

Statement of Commitment to Sustainable Tourism Development.

1. Commitment to sustainable development and management of Tourism

1.1 We regard Sustainable Tourism Development as a guiding concept for the sound management of our business.

1.2 We define Sustainable Development as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

1.3 We are committed to developing, operating and marketing tourism in a sustainable manner; that is, all forms of tourism which make a positive contribution to the natural and cultural environment, which generate benefits for the host communities, and which do not put at risk the future livelihood of local people.

1.4 As Tour Operators we believe that we can be important contributors to Sustainable Tourism Development. We will strive to anticipate and prevent economic, environmental, social and cultural degradation. We will work towards integrating these considerations into our operations and activities.

1.5 We are entering into a partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Tourism Organisation (WTO/OMT), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), to improve our performance in order to achieve sustainable development and management of tourism.

2. Principles of sustainable development and management of tourism

2.1 We recognise that tourism can contribute to the viability of local economies. We also recognise that tourism can have negative impacts on the economy, environment, nature, social structures and local cultures. In the long-term interest of host communities and of our industry, we will endeavour to prevent or minimise these impacts.

2.2 We are committed to complying with local, national and international laws and regulations applicable to our business activities.

2.3 We oppose and actively discourage illegal, abusive or exploitative forms of tourism.

2.4 We are committed to a continual attempt to improve our performance in the context of sustainable development and management of tourism.

2.5 We will manage and monitor the environmental, cultural and social impacts of our activities.

2.6 We will strive to pursue the best practices in all our activities - internally and when forming business relationships with partners, suppliers and sub-contractors - especially with regard to:

- responsible use of natural resources (e.g. land, soil, energy, water)
- reducing, minimizing and preventing pollution and waste (e.g. solid and liquid waste, emissions to air)
- conserving plants, animals, ecosystems and protected areas (biodiversity)
- conserving landscapes, cultural and natural heritage respecting the integrity of local cultures and avoiding negative effects on social structures
- involving, and co-operating with, local communities and people
- using local products and skills

2.7 We will encourage our partners, suppliers and sub-contractors to improve their contribution to sustainable development and management of tourism, and will work with them and share information to assist in this.

2.8 We will seek greater co-operation within the tourism industry and between this industry and the public sector in order to further Sustainable Tourism.

2.9 We shall encourage and seek to co-operate with national and local authorities, local communities, or any other interested party, to develop and implement the integrated planning and management of destinations in order to preserve the quality and sustainability of these destinations.

2.10 We will develop these principles into a corporate policy. As part of this we will define measurable goals, and will monitor and report publicly on our progress.

3. Public awareness and communication

3.1 We wish to create awareness and active involvement among our customers towards the natural, social and cultural environment of the places they visit. We further wish to encourage host communities and our customers to develop a better understanding and mutual respect for one another.

3.2 We will endeavour in our public communication and advertising to promote behaviour and activities compatible with the principles of sustainable development and management of tourism.

3.3 We will encourage other tour operators to support this Statement.