



TRAILS OF INDOCHINA

*Artisans of bespoke journeys to
Southeast Asia & beyond*

Sustainability Policy





SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

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Approved by Board Of Management

As a Travel Destination Management Company, Trails of Indochina engages with various stakeholders in the tourism industry, including clients, tour guides, travel agencies, hotels, transport companies, restaurants, and attractions. We understand the crucial role we play in promoting sustainable tourism. Therefore, we are committed to implementing and promoting good sustainability practices to minimize negative impacts and maximize positive impacts on our internal as well as tourism operations. We aim to influence our clients and partners to do the same. Our sustainability policy is organized into 10 themes, each consisting of a set of principles and corresponding practical actions.

1. Sustainability management & Legal compliance

1.1. We commit to sustainability management, practiced by these following actions:

- To have an appointed employee who is responsible for Sustainability Coordinator tasks and completes the Travelife basic trainings;
- To have a Sustainability Mission Statement that is published on our website and communicated to clients, suppliers and partners;
- To have Sustainability Committee including top management to make company level decisions regarding sustainability;
- To conduct Baseline Assessment of the company's performance on sustainable practices;
- To have an accessible and written Sustainability Policy including human rights, risk and crisis management, quality, and employee-related health and safety aspects which aims for a reduction of the negative social, cultural, economic and environmental impacts of the company's activities;
- To have Sustainability Action Plan with clear targets, actions, measures, responsibilities and time planning;
- To ensure that all staff are fully aware of our Sustainability Policy and are committed to implementing and improving it. New staffs are trained by Product & Sustainability Department;
- To communicate to all suppliers about Sustainability and encourage them to join the sustainability direction by attaching Sustainability Policy in the contract;

- To create Sustainability Pioneer Team which is opportunity for employees to actively contribute in sustainability implementation and improvements
- To develop documented procedures to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the sustainability policy, objectives and targets;
- To ensure company's transparency in sustainability by public reporting and communicating.

1.2. We commit to complying with all national legislation, regulations and codes of practice.

2. Internal management: Social policy and Human rights

2.1. We commit to sustainable internal management by having clear written and well-communicated social policy that includes the following principles:

- To grant employees the freedom of employment and contract termination with notice (ideally minimum one month) and without penalty
- To include labor conditions according to national labor law and a job description in the employment contract;
- Wage rate is to be mentioned in the contract and equals or above the national legal wage;
- To determinate and compensate of overtime working hours based on agreement;
- To provide medical and liability insurance according to the national law;
- To grant employees fixed paid yearly holiday and sick leave and unpaid annual leave allowance;
- To have health and safety policy for employees which complies to national legal standards;
- To obey national concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment.

2.2. We commit to practice human rights by ensure the enforcement of following practices:

- To declare not to hinder trade union membership, collective labor negotiations and representation of members by trade unions.

3. Internal management: Environment and Community relations

We commit to practice environmental protection and enhance community relations by ensuring the enforcement of following practices:

- Set copy and printing machines by default to double-sided printing or other forms of paper saving modes;
- Print brochures on environmentally friendly paper, with a printing company that works with a certified environmental management system, if locally available at reasonable costs;
- Have an active commitment to measure, monitor and reduce energy consumption;

- Purchase or locally produce green energy and energy efficient lighting for all areas, when available;
- Switch off Lights and equipment when not in use, use automatic switch on/off system with timers or movement sensors and set equipment by default in the energy saving mode, where this is feasible;
- Prefer low energy equipment when buying new items, including considerations of cost and quality;
- Comply with the national legislation concerning waste disposal;
- Develop and implement a solid waste reduction and recycling policy, with quantitative goals to reduce none-useable or recyclable waste;
- Take action to reduce the amount of (non-refillable) plastic bottles of drinking water for office use;
- Separate all materials which can be recycled and organize collection and proper disposal;
- Recycle or properly dispose of batteries;
- Comply with national legislation of wastewater treatment, which should be reused or released safely;
- Reduce transport related impacts by tele-work, tele/video meetings, work- at-home policies or other means;
- Provide periodic guidance, training and/or information to all staff members (including field staff), about their roles and responsibilities with respect to internal environmental practices including water, energy saving, paper, and waste issues;
- Comply with land use, zoning and protected or heritage area laws and regulations; when planning, designing, constructing, renovating, operating or demolishing company buildings and infrastructure;

