

AFRICAN INSIGHT RESPONSIBLE TOURISM POLICY



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Responsible Tourism is a key and integral part of the approach adopted by African Insight in conducting its business operations. Responsible Tourism is a broad concept and in African Insight it has been developed with an understanding of, and taking into account, the “triple bottom line” as defined by the following three strands:

- Economic
- Social
- Environmental

Furthermore, African Insight understands the negative impacts that tourism can have, particularly in a society like South Africa, which has structural inequalities relating to race and gender and wealth of natural heritage and cultural diversity. African Insight believes that Responsible Tourism is the only sustainable approach to tourism.

Transparency is an integral part of Responsible Tourism. African Insight adheres to this principle and, to this end, believes it necessary to publish empirical evidence in terms of achieving its Responsible Tourism objectives. African Insight undertakes to monitor and assess its impact in respect of all three strands of Responsible Tourism and to report annually on its performance and progress in each.

South Africa has a history of 300 years of colonial oppression of indigenous people and cultures, particularly so in the last 40 years (prior to 1994) of legislated apartheid, by the ruling white minority against all non-white races. This has resulted in the creation of a situation where the majority of South Africans are historically disadvantaged in virtually all aspects of civil society. Through its operations African Insight aims to address this inequality.

Our Responsible Tourism Policy is distributed to all of our staff and suppliers and is made available to travellers through our website.

2.0 AIMS OF POLICY

Having a Responsible Tourism Policy that sets achievable and realistic targets will enable African Insight to:

1. Reduce the negative and increase the positive impacts of our operational practices on the social and physical environment within our areas of operation.
2. Inform and demonstrate to our staff, suppliers, overseas outbound tour operators and travellers our commitment to social, economic and environmental best practice.

3. Serve as an agreement to which our suppliers will be encouraged to sign up, enabling it to be used as a management tool that will assist in ensuring suppliers implement the aspects applicable to their area of operation.
4. Enhance our reputation and differentiate our product from other operators and 'add value' to the quality product we already offer.
5. Create better travel experiences for our customers – holidays that make a difference.

2.1 What is Success?

Success is:

- An improvement in the social and economic well being of the local communities in which we operate.
- Greater environmental sustainability, and hence enhanced long-term prospects of the tourism product.
- A greater respect for wildlife - and knowledge of animal welfare and conservation issues - by visitors, suppliers and local host communities.

3.0 ECONOMIC POLICY

Like any viable business, African Insight pursues sufficient turnover to cover its operational costs, and to recover investments that have been made. However this is never at the expense of people, culture or the environment.

In recognition of historic economic oppression African Insight undertakes to:

- Explore innovative and creative ways of increasing the benefits of tourism to South Africa, particularly to marginalised sectors of our society, with an emphasis on empowering women and Black South Africans.
- Create and promote employment and entrepreneurship for historically disadvantaged individuals (women and Black South Africans) both within our own company and with the suppliers we use.
- Create mutually beneficial linkages between the formal and informal sectors.
- Support marginalised and historically disadvantaged people through integrating preferential procurement at all levels of the business.
- Make every effort to identify and minimise the leakage of revenue out of the local community.

African Insight understands that the concept of Responsible Tourism is currently in its early stage of adoption and implementation in South Africa. It accepts, therefore, that it may not always be possible to fulfil all of its economic policy objectives at this time. In those instances of non-compliance African Insight will make every effort to remedy the situation for the future. At no time will any compromises made be exploitative of people, the environment or wildlife.

3.1 Examples of African Insight's Economic Policy in Practice

African Insight currently:

- Promotes accommodation establishments and products that employ and buy goods locally (within a 20 kilometre radius).
- Promotes tourism services offered in disadvantaged communities e.g. township tours and restaurants, etc.
- Uses services provided by historically disadvantaged entrepreneurs e.g. tour guides and transport hire.
- Promotes opportunities for visitors to buy local products and services, which comply with African Insight's environmental and social policies e.g. crafts.
- Gives priority to the promotion of products that are either:
 - Certified by Fair Trade Tourism South Africa (FTTSA) and other acclaimed Fair Trade/ Responsible Tourism accrediting/ awarding bodies, or
 - Comply with African Insight's internal Responsible Practice Guidelines.
- Provides constructive feedback and advice to emerging tourism businesses in terms of client experiences in such issues as pricing and quality, etc.
- Pays a fair price for goods and services.
- Shares best practice with others.

3.2 Black Economic Empowerment

In the South African context Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) is an important component of a Responsible Tourism policy. African Insight policy in this area is that it supports and strives to comply with the government's Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment motion, as defined within the country's Tourism Charter which is due to be launched in 2005. African Insight is taking pro-active steps to address the following key issues contained within this Charter:

- Employment equity
- Skills development

- Preferential procurement
- Enterprise development
- Social development

It is important for African Insight to also consider BEE in the view of the fact that the company is the result of a recent merger of three existing, individually white owned 'one-man businesses'. African Insight therefore acknowledges that at the time of the launch of the BEE Tourism Charter in 2005, the company begins its life in a position of weakness with relation to Black Ownership. In the pursuit of full compliance African Insight has, however, mapped out a course of action to address this weakness, including:

- Provision in African Insight's 'Articles of Association' for the acquisition of a minimum of 25% of the shares by suitable BEE partners.
 - 50% of this has been set-aside for transfer of ownership to suitable employees.
 - African Insight is actively searching for the right BEE partner/s for transfer of ownership of the remaining 50%.
- African Insight's 'Articles of Association' prevent any one shareholder from acquiring more than 49% of shares.

