

Grand Angle

Trek & Bike

Sustainable Development Policy

Introduction

As a travel agency committed to various tourism stakeholders, including consumers, tour guides, travel agencies, hotels, transport companies, restaurants, and attractions, Grand Angle understands its key role and influence in sustainable tourism development. Consequently, we are committed to promoting sustainability. We aim to follow, implement, and promote best sustainability practices in order to maximize the positive impacts and minimize the negative impacts of our activities on tourism, while encouraging our clients and partners to do the same.

We view sustainability not as a constraint, but as a core value and a driver of innovation. As a travel agency specialized in hiking and cycling, we have both the responsibility and the desire to set an example and contribute to a more sustainable future.

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

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1. Sustainable Development Management and Legal Compliance

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

- Appointing a designated employee responsible for sustainability coordination tasks;
- Having a sustainability mission statement communicated to clients, partners, and suppliers;
- Maintaining a written and accessible sustainability policy aimed at reducing the negative social, cultural, economic, and environmental impacts of the company's activities, including health and safety aspects related to employees;
- Collaborating with and actively participating in external forums and working groups that support sustainability in tourism;
- Conducting a baseline assessment of the company's performance in sustainable practices;
- Having sustainability guidelines and an evaluation system to identify the sustainability performance of key suppliers/partners;
- Maintaining a sustainability action plan with clear objectives, actions, measures, responsibilities, and timelines;
- Developing documented procedures to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the sustainability policy, objectives, and targets;
- Ensuring company transparency on sustainable development through reporting and communication;
- Ensuring that all staff are fully aware of our sustainability policy and are committed to implementing and improving it.

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

2. Internal Management: Social Policy and Human Rights

We are committed to sustainable internal management by maintaining a clear, written, and well-communicated social policy, which includes the following principles:

- Granting employees the freedom to accept or terminate employment with notice and without penalty;
- Including working conditions in the employment contract in accordance with national labor law, along with a clear job description;
- Stating the salary in the contract, which must be equal to or higher than the national legal minimum wage;
- Determining and compensating overtime based on an agreement;
- Providing medical and liability insurance in accordance with national legislation;
- Granting employees paid annual leave and sick leave, as well as unpaid leave allowances;
- Maintaining a health and safety policy for employees that complies with national legal standards;
- Providing first aid kits and trained personnel at all relevant sites;
- Complying with national provisions on minimum working age;
- Establishing a Social and Economic Committee (CSE) to ensure direct communication between employees and management and to support social dialogue, allowing employees to express complaints and expectations;
- Conducting annual employee reviews in accordance with legal requirements. These reviews promote constructive discussions about objectives, working conditions, career development opportunities, and training needs, contributing to professional growth and employee well-being;
- Providing periodic guidance and training to employees on their roles, rights, and responsibilities regarding health and safety, including fire safety and relevant natural disasters;
- Creating opportunities for students to participate in internships, traineeships, and apprenticeships;
- Encouraging employment opportunities for people with special needs.

We are committed to respecting human rights by implementing the following practices:

- Ensuring that employees are not obstructed from joining a union, participating in collective bargaining, or being represented by unions;
- Participating in and complying with a collective bargaining structure for working conditions;
- Prohibiting discrimination in recruitment, employment conditions, access to training, managerial positions, or promotion based on gender, race, age, disability, ethnic origin, religion/beliefs, or sexual orientation;
- Ensuring that all employees have equal access to resources and personal development opportunities through regular training and education.

3. Internal Management: Environment and Community Relations

We are committed to practicing environmental protection and improving community relations by implementing the following practices:

- Actively reduce the use of disposable and consumable goods;
- Promote the purchase of sustainable goods and services, including office and catering supplies, promotional gifts, and merchandise;
- Buy products in bulk to reduce packaging materials;
- Set photocopiers and printers to default double-sided printing or other paper-saving modes;
- Use non-hazardous, non-eutrophic, and biodegradable cleaning products, certified by an eco-label, if locally available;
- Actively commit to measuring, monitoring, and reducing energy consumption;
- Calculate and offset CO2 emissions and compare across different periods;
- Purchase green energy and high-efficiency lighting for all areas whenever possible;
- Turn off lights and equipment when not in use, use automatic on/off systems with timers or motion sensors, and set equipment to energy-saving modes where possible;
- Prefer energy-efficient equipment when purchasing new items, considering cost and quality;
- Maintain an active water-saving policy, implemented and monitored on a monthly or yearly basis for evaluation purposes;
- Use sustainable water sources that do not harm environmental flows;
- Install water-saving devices in toilets, and reuse wastewater and/or collected rainwater;

