

# **Sustainability Policy of Travel Agent Support**

As a travel company that operates both as a tour operator and a ground handler, Travel Agent Support is involved in nearly all facets of tourism, from clients to land services and suppliers. We recognize our critical role and far-reaching impact in promoting sustainable tourism. Therefore, we made this sustainable policy and are firmly committed to upholding and advancing sustainable development principles.

Our goal is to adopt, implement, and promote best practices in sustainable tourism, maximizing the positive impacts of our operations while minimizing negative effects.

By sharing our sustainable practices, we actively encourage our clients and partners to join us in embracing sustainable tourism practices.

This policy is divided into ten chapters, each outlining our core principles and specific measures in sustainable tourism.

## **Chapter 1 Sustainability Management and Legal Compliance**

At Travel Agent Support, we understand that sustainable management is essential for long-term business success. We are dedicated to integrating sustainable development principles into our operations, reducing the negative impacts of our business on society, culture, the economy, and the environment, while ensuring the health and safety of our employees.

### **Actions We Have Taken:**

- Established a Sustainable Tourism Development Coordination Team directly overseen by the General Manager, with representatives from key departments such as marketing, product development, sales, procurement, and administration. Each department head is responsible for coordinating sustainability efforts.
- Developed and implemented a sustainable development policy that is easily accessible, aimed at reducing the negative impacts of our operations on society, culture, the economy, and the environment, while addressing employee health and safety.

- Communicated our sustainable tourism policy to key clients, partners, and suppliers to ensure their understanding and support.
- Participated in industry forums, staying updated on sustainable tourism trends, and serving as a member of the PATA (Pacific Asia Travel Association) Executive Committee to promote sustainable tourism in the Asia-Pacific region.
- Conducted benchmark assessments of our sustainable practices and developed clear action plans with specific goals, measures, responsible parties, and timelines to ensure effective implementation.
- Created tracking tools and assigned oversight personnel to ensure the enforcement of our sustainable tourism policy, maintaining transparency through public reporting and communication.
- Ensured all employees are fully informed and trained on our sustainability policy, fostering continuous improvement.
- Complied with all relevant laws, regulations, and national sustainable development guidelines to ensure legal compliance and contribute to the industry's sustainable growth.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Internal Management: Social Policy and Human Rights**

We believe that happy employees provide more meaningful and enjoyable travel experiences for our clients. Therefore, we maintain clear human resources policies to ensure a healthy and safe working environment.

#### **Actions We Have Taken:**

- Grant employees the right to freely choose employment and terminate contracts with reasonable notice (ideally at least one month) without penalty.
- Clearly state employment conditions and job descriptions in contracts, in compliance with national labor laws.
- Ensure wages meet or exceed the national minimum wage and compensate overtime in accordance with labor laws.
- Provide employees with social insurance, including pension, medical, unemployment, work injury, maternity, and housing fund benefits.

- Offer paid annual leave, sick leave, maternity leave, and nursing leave, as well as travel allowances for business trips.
- Adhere to national health and safety policies, providing free annual health check-ups, and equipping offices with first aid supplies and trained personnel.
- Comply with minimum working age regulations and maintain clear disciplinary procedures communicated to all employees.
- Provide regular training on job responsibilities, rights, and health and safety, such as fire safety training.
- Partner with universities to offer internships and learning opportunities, and encourage employment opportunities for individuals with special needs.

**We are committed to upholding human rights by:**

- Allowing employees to join unions, engage in collective bargaining, and participate in union representation.
- Participating in and adhering to industry collective labor agreements where applicable.
- Prohibiting discrimination based on gender, race, age, disability, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation in recruitment, employment conditions, training, promotion, or advancement.
- Ensuring equal opportunities and resources for all employees to pursue personal development through regular training and education.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Internal Management: Environment and Community Relations**

As our business grows, we are determined to reduce the negative environmental impacts of our operations and increase positive contributions to the environment and communities. We aim to preserve the beauty of our home for future generations.