3.3 Gender Economic Equality

Due to the founding partners of African Insight being male, the company is aware that there is an inherent shortfall on the issue of gender representation at the ownership level. To address this imbalance over time African Insight's 'Articles of Association' make provision for:

- Acquisition of a minimum of 25% of shares by women.

4.0 SOCIAL POLICY

African Insight understands that tourism can improve local living standards, whilst uncontrolled development or interaction with tourists can be destabilising to communities.

To this end African Insight operates with respect for indigenous culture and supports social development initiatives, while considering, on an ongoing basis, the impacts tourism is having on the communities in which it operates.

Whilst the broader issues pertaining to benefits from tourism accruing to local communities are relevant to the tourism industry

in general, they are, however, particularly important to wildlife tourism suppliers as:

- There is a close interdependence between local communities and the wildlife/natural resource base upon which wildlife tourism relies.
- The majority of wildlife tourism takes place in rural areas where the lack of other opportunities means that opportunities or problems arising from wildlife tourism can make a real difference to people's lives.
- The costs of living with wildlife fall heavily on local people (e.g. crop raiding by elephants, deaths of people).

All too often in the developing world, where the majority of wildlife tourism destinations are located, local communities suffer the negative impacts of wildlife tourism (erosion of their culture, human/wildlife conflicts, competition for scarce resources, etc.), without benefiting from the potential positives that an influx of wildlife tourists from the developed world has the power to bring. Wildlife tourism experiences need to ensure that local people benefit financially and/or in terms of their quality of life from tourism and that any socio-cultural impacts are minimised.

In so far as indigenous cultures and communities are concerned there are a number of critical elements, which for the basis of a comprehensive Responsible Tourism policy, need to be taken into account. These include:

4.1 Respect For Local Culture

African Insight undertakes to:

- Negotiate with local communities visited regarding issues of group size, what activities are acceptable, and whether it is appropriate to visit homes.
- Ensure visitors are informed of local customs, traditions and appropriate behaviour.
- Ensure that the hosts are at ease with cameras and videos and to ensure visitors ask permission before taking photographs and video footage.
- Use local guides wherever possible.
- Ensure open and honest relationships that reflect the principle of transparency.

4.2 Create a Tourism Culture

African Insight understands the need to create a tourism culture in South Africa that truly makes "Tourism Everybody's Business". To this end African Insight will endeavour to:

- Embrace tourism initiatives that are dedicated to promoting tourism in South Africa and at the same time are applicable and appropriate to the communities in which the initiative is operating e.g. 'Tourism Month' initiative.
- Work with other tourism organisations that are dedicated to the same objectives e.g. Tourism Education Trust.

4.3 Identify Potential Impacts

Wherever possible African Insight will play an active role in identifying potential positive and negative impacts, ensuring that:

- Host communities are aware of the potential negative impacts of tourism and to assist them in making informed decisions about tourism development.
- The positive impacts of tourism are embraced in such a way as to achieve maximum benefit for all by all.

4.4 Maximise Benefits to Local People and Local Businesses

African Insight understands that tourism can bring significant benefits to local people and local businesses if managed positively. The company will strive to maximise these benefits by:

- Adopting a fair and equitable employment policy.
- Adopting employment practices with no discrimination according to gender, ethnicity or colour.
- Offering local people employment in all areas of the business and paying fair and competitive wages.
- Providing training and career progression opportunities.
- Purchasing locally produced goods and services that benefit the wider local community where possible.
- Promoting and supporting community-based tourism initiatives/ enterprises.
- Ensuring that a local guide accompanies all group visits to local communities.
- Contributing financially towards projects that improve the welfare of the local community.

4.5 Support Local Community Projects

African Insight understands that for visitors, part of the process of making a difference is to witness or experience the project they are supporting. The company will achieve this by:

- Supporting local community projects that are included in promoted itineraries.
- Mentoring.

4.6 Local Community Development Organisations

African Insight believes that community development is most effective when it is a 'grass roots' needs-driven process and hence being aware of current and the most pressing needs of local communities is vitally important. Additionally, to be effective in delivering optimum benefits it needs to be professionally coordinated and managed.

African Insight is aware that there are many established professional organisations doing good work in communities, and will support these organisations by:

- Striving to remain informed of community development projects in areas that are visited on tours.
- Offering, where appropriate and welcome, practical support to these projects, with particular emphasis on harnessing travellers' philanthropy.

4.7 Raising Awareness of Social Issues

The key social issues facing South Africa today, and which African Insight will strive to raise awareness of and actively address, are:

4.7.1 HIV/AIDS

This is currently the biggest social issue facing Sub Saharan Africa. African Insight understands that an important way to address this epidemic is to prevent further infection. This, it believes, can be achieved through a variety of means including educational programmes, practising safe sex, poverty alleviation, boosting natural immunity through better nutrition, access to and distribution of free condoms and preventing HIV mother to baby transmission through breast-feeding.

African Insight undertakes to:

- Not discriminate against HIV positive people. This includes choice of communities visited, suppliers and employment practices.
- Ensure that all African Insight employees receive training on HIV/AIDS and are aware of the high-risk behaviours that cause infection, as well as ways of protecting themselves against the virus and what to do in the event of contracting HIV.
- Give access to all employees to free condoms from its offices.
- Align resources with ATTIC (AIDS training NGO) so as to support this organisation in its wide-ranging AIDS/HIV community education activities.
- Assist community initiatives that focus on the care of people dying of AIDS wherever possible. This to be done in practical

ways, such as providing nutrition to boost immunity, blankets, soap, etc. Calabash Trust, whom African Insight supports, is already engaged in programmes supporting home care groups that wash and feed dying AIDS victims.