- Comply with national legislation regarding waste disposal;
- Develop and implement a solid waste reduction and recycling policy with quantitative targets;
- Take measures to reduce packaging materials and avoid providing non-recyclable or non-biodegradable packaging;
- Separate all recyclable materials and organize proper collection and disposal;
- Properly recycle or dispose of batteries;
- Comply with national legislation for wastewater treatment, ensuring safe reuse or discharge;
- Minimize and replace the use of harmful substances, and properly manage the storage, handling, and disposal of chemicals;
- Use lead-free, water-based paints indoors and outdoors when locally available;
- Measure and reduce staff travel and promote more sustainable transport modes; calculate emissions with the aim to reduce and offset them using a reliable local program;
- Financially encourage employees to use public transport or sustainable travel options;
- Reduce transport impacts through teleworking, tele/video meetings, work-from-home policies, or other measures;
- Properly maintain and inspect company vehicles to reduce emissions and energy consumption, ensuring compliance with legal emission standards;
- Provide periodic guidance, training, and/or information to all staff on their roles and responsibilities regarding internal environmental practices;
- Comply with laws and regulations regarding land use, zoning, and protected or heritage areas during planning, design, construction, renovation, operation, or demolition of company buildings and infrastructure;
- Contribute to the protection and preservation of historically, archaeologically, culturally, and spiritually important local properties and sites, and do not restrict access for local residents.

4. Partner Agency

Based on an inventory of our main partner agencies, we have developed and implemented a policy aimed at improving the sustainability of our partner agencies. Our goal is to make sustainable development tangible for each of our company's partners.

We are committed to this approach;

- Maintain a list of sustainability practices of partner agencies;
- Inform key partners about Travelife standards and national tourism standards;
- Have a partnership agreement that includes sustainability clauses;
- Regularly assess the sustainability practices of our main partners to ensure their practices are genuinely sustainable;
- Inform key partners of the travel companies' sustainability policy and that they are expected to comply with it and/or communicate it to end clients, where applicable;
- Include key sustainability clauses in agreements with incoming/receptive partners;
- Encourage incoming and outgoing partners to participate in sustainability training for travel companies;

5. Transport

We strive to ensure that the vehicles used during our tours do not cause above-average pollution. We believe that transport is an important aspect of sustainable tourism, and we do our best to reduce the average level of pollution.

We are committed to this approach:

- Choose the most sustainable options, taking price and comfort into account, when selecting transport to the destination;
- Include sustainable (public) transport to the starting point of international or long-distance travel;
- Consider and give preference to more sustainable alternatives when selecting transport options for transfers and excursions 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 recognized methodology, including sustainable transport, sustainable accommodation, and sustainable activities.

6. Accommodation

We strive to establish a fully sustainable tourism supply chain. Partner accommodations play an important role in this and are encouraged and motivated to adopt sustainable practices.

We are committed to this approach:

- Select accommodations that meet sustainability and quality standards, paying particular attention to the following:
 - *Do they have a signed sustainability agreement?*
 - *Do they have a water-saving program?*
 - *Do they have an energy-saving program?*
 - *Do they have a waste management program?*
 - *Do they have a system to reduce energy consumption?*
 - *Do they have a sustainable supply chain?*
 - *Do they engage in CSR activities?*
- Motivate and encourage partner accommodations to obtain sustainable certification;
- Prefer and select accommodations that are locally owned and managed;
- Have accommodations sign a sustainability agreement;
- Encourage accommodations to follow best practices/training in responsible tourism;
- Encourage accommodations to complete the sustainability questionnaire to better understand their practices;
- Clearly and actively communicate our sustainability goals and requirements for contracted accommodations and other relevant arrangements;
- Give clear preference to accommodations that hold an internationally recognized certification (e.g., GSTC-recognized) and/or Travelife.

7. Excursions and Activities

We place great importance on the well-being of animals and communities, and we aim for tours that leave only a minimal footprint. We preserve the authenticity of communities and the natural environment and are firmly opposed to any harm to wildlife or environmental pollution.

