the comparison is for caravanning. In the assumed Rügen trip, not even the journey by train (if you stay overnight in a hotel) turns out to be much more climate-friendly than the caravanning trip. The same applies to long-distance buses. The CO₂ saving by the climate-friendlier arrival and departure with the public long-distance passenger traffic is not sufficient to compensate for the higher greenhouse gas emissions of the accommodation. "The result surprised even us, since train journeys are considered particularly climate-friendly," says graduate transport engineer Fabian Bergk, from the mobility department at ifeu.

Caravanning more climate-friendly than air travel

The renowned Heidelberg Institute also analysed the climate balance of a trip abroad, specifically to southern France. Here the researchers made among other things a comparison with a flight plus a stay in a hotel. The Caravanning journey lies clearly in front regarding the impact on the climate. The effect of an overnight stay on a motor caravan pitch is even greater than on a campsite. "The ifeu study confirms what earlier studies have already shown: Compared to other forms of travel, caravanning is an environmentally and climate-friendly form of vacation – especially for discovering the most beautiful parts of Germany," says Daniel Onggowinarso, Managing Director of the caravanning industry association CIVD.

Over 40 years of expertise in environmental research

The ifeu conducts research worldwide on all major environmental and sustainability issues. With over 40 years of experience, it is one of the most important ecological research institutions in Germany. The non-profit institute undertakes interdisciplinary research to find answers to urgent sustainability issues. It employs over 80 staff from the natural sciences, engineering and social sciences at its sites in Heidelberg and Berlin.

For further information about caravanning, please visit our web sites:

caravaning-info.de or www.civd.de, where there are also photos available for downloading.

Press contact:

Marc Dreckmeier
Director Marketing & PR
Caravaning Industrie Verband e.V. (CIVD)
Hamburger Allee 14
60486 Frankfurt am Main
Germany
Phone: +49 69 704039-18
marc.dreckmeier@civd.de

Press contact:

Daniel Rätz
Marketing & PR Manager
Caravaning Industrie Verband e.V. (CIVD)
Hamburger Allee 14
60486 Frankfurt am Main
Germany
Phone: +49 69-704039-28
daniel.raetz@civd.de

About Caravaning Industrie Verband e. V.

Caravaning Industrie Verband (CIVD) is the trade association for the industrial arm of the German caravanning sector. Our members include German and European caravan and motor caravan manufacturers, numerous caravan and motor caravan supply vendors and service providers, as well as public institutions and associations. Founded in 1962, CIVD represents the interests of the German caravanning industry for all matters of concern to its members, through lobbying and other communication measures directed at German and European political institutions and government authorities. The CIVD is also the ideal sponsor for CARAVAN SALON, the world's largest caravanning industry trade show. In this capacity CIVD plays a pivotal role in promoting the progress and development of the European caravanning industry.