- Ensure that all travellers booking with African Insight are provided with information on methods of HIV transmission along with high-risk sexual practices.
- Where travellers are to spend extended periods of continual stay in a community (e.g. community volunteers), African Insight will ensure they attend an HIV/AIDS educational workshop.

4.7.2 Sex Tourism

There is emerging evidence and concern that South Africa is developing as a sex tourism destination, particularly child sex, since international legislation has taken effect in traditional child sex markets such as the Philippines and Thailand. Its growth is fuelled by poverty, patriarchy and a lack of effective policy and policing. Sexually exploited children are severely wounded physically and emotionally. Many acquire diseases such as HIV/AIDS, and almost all suffer rejection by their families and communities in addition to fear, shame and despair.

African Insight condemns outright all forms of sex tourism and sexual exploitation. It aims to contribute to combating, in particular, child sex tourism by:

- Deterring would-be child sex tourists with deterrence messages on its website.
- Assisting law enforcement agencies and organisations in identifying child sex tourists and tourism businesses exploiting this area.
- Helping to prevent children from being drawn into the commercial sex trade through supporting educational programmes, advocacy of and the creation of other means to make a living through its Economic Policy.

4.7.3 Access to Education

Many children in South Africa do not have access to education. African Insight supports the Calabash Trust (www.calabashtrust.org.za), which operates a number of community development projects, including educational programmes.

5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

The overarching issues affecting environmental sustainability are the same, irrespective of the type of tourism business operated.

However, some issues are particularly salient in rural and coastal areas (water use, waste disposal etc.), where the majority of wildlife tourism takes place. Environmental sustainability takes on even greater significance in such circumstances, as the environment is inextricably linked to the wildlife product and to local communities. Both depend on the natural environment for their survival, so it is vital that wildlife tourism suppliers operate responsibly.

Key issues to consider in this area include water-use management, waste and waste-water management, energy management, purchasing policy, tourism infrastructure and visitor activities, whilst impacts range from pollution and exploitation of water resources, through to loss of natural habitats and biodiversity along with wildlife disturbance/suffering.

The underpinning philosophy of African Insight's environmental policy is to ensure that the **direct** and **indirect** activities of African Insight do not impact negatively on the continued sustainability of the environmental assets which are the very reason for the attraction of a particular destination / activity / experience in the first place.

From African Insight's perspective a responsible environmental policy has two core foci:

- those that it has **direct** control over through the daily execution of its administrative and operational activities, and
- those that it only has **indirect** influence over through the discerning selection of suitable product and service providers.

5.1 Direct Environmental Issues

5.1.1 Corporate Governance

African Insight undertakes to provide, maintain and monitor Responsible Practice Guidelines for the following:

- Operational systems that have a low impact on resources e.g. employing paperless technology.
- Recycling of office waste e.g. paper.
- Responsible disposal of non-recyclable / harmful waste e.g. printer cartridges.
- Regular maintenance of vehicles to limit environmental pollution.

5.1.2 Staff Training

African Insight undertakes to:

- Provide, maintain and monitor Responsible Practice Guidelines that are relevant to all staff i.e. travel consultants, general office staff and tour guide leaders/guides.
- Provide training and information on the need for a responsible environmental policy and the issues involved.
- Source information on responsible tourism products that can be included in itineraries.

5.1.3 Visitor Information

African Insight understands the need for visitors to be well informed, prepared and equipped in order to minimise their impact on the environment. African Insight undertakes to provide all clients with information and appropriate codes of conduct on how to be a responsible traveller, covering environmental issues, along with social and cultural issues and issues pertaining to animal welfare etc.

5.2 Indirect Environmental Issues

African Insight has a significant role to play in educating, supporting, evaluating and monitoring suppliers of accommodation, activities, experiences and other services. African Insight has commissioned independent local and internationally accredited Responsible Tourism consultants to assist in the provision of Responsible Practice Guidelines for the following:

5.2.1 Suppliers of Accommodation

African Insight has commissioned a comprehensive document that provides Responsible Practice Guidelines for suppliers **and** a process by which African Insight can 'audit' products to establish the level of compliance on all Responsible Tourism issues. These are applicable across a range of accommodations and settings including:

- Urban and semi-urban environments.
- Rural environments.
- Within nature/ game reserves and national parks.

5.2.2 Activity Service Providers

A number of critical general outdoor and specific wildlife based activities have been identified which have potentially high environmental impacts and for which Position Statements see section 8.0) and Responsible Practice Guidelines are necessary. These include:

- Off-road motorised experiences and adventures
- Camping and hiking in wilderness areas
- Marine based experiences

- Freshwater based experiences
- Game viewing experiences
- Captive animal attractions
- Golf Tourism
- Trophy Hunting

5.2.3 Operational Service Providers

African Insight requires the services of various suppliers during the routine execution of its business. The suppliers of services have the potential for serious environmental impact and, therefore, will be required to provide evidence of having a comprehensive environmental policy that is measured and monitored. The following service providers have been identified and links are provided for those where African Insight has developed Position Statements and Responsible Practice Guidelines:

- Vehicle manufacturers
- Vehicle maintenance
- Suppliers of tyres
- Paper manufacturers

6.0 POSITION STATEMENTS ON SPECIFIC ISSUES

African Insight has adopted positions on several specific issues including:

6.1 Wildlife Viewing

African Insight ensures that all wildlife viewing activities that it carries out or supports (walking and driving experiences) are conducted responsibly so as to avoid causing disturbance or injury to wildlife and at the same time minimising the impact on these activities on the environment. To facilitate this African Insight has developed Responsible Practice Guidelines for wildlife viewing, to which it strictly adheres.