4. Partner agencies

We conduct an inventory of our key partners and formulate a policy to enhance their sustainability. Our goal is to make sustainable development a tangible reality for our key business partners.

5. Transports

We try to ensure that vehicles used for tours produce no more than average pollution levels. We recognize that transportation is a crucial aspect of sustainable tourism and strive to minimize pollution levels.

We commit to this by:

- Selecting the most sustainable options considering price and comfort when selecting transport options to the destination;
- Considering and giving preference to more sustainable alternatives when selecting transport options for transfers and excursions in the destination, taking into account price, comfort, and practical considerations;

6. Accommodations

We aim for a fully sustainable tourism supply chain and motivate accommodation partners to adopt sustainable practices to achieve this. Sustainability is crucial for the tourism industry's longevity and the planet's preservation.

We commit to this by:

- Motivating and encouraging partner accommodations to become sustainably certified;
- Giving clear preference to accommodations that work with internationally acknowledged (e.g. GSTC recognised) and/or Travelife certification;
- Stimulating contracted accommodation partners to participate in sustainability trainings and other relevant events.
- Supporting collaborative initiatives with other tour operators and/or stakeholders to promote sustainability among accommodations in destinations;
- Ensuring that through our accommodation supply chain, the rights of children are respected and safeguarded by;
 - Having a clause in contracts throughout the value chain stating a common repudiation and zero tolerance policy of sexual exploitation of children;
 - Having a clause dedicated to this aspect in their contract that enables the travel company to end the contractual agreement prematurely if the accommodation supplier does not take adequate measures to prevent sexual exploitation of children;
 - Training employees in children's rights, the prevention of sexual exploitation and how to report suspected cases;
 - Supporting, collaborating with, and engaging stakeholders in the prevention of sexual exploitation of children;

7. Excursions and activities

We prioritize animal and community welfare and strive for tours with minimal impact. Our goal is to safeguard the authenticity of communities and the natural environment, while strongly opposing harm to wildlife and pollution.

We commit to this by:

- Having an inventory of environmentally or culturally sensitive excursions which are offered in each destination;
- Developing and implementing a policy to improve the sustainability of its excursion base which advises guests on behaviour standards during excursions and activities with a focus on respecting the local culture, nature, and environment;
- Communicating our sustainability objectives and requirements to contracted and other relevant excursion suppliers by distributing this information via code of conducts, guidelines, representative agents, social media, email, discussions, and/or meetings, to minimise negative visitor impact and maximise enjoyment;
- Preferring excursions that operate based on acknowledged and controlled sustainability standards (e.g., Travelife, GSTC).

- Not offering any excursions that harm humans, animals, plants, natural resources such as water and energy, or which are socially and culturally unacceptable;
- Not offering any excursions in which wildlife is held captive, except for properly regulated activities in compliance with local, national, and international law;
- Not being involved with companies that harvest, consume, display, sell, or trade wildlife species unless it is part of a regulated activity that ensures that their utilisation is sustainable and in compliance with local, national, and international law;
- Not offering any excursions in which interactions with free-roaming wildlife do not comply with relevant codes of conduct;
- Having skilled and/or certified guides to guide our guests in sensitive cultural sites, heritage sites, or ecologically sensitive destinations;

8. Tour leaders, local representatives and guides

We prioritize employing locals and creating a fair, safe working environment that supports and respects local communities.