**Actions We Have Taken:**

- Reduce the use of single-use consumables and prioritize sustainable products and services.

- Purchase bulk products to minimize packaging and set printers and copiers to double-sided or paper-saving modes by default.
- Use non-toxic, biodegradable cleaning materials and products with eco-labels.
- Promote paperless offices and reduce brochure waste.
- Monitor and reduce energy consumption by recording utility costs and using green energy and energy-efficient lighting.
- Turn off lights and equipment when not in use, using automatic switches, and set devices to energy-saving modes.
- Prioritize low-energy equipment when purchasing new devices.
- Implement water conservation policies, install water-saving devices, and conduct annual assessments.
- Comply with national waste disposal regulations and promote internal waste sorting and recycling.
- Reduce packaging materials and avoid non-recyclable or non-biodegradable packaging.
- Minimize the use of single-use plastic bottles in offices and properly recycle or dispose of batteries and printer cartridges.
- Comply with national wastewater treatment regulations and use eco-friendly materials for office renovations.
- Reduce pollution from company facilities and promote sustainable employee travel policies, such as using public transportation or remote work options.
- Maintain company vehicles to reduce emissions and ensure compliance with environmental regulations.
- Adhere to land use, zoning, and heritage protection laws when planning, constructing, or renovating buildings.
- Design and construct new buildings or renovations based on sustainable practices and locally available materials.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Partners**

Travel Agent Support is committed to providing meaningful and immersive travel experiences while encouraging clients to explore destinations sustainably. We strive to avoid harmful impacts on society, culture, and nature and expect our suppliers to share this commitment.

#### **Actions We Have Taken:**

- Developed a policy to enhance partner sustainability and communicated it to the procurement department.
- Prioritize partners with international sustainability certifications and strong environmental, social, and economic practices.
- Support local businesses and entrepreneurs to promote community economic growth.
- Collaborate with small and medium-sized enterprises to expand their reach and foster development.
- Build long-term relationships with suppliers to support their growth and the economic sustainability of destinations.
- Require partners to comply with all relevant laws, respect human rights, ensure fair employment conditions, and protect the environment and local communities.
- Terminate partnerships immediately if child exploitation is detected.
- Ensure all partnerships are governed by written contracts.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Transportation**

Transportation plays a vital role in tourism, enabling travel and exploration. However, it also poses significant environmental challenges. At Travel Agent Support, we are committed to making transportation more sustainable by minimizing its environmental impact while ensuring comfort and convenience for our clients.

#### **Actions We Have Taken:**

- Design itineraries to minimize transportation use and offer sustainable options such as bicycles, rickshaws, electric vehicles, and public transit.
- Prioritize the most eco-friendly transportation modes based on distance, cost, route, and comfort.
- Recommend direct flights for international travel to reduce carbon emissions from multiple take-offs and landings.
- For short-distance trips (under 5 hours), encourage the use of trains or buses, particularly regional trains, which are more energy-efficient.
- Within cities, promote the use of public transportation such as buses, subways, light rail, and trams to reduce reliance on private vehicles and lower carbon emissions.
- Select the most efficient vehicles for group travel based on group size, prioritizing hybrid or electric vehicles that have lower emissions and higher fuel efficiency.
- Encourage clients to stay longer at destinations to reduce the frequency of travel and minimize their carbon footprint.
- Integrate and promote sustainable tourism products that include eco-friendly transportation, accommodations, and activities.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Accommodation**

Accommodation is a crucial part of the travel experience, and choosing sustainable options not only enhances the journey but also benefits local communities and the environment. At Travel Agent Support, we are committed to partnering with accommodations that share our values of responsible tourism.

#### **Actions We Have Taken:**

- Developed a sustainable accommodation policy and communicated it to the procurement department to ensure alignment with our sustainability goals.
- Prioritize partnerships with hotels, lodges, and resorts that hold international eco-certifications or demonstrate outstanding sustainability practices.

