

# Abstract

## **Tourism, Time and Tracking: GIS for Understanding Tourist Flows**

**Track:** Business, Banking, and Insurance

**Author(s):** Pip Forer, Jinfeng Zhao

Tourism is a major factor in many aspects of many countries' economies. Increasingly tourists seek flexible itineraries and can be classed as FITs (Free Independent Travelers). In New Zealand most travelers are FITs, since the country is distant from its markets but eminently tourable, and while sheep numbers have declined in the last decade, tourist numbers have boomed. Tourists are economically important, but also impact the environment and local communities, and FITs reach out to most regions of the country. This paper explores how GIS can assist in understanding the flows of tourists, both individually and as an aggregate. What is visited, when, and in what sequence are all important questions. This paper provides illustrations of how individual and aggregate flows can be visualized and queried to give significant extra knowledge on tourist behavior.

### **Pip Forer**

University of Auckland  
School of Geography and Environmental Sciences  
10, Symonds St,  
Auckland PB 92019  
New Zealand

**Phone:** +64 9 3737599

**Fax:** +64 9 3737434

**E-mail:** [p.forer@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:p.forer@auckland.ac.nz)

### **Jinfeng Zhao**

University of Auckland  
School of Geograohy and Environmental Sciences  
10 Symonds St  
Auckland PB 92019  
New Zealand

**Phone:** +64 3737 599