6.2 Golf Tourism

African Insight is extremely conscious and concerned about the potential social and environmental impacts of golf tourism in the South African context.

- In relation to the size of the industry, golf courses are low volume employers of relatively unskilled labour. The great majority of employment opportunities available to local people

are of a temporary nature and consist of menial positions, offering little security or long-term job prospects.

- Most golf courses in South Africa are aimed at a very small rich, white, elite portion of the population and exclude the majority of South Africans.
- Golf courses place a disproportionate demand on water supplies (some courses use up to 3,000 L per day) in a water poor country like South Africa where 15 million South Africans (32%) have no access to potable water.
- Golf courses have a large development footprint and as such can impact considerably on the natural landscape and on biodiversity.

In light of the above, African Insight believes that golf tourism in South Africa is not responsible and hence does not promote golfing experiences. If a client wishes to include golf in their holiday itinerary African Insight will provide information on courses available and their social and environmental impacts to allow the client to arrive at their own informed decision.

6.3 Boat Based Whale and Dolphin Watching

African Insight is aware of the potential negative impacts of boat based whale and dolphin watching on cetaceans including the disruption of parent-offspring bonds and the disturbance of feeding and breeding patterns. African Insight, therefore, only supports boat based whale and dolphin watching where it is operated and managed responsibly so as not to disturb or harm in any way the cetaceans being viewed. African Insight supports licensed operators who when monitored through African Insight's own internal audit process have been shown to be responsible. This includes:

- Boat operators having an in date operating license.
- Approaching cetaceans at an appropriate angle or direction so as not to disturb or alarm them.
- Maintaining an appropriate distance away from cetaceans so as not to disturb them. If cetaceans appear disturbed, then the distance approached is too close.
- Minimising speed (no-wake speed) and avoiding sudden changes in boat speed, direction and noise when close to cetaceans.
- Minimising noise from all sources (people and boat) when close to cetaceans.
- Not pursuing cetaceans showing avoidance tactics.
- Never encircling or separating cetaceans.
- Taking extra care when approaching cetaceans with young. Parents and their offspring should never be separated. If whale calves are separated from their mothers, with whom

they normally maintain constant body contact, they can transfer their attachment to the side of the tourist boat with potentially serious consequences.

- Ensuring no more than 3 boats are viewing cetaceans for a prolonged period. If further boats are waiting to view, time spent viewing is limited to 10 minutes before giving way to other boats.
- Allowing cetaceans to control the nature and duration of the 'encounter'.
- Adopting a 'no contact' policy with cetaceans i.e. no 'swim with' dolphin encounters or touching of cetaceans permitted.
- Prohibiting the feeding of cetaceans.
- Not running through groups of dolphins to solicit bow riding. If dolphins choose to bow ride, boats to maintain original course and speed.
- Not using 'playback' tapes of whale/dolphin sounds to attract cetaceans so they are more easily viewed. This can displace animals from their natural territories and affect their survival success.
- Providing litter disposal facilities on board boats and instructing tourists not to drop litter over-board.
- Avoiding pumping oily bilge water or other hazardous substances into the sea, particularly when near coral reefs.
- Encouraging visitors to use rest rooms on land before their trip.
- Disposing of sewage on land, or if not possible, treating sewage before disposal at sea.

6.4 Scuba Diving

Responsibly operated scuba diving offers outstanding opportunities for people to discover a diverse range of underwater marine life. African Insight hence supports responsible scuba diving experiences that seek to minimise their disturbance and negative impacts on the environment and at the same time maximise the education and enrichment of visitors. African Insight supports licensed operators who when monitored through African Insight's own internal audit process have been shown to be responsible. Responsibility implies:

- Not allowing visitors to disturb, touch or remove plants and animals e.g. coral.
- Operating a 'no contact' policy with all marine life.
- Not permitting feeding or harassment of sharks, reef fish or other marine wildlife.
- Not permitting divers to pursue marine wildlife that is displaying avoidance tactics.

- Not permitting divers to swim closer than 100m from whales and 10m from dolphins, seals and other marine mammals.
- Not disposing of any litter into the sea – all boats equipped with litter disposal facilities.
- Using reef mooring buoys (rather than anchors) over coral reefs to prevent damage.
- Avoiding pumping oily bilge water or other hazardous substances into the sea, particularly when near coral reefs.
- Disposing of sewage on land, or if not possible, treating sewage before disposal at sea.

6.5 Shark Cage Diving

Direct contact between humans and wildlife carries the risk of disturbance and harm to wildlife, as well as placing humans at risk. African Insight hence does not support activities that involve direct contact/close interaction with wildlife.

In the case of sharks, however, African Insight believes that the opportunity to learn and understand these much maligned, misrepresented and threatened predators through responsibly operated shark cage diving experiences, may benefit the future conservation of the species. For this reason African Insight supports responsibly operated Shark Cage Diving that have taken into consideration the potential threats of such experiences to the sharks' health, welfare, natural role in the ecosystem and natural relationship to humans, and have put in place effective operational procedures to mitigate these along with an active public education programme as an integral part of these experiences.

African Insight believes that these issues have been investigated and considered by Marine and Coastal Management (MCM) in South Africa, the government body responsible for Marine Affairs. In consultation with professional environmentalists and concerned tour operators MCM have developed a Code of Conduct for responsible White Shark Cage Diving and a Permitting System with Permit Conditions, which responsible operators are accredited to.

African Insight hence supports Shark Cage Diving operators who are accredited by MCM.

