

Sustainability policy

TravelTailors, DMC in Portugal, involved with various tourism entities such as tour guides, travel agencies, hotels, passenger transport companies, restaurants, leisure and cultural activities; TravelTailors understands its role and influence in the sustainable development of tourism. We aim to follow, implement and promote good sustainability practices to maximise positive impacts and in turn minimise negative impacts on tourism from our operations and influence our clients and partners to do the same.

Our sustainability policy is divided into 10 themes. Each theme consists of a set of principles and practical actions accordingly.

This policy applies to all operations, from management to the executive level of our company. Employees, suppliers and partners are expected to fully uphold the objectives of this policy wherever possible within current budgets - TravelTailors will do everything in its power to put all objectives into practice.

1. Sustainability Management and Legal Compliance

We are committed to sustainability management, practiced through the following actions:

- Having a designated employee responsible for the tasks of the sustainability coordinator;
- Having a sustainability mission statement that will be communicated to customers, partners and suppliers;
- To have an accessible and written sustainability policy that aims at reducing the negative social, cultural, economic and environmental impacts of the company's activities - includes aspects related to employee health and safety;
- Collaborate and actively engage in external forums and working groups supporting sustainability in tourism;
- Conduct baseline assessment of the company's performance in sustainable practices;
- Have sustainability guides and evaluation system to identify sustainability performance of key suppliers/partners;
- Have sustainability action plan with clear targets, actions, measures, responsibilities and time planning;
- Develop documented procedures to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the sustainability policy, objectives and targets;

- Ensure company transparency in sustainability through reporting and public communications;
- Ensure that all employees are fully aware of our Sustainability Policy and are committed to implementing and improving it every day.

We are committed to complying with all national legislation, regulations and codes of practice.

2. Internal management: social policy and human rights

We commit to sustainable internal management through a clear, written and well-communicated social policy that includes the following principles:

- Grant employees freedom of employment and contract termination with notice (ideally minimum one month) and without penalty;
- Include working conditions in accordance with national legislation and a job description in the employment contract;
- Salary should be mentioned in the contract and equal or higher than the national legal salary;
- Grant employees fixed paid annual leave and sick leave and unpaid annual leave allowance;
- Have an employee health and safety policy that meets national legal standards;
- Have first aid kits and trained personnel available at all relevant locations;
- Comply with national standards regarding Minimum Age for Admission to Employment;
- Have documented and effective procedures for employees to express their complaints and expectations;
- Have a clear and effectively communicated disciplinary procedure for employees;
- To have a system for regular measurement of employee satisfaction;
- Provide regular orientation and training to employees on health and safety roles, rights and responsibilities;
- Create opportunities for students to participate in work placement;
- To encourage employment opportunities for people with special needs;

We commit to practicing human rights by ensuring that the following practices are applied:

- Declare not to hinder trade union membership, collective bargaining and representation of members by trade unions;
- To prohibit discrimination, with respect to recruitment, conditions of employment, access to training and senior positions, or promotion on the basis of gender, race, age, disability, ethnicity, religion/beliefs or sexual orientation;
- To ensure that all employees have equal opportunities and access to resources and opportunities for personal development through regular training, education.

3. Internal Management: Environment and Community Relations

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

- Actively reduce, or even eliminate, the use of consumer goods and disposables;
- Favour the purchase of sustainable goods and services, office supplies and catering;
- Define a 100% paper-free office;
- Implement measures to reduce brochure waste or an 'internet only' policy;
- Have an active commitment to control and reduce energy consumption;
- Calculate and offset CO2 emissions and compare different periods;
- Purchase energy efficient lighting tools for all areas, where available;
- Switch off lights and equipment when not in use, use automatic on/off with timers or motion sensors and set equipment by default in energy saving mode when possible;
- Prefer energy-efficient equipment when purchasing new items, including cost and quality considerations;
- Have an active policy to reduce water consumption, implemented and monitored on a monthly basis;
- Use sustainable water sources, which do not harm environmental flows;
- Install water-saving equipment in bathrooms,
- Comply with national legislation regarding waste disposal;
- Develop and implement a solid waste reduction and recycling policy;