- Ensure that all accommodations comply with legal and fair business practices, such as hiring locally, paying fair wages, and providing opportunities for professional development.
- Partner with accommodations that actively reduce their environmental impact through measures such as using eco-friendly materials, implementing energy and water-saving initiatives, and managing waste effectively.
- Support accommodations that contribute to local communities by providing employment opportunities, promoting local culture and heritage, and sourcing from local suppliers.
- Conduct on-site inspections and use industry and client feedback to evaluate and select accommodations that align with our sustainability standards.
- Develop a sustainability assessment form for accommodation providers to monitor their practices and ensure continuous improvement.

## **Chapter 7**

### **Tours and Activities**

We design tours and activities to enrich travel experiences and foster meaningful connections with destinations. At Travel Agent Support, we aim to provide immersive local experiences that benefit travelers, communities, and the environment.

#### **Actions We Have Taken:**

- Developed sustainable product design guidelines and communicated them to the product and sales departments to ensure tours and activities align with our sustainability principles.
- Avoid offering activities that harm humans, animals, plants, or natural resources, or that are socially or culturally unacceptable.
- Prohibit activities involving captive animals unless they are regulated by local, national, or international laws and ensure the animals are treated humanely.
- Refrain from collaborating with companies involved in the collection, consumption, display, sale, or trade of wildlife, unless such activities are legally regulated and sustainable.

- Encourage clients to participate in activities that directly support local communities, such as purchasing local goods and services, learning about traditional crafts, or visiting social projects.
- Promote activities that support environmental conservation and biodiversity, such as visiting protected areas or participating in environmental protection initiatives.
- Communicate our responsible travel philosophy and goals to suppliers and activity providers through our website and other channels.

## **Chapter 8**

### **Tour Leaders, Local Representatives, and Guides**

At Travel Agent Support, we not only focus on ground handling services but also operate global tour operations. Our tour leaders, local representatives, and guides include both directly employed staff and those hired by our partners. In some special destinations, guides may be managed by government departments. We are committed to ensuring the rights and well-being of all staff while providing high-quality service to our clients.

#### **Actions We Have Taken:**

- For Directly Employed Staff:
  - Prioritize hiring local residents for tour guiding and representation roles to support local employment and promote cultural authenticity.
  - Ensure all guides, tour leaders, and local representatives possess relevant industry qualifications and certifications.
  - Provide clear written employment contracts that outline job conditions, descriptions, and compensation, ensuring employees fully understand their rights and responsibilities.
  - Grant employees the right to freely choose employment and terminate contracts with reasonable notice (ideally at least one month) without penalty.
  - Ensure wages meet or exceed the national minimum wage or industry standards.



- Provide comprehensive social insurance benefits, including pension, medical, unemployment, work injury, maternity, and housing fund, in compliance with national laws.
- Adhere to national health and safety policies, offering free annual health check-ups and equipping offices with first aid supplies and trained personnel.
- Comply with national regulations regarding minimum working age.
- Support employees' rights to join unions, engage in collective bargaining, and participate in union representation.
- Provide equal opportunities for all employees to pursue personal development through regular training and education programs.
- For Non-Directly Employed Staff (Provided by Partners):
  - Communicate our sustainability policies and service standards to our partners, ensuring they understand and adhere to our requirements.
  - Require partners to provide their staff with fair employment conditions, including wages that meet or exceed national or industry standards.
  - Ensure that all partner-provided staff are trained to meet our service and sustainability standards.
- General Measures for All Guides:
  - Develop and distribute a comprehensive guide for tour reception standards, ensuring all guides and representatives are familiar with and adhere to these guidelines.
  - Foster a culture of respect, inclusivity, and equality, ensuring all staff members feel valued and supported.
  - Encourage feedback from staff to identify areas for improvement and implement changes to enhance their working conditions and professional growth.