We commit to this by:

- Ensuring that all employees have a written employment contract, including labour conditions and a job description, and fully understand the terms and conditions;
- Paying tour leaders, local representatives, guides, porters and other local staff contracted by us at least a living wage that is equal to or above the legal minimum or relevant industry standard;
- Ensuring that our local employees are informed on relevant aspects of our sustainability policy and comply with it, by newsletters, references or supplements to contracts, emails, or training and information sessions;
- Offering a special sustainable travel module in the trainings program for local tour guides and representatives, in which the main responsible tourism aspects are brought to attention followed by the role expected from the employees. This module will also include knowledge regarding the destination and its relevant sustainability aspects;
- Having our tour leaders, local representatives and guides inform clients on relevant sustainability matters in the destination (e.g. protection of flora, fauna, and cultural heritage, resource use), social norms and values (e.g. tips, dressing code and photography) and human rights (e.g. sexual exploitation).

9. Destinations

Our aim is to ensure sustainable development at the destinations where we operate by maximizing positive impacts and minimizing negative impacts.

We commit to this by:

- Consider sustainability aspects in destinations in the selection of new destinations and in the product development process. We intend to provide social and environmental benefits to the communities we visit. We understand the importance of visitor dispersion and of not exceeding the

carrying capacity of destinations; therefore, we encourage the promotion of lesser-known areas (with the approval of the local community), to prevent over tourism and its negative impacts;

- Not promoting souvenirs which contain threatened flora and fauna species as indicated in the CITES treaty and the IUCN 'Red List'; or historic and archaeological artefacts (except as permitted by law).

10. Customer communication & protection

Ensuring the welfare and protection of our clients is of utmost importance to us. We are committed to maintaining clear and constant communication and providing high levels of protection throughout our clients' experiences.

We ensure that no marketing and advertisement document, statement, or other publication, shall contain misleading information, over advertise and under deliver. We guarantee that all our staff are aware of and ensure that what is offered can be delivered to our clients with ease.

In order to ensure this, we make the following commitments prior to booking:

- Ensure that customer privacy is not compromised;
- Comply with relevant standards and voluntary codes of conduct in marketing and advertising messages, and not promise more than is delivered;
- Make product and price information clear, complete and accurate, with regard to the company and its products and services, including sustainability claims;
- Provide destination information, including sustainability aspects, which is factually correct, balanced and complete;
- Inform the customer about sustainable alternatives concerning accommodations, excursions, package holidays and transport options, if available;
- Clearly inform (potential) direct customers, about sustainability commitments and actions.
- After booking and during holidays, we commit to:
 - Provide information to consumers about the natural surroundings, local culture and cultural heritage in the holiday destination;
 - Inform clients about key sustainability aspects and issues in the destination and receive recommendations on how to make a positive contribution;
 - Inform clients about risks and precautions related to health and safety matters in the destination;
 - Keep a contact person and a telephone number permanently available for emergency situations;
 - Train personnel and keep guidelines available, on how to deal with emergency situations;
 - Provide clients with documented guidelines and/or codes of conduct for sensitive excursions and activities, to minimize negative visitor impact and maximize enjoyment. The guidelines are based upon international and national good practice and locally agreed;
 - Provide clients with information about commercial, sexual or any other form of exploitation and harassment, particularly of children and adolescents;

- Inform clients about applicable legislation concerning the purchasing, sales, import and export of historic or religious artefacts and articles containing materials of threatened flora and/or fauna in the destination;
- Motivate clients to use local restaurants and shops (where appropriate);
- Inform clients on sustainable transport options in destinations, when feasible.

After holidays, we commit to:

- Measure systematically client satisfaction and take into account the results, for service and product improvements;
- Have clear procedures in case of complaints from clients.

We will continue to monitor and adjust this policy in accordance with the company direction and industry development. We welcome and appreciate any constructive comments from relevant parties that can help us improve this policy via sustainability@trailsofindochina.com.