- Take measures to reduce the amount of packaging materials and not to supply packaging materials that are not recyclable or biodegradable;
- Separate all materials that can be recycled and organise collection and proper disposal;
- Recycle or dispose of batteries properly;
- Comply with national legislation for the treatment of waste water, which must be reused or discharged safely;
- Reduce transport related impacts through teleworking, tele/video meetings, home working policies or other means;
- Properly maintain and check company motor vehicles to reduce emissions and energy use and ensure they meet legal emission standards;
- Provide regular guidance and information to all employees on their roles and responsibilities with regard to internal environmental practices;
- Contribute to the protection and preservation of important historical, archaeological, cultural and spiritual properties and sites and not impede access to them by local residents.

4. Partner Agency

Based on an inventory of our key partner agencies, we have developed and implemented a policy to improve the sustainability of our partner agencies. Our aim is to make sustainable development concrete for each and every one of our business partners.

We commit to this wherever possible by:

- Maintaining a listing of the sustainability practices of partner lodges and agents;
- Trying to work only with organisations that really implement sustainability in their tourism policy;
- Minimising the ecological footprint of the office by commuting mostly by public transport, working as paperless as possible, separating waste and using certified recycled paper;
- Raise awareness of sustainable consumption among key partners by organising (online) campaigns and training;
- Inform key partners about Travelife and national tourism standards;

- Regularly assess the sustainability practices of our main partners to ensure that their practices are truly sustainable;
- Throughout the process of developing and operating our travel packages, TravelTailors expects that the partner agency will act in the best interests of the surrounding communities and the environment, as well as our guests.

5. Transport

We try to ensure that the vehicles used on the tours do not cause above average pollution. We believe that transport is an important aspect of sustainable tourism and we do our best to lower the average pollution level.

We commit to this wherever possible 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 tours at the destination, taking into account price, comfort and practical considerations;
- Integrate and/or promote one or more sustainable holiday products/packages based on a recognised methodology, including sustainable transport, sustainable accommodation and sustainable activities.

6. Accommodation

We seek to achieve a tourism production chain that is fully sustainable. Partner accommodations play an important role in this, and are encouraged and motivated to adopt sustainable practices.

We commit wherever possible to:

Selecting lodges that meet sustainability and quality standards, such as:

- - Do they have a signed sustainability contract?
- - Do they have a water saving program?
- Do they have an energy saving programme?
- Do they have a waste management programme?

- Do they have an energy reduction system?
- Do they have a sustainable supply chain?
- Do they have a child protection policy?
- Do they train staff in Health and Safety?
- Motivate and encourage partner accommodations to become sustainably certified;
- Prefer and select lodges that are locally owned and managed;
- Select accommodations that employ local communities;
- Encouraging accommodations to follow best practices/training on responsible tourism;
- Clearly and actively communicate our sustainability objectives and requirements in relation to contracted accommodation and other relevant accommodation;
- Give clear preference to accommodation operating with internationally recognised certification (e.g. recognised GSTC) and/or Travelife;
- Ensure that, through our accommodation supply chain, the rights of children are respected and safeguarded;
- Work with accommodation and restaurants that incorporate elements of local art, architecture or cultural heritage; respecting the intellectual property rights of local communities.

7. Excursions and activities

We value animal and community welfare extremely high and aim for tours that leave only a small footprint. We are safeguarding the authenticity of communities and the natural environment, and are strongly against harming wildlife and polluting the environment.

We commit ourselves wherever possible to:

- Advising guests on standards of behaviour during excursions and activities with a focus on respecting local culture, nature and the environment;
- Communicating our sustainability objectives and requirements to contractors and other relevant tour providers, distributing this information through representative agents, social media, and email, to minimize negative visitor impact and maximize enjoyment;
- Have qualified and/or certified guides to guide our guests to sensitive cultural sites, historical sites, or ecologically sensitive destinations;
- Promoting and advising our guests on excursions and activities that directly involve and support local communities through the purchase of goods or services, traditional crafts and local (food) production methods, or visiting social projects.