6.6 Fishing and Other Marine Harvesting

Although legislation regarding recreational (non commercial) fishing and harvesting of marine life is comprehensive in South Africa, the enforcement of this legislation is often lacking given the country's extensive coastline and limited resources. This situation calls upon the commitment of all participants in this industry, as well as those

indirectly associated e.g. the tourism industry, to actively support legislation and contribute to the conservation of marine resources through responsible practice.

In this regard African Insight undertakes (when such an experience is requested by a client) to research, locate and use fishing charter companies that can provide conclusive evidence that:

- They are familiar with and adhere to relevant legislation.
- Actively assist the authorities in upholding the law.
- Are fully compliant in terms of safety and legal requirements regarding conducting fishing charters for paying clients.
- Contribute meaningfully to the conservation of the very resource they are exploiting for a living.

Certain areas of the South African coastline are being targeted by 'poachers' who are illegally exploiting rare shellfish for the restaurant trade and illegal export to countries in the Far East. As such African Insight condemns:

- The illegal sale, by the general public and other unlicensed operators, of fish and other marine life to restaurants etc., where this is in contravention of legislation.
- The indiscriminate methods of harvesting used by certain commercial operations at the expense of the natural resource.

South Africa is well known for its seashells, corals, starfish, seahorses, etc. and with the advent of tourism this has led to the establishment of an illegal trade and irresponsible harvesting methods of these collectables, living and dead. African Insight commits to encouraging all visitors to investigate the origin of such collectables fully before purchasing and when in doubt, or insufficient proof of legitimacy exists, to refuse to purchase such items.

6.7 Captive Animal 'Attractions'¹

Although animals in captivity have the same needs of the same species in the wild, captivity is an artificial environment. An animal in a cage almost certainly lacks the quantity and diversity of space enjoyed by an animal in the wild. Similarly, a captive animal does not have the same degree of freedom to forage, hunt, feed,

¹ All permanent establishments where live animals of wild species are kept for exhibition to the public for 7 or more days a year [admission paid or unpaid]. This includes zoos, captive safari parks, aquaria, butterfly farms, farm parks with wild animals, sanctuaries/orphanages open to the public, amusement parks, captive wild animals in hotels, shopping centres etc., road-side menageries, falconry centres, reptile parks and bird parks.

exercise or interact with other species, or individuals of the same species. Research has shown that animals can experience feelings similar to those found in humans including fear, pain, boredom and frustration, and it is very difficult to prevent these from occurring in captivity. As such many animals in captivity suffer for the benefit of the visiting public. Compounding the issue is that many captive wild animal attractions across the globe are to a great extent unregulated and uncontrolled. Some of these are poorly designed, managed and maintained, unable to provide the barest essentials necessary for the health and psychological well-being of the animals in their care.

In light of the above, African Insight does not support captive animal attractions and instead firmly believes that wildlife belongs in the wild unless circumstances dictate that captivity is the best option for the animal in question e.g. it is an injured or rescued animal that would not otherwise survive in the wild. In these circumstances African Insight supports the caring for these animals in responsibly run animal sanctuaries.

African Insight supports visits to wildlife sanctuaries that:

- Only acquire injured or rescued animals.
- Maintain high standards of animal welfare.
- Have an active programme of rehabilitation back into the wild for all animals where this is an appropriate strategy.
- Have a policy of not breeding animals or replacing animals that have died.
- Do not dispose of surplus animals into zoos and other such captive animal attractions.
- Do not allow visitors to touch, feed or handle animals.
- Do not use animals to 'perform' to the visiting public.
- Do not mutilating animals to make them safe for handling e.g. removing claws, teeth, venom etc.
- Have an active public education programme.

In relation to wild animals that are kept as 'pets and mascots' in lodges and other establishments, African Insight condemns this practice. The company believes that if such animals are orphaned/injured that they should be nursed back to health and released back into the wild if appropriate, rather than being kept as pets or mascots. If this is not appropriate all efforts should be made to house such animals in responsibly run animal sanctuaries, where they have the opportunity to mix (if a social animal) with others of their own species.

6.8 Elephant Back Safaris

Consistent with our position statement on Captive Animal Attractions, African Insight does not promote Elephant Back Safaris where the elephants used have been taken from the wild, have been bred in captivity for the 'entertainment' of humans, or are orphans that could have been released back into the wild.

Elephant Back Safari Operators exist in South Africa, however, that have acquired elephants that are orphans and for whom re-introduction back in to the wild is not possible nor can they be accommodated in spacious sanctuary accommodation. In such rare circumstances, African Insight accepts that, for some of these animals, a life working in safaris can be better than a life confined to a small enclosure. African Insight is also aware, however, that the training methods employed by some of those training elephants to be used in Elephant Back Safaris are cruel and that some adopt poor animal welfare standards. As it is difficult for African Insight to make an accurate, informed assessment on these factors through independent objective sources, the company cannot promote any operation with confidence and, therefore, it will not promote Elephant Back Safaris to clients.

6.9 Community-Based Projects

Community-based projects are important linkages in creating a positive tourism culture in communities where tourism has historically been viewed in a negative light due to racial segregation during the apartheid years. They also have the potential for creating a real difference to the lives of those involved and the wider community as a whole.

Responsible Tourism is ideally suited to community-based projects and African Insight undertakes to support such projects (when it is economically sustainable to do so) that are consistent with its Responsible Tourism policy and where the project's stated aims include not only benefits accruing to those directly involved in the project, but to the wider community in which it operates.

African Insight has the potential to not only play an instrumental role in supporting community-based projects, but in also initiating projects where the company has established sustainable flows of tourists to an area where the community wish to engage in tourism. Examples of such projects include cultural home stays, local handcrafts, catering and local site guides.