## **Chapter 9**

### **Destinations**

When recommending travel destinations, we strive to maximize their positive impacts while minimizing negative effects. At Travel Agent Support, we are

committed to promoting sustainable destinations that benefit both travelers and local communities.

### **Actions We Have Taken:**

- Consider sustainability when selecting new destinations, offering less-visited alternatives to reduce pressure on over-touristed areas.
- Prioritize destinations that are accessible by sustainable transportation options.
- Comply with local, regional, and national regulations regarding land use, protected areas, and heritage conservation when planning, designing, or operating tours.
- Support biodiversity conservation by promoting tourism products that align with the protection of high-biodiversity areas and nature reserves.
- Avoid promoting activities involving species listed in the CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) or the IUCN Red List, or activities involving historical or archaeological artifacts (unless legally permitted).
- Partner with local suppliers to promote economic growth and educate travelers on respecting local cultures and traditions.
- Encourage responsible shopping and other practices that positively impact local communities.
- Reduce environmental impacts by carefully selecting transportation modes, planning efficient travel routes, and educating travelers on sustainable practices.
- Use our website and other platforms to promote responsible tourism practices and raise awareness about sustainable travel.
- We do not allow the purchase of souvenirs containing threatened flora and fauna species, any illegally obtained historic/archaeological artefacts, drugs or illegal substances, and abide by local and international laws in place to prevent this.

## **Chapter 10**

### **Client Communication and Protection**

At Travel Agent Support, we prioritize clear communication and the protection of our clients throughout their travel journey. From the initial booking to post-trip follow-up, we are committed to providing transparent, reliable, and responsible service.

### **Actions We Have Taken:**

- Pre-Booking:
  - Strictly enforce client privacy regulations to protect personal information and ensure data security.
  - Ensure all marketing and advertising materials comply with relevant regulations and voluntary codes of conduct, accurately reflecting the services provided.
  - Provide clients with clear, complete, and accurate information about products, prices, and sustainability practices.
  - Promote sustainable transportation, accommodations, and tours, prioritizing partners with recognized sustainability certifications.
  - Offer alternative sustainable options for accommodations, tours, and transportation when requested or necessary.
- Post-Booking and During Travel:
  - Provide destination-specific travel advice, including cultural norms, safety tips, and sustainable travel practices.
  - Send clients a detailed itinerary confirmation, highlighting any sensitive activities and providing reminders about responsible behavior.
  - Offer 24/7 emergency contact numbers for sales, customer service managers, and local partners to ensure clients have support at all times.
  - Conduct follow-up calls during tours to check on client satisfaction, address any concerns, and ensure the quality of the travel experience.
  - Maintain a comprehensive guide for handling common travel emergencies and regularly train sales and customer service teams to respond effectively.
  - Establish clear reception standards and complaint handling procedures, ensuring all partners and guides are informed and adhere to these guidelines.

- Encourage clients to support local communities by choosing locally-owned restaurants, shops, and services, and by participating in community-based activities.

- Encourage clients to donate to local charities or sustainable development projects that benefit the destinations they visit.

- Post-Travel:

- Collect client feedback through surveys and reviews to systematically measure satisfaction and identify areas for improvement.

- Use feedback to refine our services and develop new sustainable tourism products.

- Handle client complaints promptly and professionally, following established procedures to ensure fair and satisfactory resolutions.

## **Conclusion**

Travel Agent Support is dedicated to advancing sustainable tourism, protecting natural and cultural heritage, and creating meaningful travel experiences for our clients. We believe that through collaboration with clients, employees, partners, and local communities, we can preserve the beauty and integrity of our destinations for future generations.

We are committed to continuously improving our sustainability practices, ensuring the long-term health of the tourism industry, and providing responsible, eco-friendly travel experiences. By working together, we can make a positive impact on the world and inspire others to travel responsibly.