We are committed to this approach:

- Maintain an inventory of environmentally or culturally sensitive excursions offered at each destination;

- Advise clients on behavior standards during excursions and activities, emphasizing respect for local culture, nature, and the environment;
- Communicate our sustainability goals and requirements to contracted excursion providers and other relevant suppliers through codes of conduct, representatives, social media, emails, discussions, and/or meetings, to minimize negative impacts on visitors and maximize enjoyment;
- Avoid offering excursions that harm humans, animals, plants, natural resources such as water and energy, or that are socially or culturally unacceptable;
- Do not offer excursions in which wild animals are held in captivity, except for activities that are duly regulated and comply with local, national, and international legislation;
- Ensure qualified and/or certified guides lead our guests at sensitive cultural sites, heritage sites, or ecologically sensitive destinations;
- Promote and advise our clients on excursions and activities that directly involve and support local communities through the purchase of services or goods, traditional crafts, local (food) production methods, or visits to social projects;
- Promote and advise our clients on excursions and activities that support the local environment and biodiversity, such as visits to protected areas or environmental conservation projects.

8. Tour Leaders, Local Representatives, and Guides

We aim to involve as many local people as possible by employing them in tourism activities. We support a fair and safe working environment that respects and benefits local communities.

We are committed to this approach:

- Prefer working with local tour managers, local representatives, local tour guides, and other local staff when capabilities are equal, and provide training if necessary;
- Ensure that our local partners comply with all applicable international, national, and local laws and regulations, minimum industry standards, and any other relevant legal requirements, following the strictest standards;
- Ensure that our tour leaders hold a State Certificate or State Diploma, which is an essential prerequisite for leading groups in the mountains;

- Ensure that our local employees are informed about relevant aspects of our sustainability policy and comply with it, through newsletters, emails, or training and briefing sessions;
- Ensure that our tour leaders, local representatives, and guides inform clients about relevant sustainability issues at the destination (e.g., protection of flora, fauna, and cultural heritage, resource use), social norms and values (e.g., tipping, dress codes, and photography), and human rights (e.g., sexual exploitation).

9. Destination

We aim to maximize positive impacts and minimize negative impacts at the destination to ensure the sustainable development of the places where we operate.

We are committed to this approach:

- Consider sustainability aspects in the process of selecting new destinations and, where appropriate, propose alternative, non-traditional destinations;
- Avoid selecting destinations where tourism causes structural negative local effects (unless the company's involvement leads to clear compensatory effects);
- Consider selecting new destinations that are accessible by more sustainable means of transport;
- Comply with legal regulations regarding land use, protected areas, and heritage, as well as with local, regional, and national destination management strategies;
- Influence and support local government (where possible, together with other travel companies and stakeholders) regarding sustainability, destination planning and management, natural resource use, and socio-cultural issues;
- Support biodiversity conservation, including protected areas and high-biodiversity zones, through financial contributions, advocacy, and integration into product offerings;
- Do not promote souvenirs containing threatened wildlife and plant species, as listed in the CITES treaty and the IUCN Red List, or historical and archaeological objects (unless permitted by law).

10. Communication and Customer Protection

The well-being and information of our clients are very important to us. At Grand Angle, we ensure clear and consistent communication and a high level of protection for our clients.

Before booking, we commit to:

- Providing a company guideline for client consultation, followed by customer advisors;
- Ensuring that clients' privacy is not compromised;
- Complying with relevant standards and voluntary codes of conduct in marketing and advertising, and not promising more than is delivered;
- Ensuring that product and pricing information is clear, complete, and accurate regarding the company and its products and services, including sustainability claims;
- Providing destination information;
- Informing clients about the environmental impact of different transport options to reach the destination (if not included in the package), and offering sustainable alternatives where appropriate;
- Clearly informing direct (potential) clients of sustainability commitments and actions.

After booking and during the holiday, we commit to:

- Providing consumers with information about the natural environment, local culture, and cultural heritage of the holiday destination;
- Keeping a contact person and phone number available at all times for emergencies;
- Training staff and providing guidelines on how to handle emergency situations;
- Providing clients with documented guidelines and/or codes of conduct for sensitive excursions and activities to minimize negative impacts on visitors and maximize enjoyment;
- Informing clients of applicable legislation regarding the purchase, sale, import, and export of historical or religious objects and items containing materials from threatened flora and/or fauna in the destination;
- Encouraging clients to use local restaurants and shops (where applicable);
- Informing clients about sustainable transport options at the destination, where possible.

After the holiday, we commit to:

- Systematically measuring customer satisfaction and using the results to improve services and products;
- Including sustainability as an integral part of customer satisfaction research;
- Having clear procedures in place for handling customer complaints.