8. Tour leaders, representatives and local guides

We aim to involve as many local residents as possible and employ them in the tourism business. We advocate a fair and safe working environment that supports and respects local communities.

We commit ourselves wherever possible to:

- Ensuring that our local partners comply with all applicable international, national and local laws and regulations, minimum industry standards and any other relevant statutory requirements, whatever the more stringent requirements;

- Commit ourselves to, wherever possible, employing qualified local guides, drivers or other local staff, paying them handsomely within set rates.

- Ensure that our tour guides, hosts and other contracted staff are qualified and regularly trained;

- We understand that guides are the intermediaries between guests and the socio-cultural and environmental context of the destination, imparting appropriate behaviour to them. Therefore, we ensure that all guides hired or conducting tours on behalf of TravelTailors are regularly trained and knowledgeable on the sustainability topics of the destination;

- Our guides are specifically trained on the critical issue of sexual exploitation of children in tourism.

9. Destination

We aim to maximise positive impacts and minimise negative impacts on the destination to ensure the sustainable development of the places where we operate.

We are committed wherever possible to

- Considering sustainability aspects in the selection process of new destinations and possibly offering alternative, unconventional destinations;

- Not select destinations where tourism has structural negative local effects, (unless company involvement results in clear offsetting effects);

- Consider selecting new destinations, accessible by more sustainable means of transport;

- Comply with land use planning regulations, protected areas and legally based heritage areas. Also with destination management strategies of local, regional and national authorities;
- Support initiatives that improve relationships between accommodation and local producers;
- Influence and support local government (where possible, together with other travel companies and stakeholders) in relation to sustainability, destination planning and management, natural resource use and socio-cultural issues;
- Encourage guests to buy responsibly and educate them about illegal/prohibited souvenirs.

10. Communication and customer protection

The welfare and information of customers are very important to us. TravelTailors guarantees clear and constant communication and high protection to our customers.

Before booking, we commit to:

- Providing a company guideline for customer consultation, which is followed by the customer's advisors;
- Ensuring that the client's privacy is not compromised;
- Complying with relevant standards and voluntary codes of conduct in marketing and advertising messages, and not promising more than is delivered;
- Make product and pricing information clear, complete and accurate, with regard to the company and its products and services, including sustainability claims;
- Provide destination information, including sustainability aspects, that is fair, balanced and complete;
- Promote sustainable (certified) accommodations, tours, packages and/or transportation options;
- Inform the client about sustainable accommodation alternatives, tours, holiday packages and transport options, if available.

After booking and during the holiday, we commit to:

- Provide information to consumers through our representatives about the natural surroundings, local culture and cultural heritage of the holiday destination;
- Inform consumers about the main sustainability aspects and issues at the destination and receive recommendations on how to make a positive contribution;
- Inform customers about risks and precautions related to health and safety issues at the destination;
- Keep a contact person and telephone number available at all times for emergency situations;
- Train staff and keep available guidance on how to deal with emergency situations;
- Inform customers of the applicable legislation regarding the purchase, sale, import and export of historical or religious artefacts and items containing endangered flora and/or fauna materials at the destination;
- Motivate clients to use local restaurants and shops (where appropriate);
- Inform customers of sustainable transport options in destinations, where feasible;

After the holiday, we commit to:

- Systematically measure customer satisfaction and take the results into account, for service and product improvements;
- Include sustainability as an integral part of the customer satisfaction survey;
- Have clear procedures in place in case of customer complaints.

Contact

The TravelTailors team is responsible for the application of this sustainability policy; as well as in its promotion and implementation in the respective departments.

The coordination of the implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the Sustainability Coordinator, Paula Alves, contactable via paulaalves@travel-tailors.com.

This policy comes into force on 1 May 2023.