6.10 Off-Road Motorised Experiences and Adventures (4x4 Vehicles, Motorbikes & Quad Bikes)

National park rangers the world over have experienced the thrill of accessing the wildest corners of our national parks in their official 4x4 or other vehicles. African Insight director, Andrew Anderson, was such a ranger in charge of 20 000 ha of the famous Umfolozi Game Reserve where access was mostly by means of rough 4x4 tracks and on horseback. This opportunity has inspired the desire to make it possible for others to share this soul enriching experience.

African Insight supports the responsible use of 4x4 motor vehicles, motorbikes and quad bikes to offer sustainable opportunities for experiencing the great outdoors. African Insight recognises, however, that non-responsible usage can cause environmental damage, disturbance to wildlife and conflict with different user groups and with local communities. To ensure our activities in this area are responsible African Insight adheres to the following ethics and procedures in carrying out these activities:

- We only use designated trails and keep to these at all times.
- We obey all designated speed limits.
- We do not use designated trails to test the power of vehicles or driving skills, but only to provide the opportunity and privilege to visit and appreciate remote areas.
- We do not allow anyone to drink and drive.
- We strive to travel through an area with little or no negative impact. On the contrary we strive to leave trails in a better state than in which we found them e.g. remove fallen trees, fill in pot holes, improve drainage, etc.
- When driving through grassy areas, we frequently check the undercarriage of vehicle for grass packing close to the hot exhaust. Grass catches fire very easily and this check helps to prevent veld fires.
- We do not stop unnecessarily or idle in dry grass on the trail, as hot air from exhausts can start fires in dry grass.
- We respect and are considerate to other user groups, so as not to impact negatively on their experience and enjoyment of the area.
- We drive slowly past farms and villages so as not to disturb local people or their livestock.
- We use the opportunity to be outstanding ambassadors for our country, culture and as outdoor enthusiasts. During these activities we are fortunate to meet people in very remote areas on which we will leave lasting impressions – and we want these to be good ones.

- We are constantly on the look out for wildlife and domestic animals crossing the road and drive slowly when these are sighted so as not to harm, disturb or alarm them.
- We do not chase, unnecessarily disturb, or follow an animal that is displaying avoidance tactics at any time.
- We ensure each vehicle has a rubbish bag in the cab to prevent littering.
- We ensure that all vehicles are well maintained and mechanically sound.
- We ensure that all vehicles have appropriate insurance cover and meet all legal requirements.

6.11 Trophy Hunting

Whilst not involved in the trophy hunting industry, African Insight recognises that trophy hunting has the potential to support conservation and benefit local communities if it is operated responsibly. Hunting should not, however, be regarded as a conservation management tool like culling.

In terms of a visitor's experience African Insight believes that wildlife viewing and trophy hunting in South Africa ARE DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSED and hence does not support any private wildlife destination where trophy hunting and game viewing are offered simultaneously.

Responsibly operated hunting experiences encompass:

- Hunting is undertaken outside of proclaimed national parks i.e. on privately owned commercial land.
- Quotas for the sustainable off-take of trophy animals are set and monitored.
- Baiting with prey to attract trophy animals is not permitted.
- Hunting does not take place from vehicles or with spotlights.
- 'Canned hunting', where wild animals are bred in captivity for use in trophy hunting, is not permitted.
- Local communities living in hunting areas benefit from trophy hunting activities either through receiving a share of the income from the sale of trophy hunting licenses and/or receiving meat from trophy animals, etc.

6.12 Culling

African Insight supports the view that the national parks authority has a mandate to conserve the complete spectrum of biodiversity (plant and animal) in South Africa, and that no one particular species should be managed to the detriment/cost of another. In this respect African Insight understands that wildlife population numbers

may need to be managed when they are adversely impacting on the biodiversity of an area.

Wildlife populations are currently managed by a variety of methods from live capture/translocation and birth control through to culling. African Insight believes that live capture/translocation is the best option and should be considered first. African Insight also believes that animals captured in this way should be translocated to wildlife areas that can sustain an increase in numbers, and should NOT be sold to captive animal attractions or into the trophy hunting trade.

It is African Insight's view that culling, whilst an important control tool, should only be employed as a last resort when other methods have been fully investigated yet proven to be inappropriate/not viable. When culling is considered as the best option African Insight believes this should be conducted responsibly by conservation managers considering the welfare of individual animals and ensuring that benefits accrue to local communities e.g. meat.

7.0 MONITORING & EVALUATION

It is not enough to have a Responsible Tourism Policy. Regular monitoring and evaluation of our own levels of operational impacts, as well as setting realistic objectives and goals concerning our operational practices are key to ensuring that we are operating responsibly.

7.1 Existing RT and FT Organisations in South Africa

South Africa is currently experiencing a dynamic phase of economic and social growth, and therefore research and knowledge sharing, covering a wide spectrum of Responsible and Best Practise issues is required. A monitoring procedure in terms of the appropriate utilisation of our natural, social and cultural resources is vital. For optimum effect, this information needs to be consolidated and given direction.

African Insight will endeavour to:

- Share knowledge and ideas, as well as cooperate freely with all organisations demonstrating genuine commitment to promoting more responsible tourism practices in South Africa.
- Engage actively with all key industry stakeholders to support, uphold and encourage the implementation of these ideals through responsible tourism, and constantly strive to improve less satisfactory situations with mediation and evaluation.
- African Insight undertakes to monitor their performance and report on this on an annual basis.

7.2 Responsible Practice Guidelines

Responsible Practice Guidelines have been developed for key areas of African Insight's business operations. These are management tools that will enable the company to continuously strive to improve its performance in relation to responsible practice and sustainability. Areas covered are social responsibility with relation to local communities, environmental impacts of operations, economic impacts along with wildlife viewing protocol, the welfare of wildlife used in captive animal 'attractions' and client safety.

The primary outcome sought through adopting these Responsible Practice Guidelines is to maximise benefits to local communities, minimise environmental and social impacts and to improve the welfare and conservation of animals that are part African Insight's activities and experiences.

This success will be achieved by understanding the issues, recognising responsible practice, and most importantly, changing policy/behaviour to achieve responsible practice.

7.3 RT Checklists

Checklists have been developed as a monitoring and evaluation tool for African Insight and its suppliers to assess their performance against key elements of the Responsible Practice Guidelines. These will not only stimulate action where failings are identified, but serve as a tool to measure performance, and improvements in responsible practice, over time.

7.4 Customer Feedback

Effective systems need to be in place that encourage visitors to feed back their views and thoughts on their holiday and to make complaints. African Insight has procedures in place that facilitate such feedback and that respond quickly to any complaints including those made by travellers concerning African Insight's Responsible Tourism Policy and its Travellers Code of Conduct.

Feedback mechanisms include the provision of an end-of-visit survey in the destination, together with the promotion of email customer initiated feedback routes. All customer feedback and complaints are responded to within 5 days and acted upon accordingly to improve sustainability and to ensure compliance with our Responsible Tourism Policy.

8.0 TRAVELLERS CODE OF CONDUCT

African Insight acknowledges that visitors want to be responsible but are often not aware of the issues and appropriate codes of conduct. As most visitors combine a number of different

destinations and activities in South Africa they therefore need to be aware of both cultural and environmental issues. This document is not intended to be exhaustive but it does highlight a number of key issues and provides guidelines that will help you to:

- Ensure your own personal safety
- Show respect for local communities, customs and value systems
- Maximise your contribution to sustainable community livelihoods
- Maximise the welfare and conservation of the wildlife you are visiting
- Minimise your impact on the environment

8.1 General Guidelines

- At all times respect your guide's advice; they are experienced professionals and are there to ensure you enjoy your experience but not at the expense of others or the wildlife you have come to enjoy
- If you are unsure or concerned about anything ask your guide
- South Africa is a water-poor country with 32% of the population having no direct access to potable water. Hence use water sparingly and wisely. Herewith are some tips to help you:
 - Never leave water taps running (even when brushing your teeth or washing your hands etc) and close them tightly when finished
 - Report dripping taps to management
 - Do not request bath towels and bed linen to be changed every day unless really necessary
 - When bathing use water sparingly
 - Shower rather than bath and do not linger longer than necessary
 - In cultural village home stays water will have to be fetched by hand, in some cases from a few kilometres away. You will normally be provided with a basin of water for washing which is totally sufficient given that you will only be there for a night or two. Practice at home how to wash in a basin using a face cloth (bring one with you)
 - Never contaminate natural water sources with litter or chemicals such as soap and shampoo etc. There are bio-

products available on the market, which are more suitable

- When out hiking or camping always carry a small trowel for use when going to the toilet
- Never urinate within 20m or defecate within 100m of a natural water source. This may need to be a greater distance depending on the terrain and natural runoff when raining. Always dig a 20 –30cm deep hole when you need to defecate
- Always dispose of litter back at base camp or the trailhead where suitable means are provided

8.2 When Participating In Wildlife Activities Or Visiting Wildlife Parks And Sanctuaries

- Do not feed wildlife as this can have severe consequences for an animal's social behaviour patterns and lead to increased aggression, which may result in the animal having to be destroyed
- Do not touch wildlife as you can unwittingly pass on diseases to wildlife, as well as placing yourself at risk
- Do not encourage guides to move so close to wildlife that your presence disturbs it or interferes with its natural behaviour
- Do not encourage guides to pursue wildlife that is showing avoidance tactics e.g. displaying threatening/alarmed behaviour or is moving away
- Do not encourage guides to drive off-road in protected areas when this is prohibited
- Speak quietly and do not make any sudden movements when close to wildlife so as not to alarm it
- In the presence of dangerous wildlife do not stand up if you are in an open safari vehicle or hang out the windows if you are in a closed vehicle
- Show respect and courtesy to other tourists by not spoiling or impacting on their experience
- When viewing primates do not approach closer than 5 meters in order to help prevent the transmission of disease between humans and wildlife
- Do not approach breeding sites (nests, burrows, dens, etc.) as this can affect the breeding success of wildlife
- Be aware that the use of flash photography to take photos of wildlife can cause alarm, leading to increased aggression – respect your guide's advice

- Do not purchase souvenirs that are made from protected / threatened wildlife products or other natural materials e.g. coral, shells (marine or land), starfish, seahorses, wild animal skin (handbags, belts, drums, etc.), ivory, hard wood, bushmeat, parts of wild animals (bone, feathers, quills, teeth, etc. used in traditional medicines, good luck charms, etc.), tortoise shell, plant parts (seeds, roots, flower heads), etc.
- Ask your guide for advice on where to make your souvenir purchases so as to ensure that benefits to local communities are maximised
- If scuba diving, do not approach marine animals but allow them instead to approach you if they so choose
- Do not drop litter or cigarette ends – this can cause fires and litter can harm wildlife - dispose of these responsibly
- If you are able, put something back into the conservation of the area/wildlife you have visited by making a personal contribution to support conservation in the area

8.3 When Participating In Cultural Activities Or Visiting Cultural Villages & Sites

Remember at all times that in many instances the local culture may differ substantially from your personal views and value systems. Yours are not necessarily right and theirs wrong, just different. Respect these differences and enjoy the unique opportunity to broaden your knowledge.

Beware of cultural activities that exploit local cultures and communities through such practices as using underage children for performances when they should be in school. You can be assured that all experiences offered by African Insight comply with our rigorous responsible tourism policies.

- Do not go uninformed and unprepared into an interactive cultural experience. Find out beforehand how you should behave and show appropriate respect
- Make sure you are aware of relevant social issues, such as HIV/AIDS, poverty and water etc. pertaining to the area or culture you are visiting. This will enable you to gain a better perspective
- Remember culture is dynamic and not all cultural activities are based on the contemporary way of life, but may also be based on a traditional way of life of a bygone era. Accept these for what they are by acknowledging the difference and value in celebrating past and present cultural differences
- Your guide will brief you on the cultural sensitivities specific to the area you are visiting and how you can minimise potential

negative impacts of your behaviour on the local community
e.g. most appropriate dress code when in local villages, etc.

- Take special consideration of and respect gender issues to which you may have a different viewpoint. Without a full understanding of the culture, which you cannot hope to acquire on a short visit, you cannot afford to challenge these. Ask questions in an attempt to gain clarity but do not pass judgement
- It is important to note cultural perspectives surrounding nudity. These differ from area to area in South Africa and between ethnic groups. Although in many contemporary traditional ceremonies today maidens, for example, will be bare-breasted (which is traditional and should be accepted with respect), African Insight does not support the commercial exploitation of nudity as 'tourist attractions'
- Take up opportunities to exchange culture with the local community in *authentic* settings and with willing participants. Avoid cultural tourist traps, which are out of context and operated for economic exploitation
- Always be polite and respectful to local people and show respect by asking before taking pictures of people and be prepared to pay for the privilege. When photographing children ask for their parents consent first
- Begging is a major problem in many areas. It is a sensitive issue and touches on the huge divide that exists between the 'haves' and 'have nots'. It is a distasteful practice, not necessarily for the visitor, but for the communities it affects
- If you are able, make a personal contribution to a local community development project in the area you have visited (e.g. local school, clinic, farming project, etc.). African Insight has structures in place to ensure that your contribution is used to its maximum potential
- Although children may ask you for money or sweets and it may make you feel good to give, please do not. The giving of cash or sweets does not help in the long term it only perpetuates an underlying problem and propagates a 'begging' culture which is demeaning to local people
- Remember at all times that children have parents and as the family providers any giving should come from the parents
- Remember at all times that in any cultural exchange / interaction the desired outcome is for you to part in the knowledge that you have done your best to leave positive impression with your hosts. Be tourism ambassadors!

8.4 When Participating In Marine Based Tourism Activities

- Do not feed cetaceans or other marine life as this can have severe consequences for an animal's social behaviour patterns and lead to increased aggression
- Do not touch cetaceans or other marine life as you can unwittingly pass on diseases or injure them, as well as place yourself at risk
- Do not encourage your guide to move so close to cetaceans that your presence disturbs them or interferes with their natural behaviour
- Do not encourage your guide to pursue cetaceans that are showing avoidance tactics
- Speak quietly and do not make any sudden movements when close to marine life so as not to alarm it
- Do not drop litter into the sea - dispose of responsibly
- Use rest rooms on land before your trip
- If you are able, put something back into the conservation of the marine life/ecosystem you have visited by making a personal contribution to support conservation in the area
- When scuba diving, along with the above:
 - do not approach cetaceans and other marine wildlife, but allow them instead to approach you if they so choose
 - do not disturb, touch or remove any plants or marine life e.g. coral
 - do not support 'swim with dolphin' experiences
 - do not feed or harass sharks, reef fish or other marine wildlife
 - do not pursue marine wildlife that is displaying avoidance tactics
 - do not swim closer than 100m from whales and 10m from dolphins, seals and other marine mammals

8.5 When Buying Local Crafts And Souvenirs

- Purchasing locally produced goods and services from locally owned establishments and individuals e.g. souvenirs, crafts, meals etc. can really enhance your experience and at the same time contribute significantly to the livelihoods of local communities, as for many this is their only source of income. Make it a policy to buy locally made products in locally owned outlets.

- Ask your guide for advice on where to make your souvenir purchases so as to ensure that benefits to local communities are maximised
- Do not purchase souvenirs that are made from protected / threatened wildlife products or other natural materials e.g. coral, shells (marine or land), starfish, seahorses, wild animal skin (handbags, belts, drums, etc.), ivory, hard wood, bushmeat, parts of wild animals (bone, feathers, quills, teeth, etc. used in traditional medicines, good luck charms, etc.), tortoise shell, plant parts (seeds, roots, flower heads), etc.
- When buying woodcarvings and items crafted from raw animal products, unless you are sure of the source of the raw material and its sustainable policy do not buy it. The indiscriminate harvesting of indigenous hardwoods and killing of animals for skins for the souvenir trade is a major cause for concern. In some cases specially protected plants and animal parts are being used, for which a legal permit is necessary and without which you could be liable for prosecution
- Be aware of the import regulations of your home country and do not purchase souvenirs that contravene these
- In many rural markets bargaining is not accepted practice. These markets are organised on a cooperative basis where all the crafters take turns in selling on behalf of the group. The seller is often not the crafter and cannot accept a lesser amount. It is also in the cooperative agreement that the seller cannot 'punt' his or her own crafts over and above another's
- In markets where each person is selling their own crafts bargaining may be acceptable. Establish this fact first. In bargaining show respect for the crafter and pay a fair price based on whether you would sell the same article for the price you are willing to pay
- Support local culture by being aware that in many cases the crafts you see in many markets may in fact not be from South Africa at all. For instance there are no South African tribal groups that use carved wooden masks, which abound in most markets