

Ve.Travel Services



SUSTAINABILITY POLICY OF VE TRAVEL SERVICES

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Purpose

VE Travel Services is committed to Our aim is to promote a new way of travelling that both supports and considers the expectations of the traveller and supports and respects the land and its inhabitants. We want you to explore the places and cultures of our world that are away from the conventional tourist attractions, take part in the sustainable development of the local communities that offer a warm and traditional reception with respect for the local places and their traditions.

Scope

This policy shall apply to all levels of the organization, encompassing all departments and operations. All staff, suppliers, and partners are expected to fully support and adhere to the objectives outlined in this policy to the best of their ability within existing budgetary constraints.



Sustainability management & legal compliance

- To effectively manage and advance our sustainability initiatives, a dedicated Sustainability/CSR
- Coordinator has been appointed. The role and responsibilities of this position have been clearly defined to ensure the successful implementation of our sustainability objectives. The sustainability coordinator has completed the Travelife sustainability training successfully.
- VE Travel Services has a formally documented sustainability policy aligned with its organizational structure and operational activities. This policy is communicated to all staff members and is accessible through company's website.
- A comprehensive sustainability mission statement has been developed and effectively disseminated through the company website.
- VE Travel Services has undertaken a baseline assessment to evaluate its current compliance with the Travelife sustainability best practice standard.
- VE Travel Services commits to report its progress via Travelife at least every two years.
- TVE Travel Services has developed a comprehensive sustainability action plan with clear targets, actions, and a timeline. The company commits to updating the staff regularly with the company sustainability activities and results.
- VE Travel Services follows all local, regional, national, and international regulations as they relate to human resources, human rights, children's rights, land rights, environmental management, wildlife, and land use.
- We follow a strict Code of Ethics, including a zero-tolerance policy for corruption, bribery, forced labor, and discrimination.

Internal management: social policy & human rights

- VE Travel Services supports both career-related and job-related professional development activities.
- VE Travel Services recognizes the right of employees to freely enter into and terminate employment relationships, subject to the terms of their employment contracts and all applicable national labor laws.
- VE Travel Services recognizes the importance of a fair wage, therefore the company ensures that all employees receive compensation that meets or exceeds the legal minimum wage. This commitment reflects the company's dedication to the well-being of its employees and their ability to meet their basic needs.
- Overtime work, defined as any work performed in excess of the standard weekly hours of employment, shall be compensated in accordance with applicable labor laws. This compensation is mutually agreed upon between the employee and VE Travel Services.
- VE Travel Services commits to stand against discrimination in all aspects of employment, including recruitment, conditions of employment, access to training and senior positions, advancement opportunities, and all other employment-related matters. Discrimination based on gender, race, age, disability, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, residency status, or any other protected characteristic is strictly prohibited.
- VE Travel Services is committed to ethical employment practices and categorically prohibits the employment of children under the age of 14 for any work typically undertaken by adults.
- VE Travel Services is committed to a zero-tolerance policy for acts of bribery, corruption, discrimination, and violation of human rights, including forced labor, human trafficking, and all rights of children.
- VE Travel Services further expects this commitment from all partners and suppliers.

Internal management: environment

Environmental management of office operations

In VE Travel Services, we are committed to keeping the direct footprint of our business operations as minimal as possible and actively follow sustainability and environmentally-sound principles.

We have the following measures in place:

- Follow all local and national regulations concerning environmental law
- Measure, monitor, and evaluate use of all commodities and products purchased, especially in terms of water, waste and energy.
- Procure office supply locally, with limited packaging, and sustainability certified whenever possible.
- Print only when absolutely necessary, and when printing, always print double-sided on grayscale. Paper must always be recycled, with preference for the highest percentage post-consumer materials.
- Energy saving measures are in place in all common areas.
- All equipment and lighting is energy-efficient and turned off/unplugged/on sleep mode when not in use.
- Waste is separated into the following categories: plastic, organic and paper products] and is disposed of properly by municipality.
- Promoting participation and communicating our commitment to responsible environmental management by promoting environmental responsibility amongst our employees and stakeholders and soliciting input from them to better achieve our environmental goals.

Transport

VE Travel Services commits to

- Preferring ground transport over air transport for short-haul travel destinations.
- Avoiding in-destination flights as much as possible.
- Using appropriate vehicle sizes for group sizes and purchasing most efficient vehicles available.

Accommodations

VE Travel Service is committed to promoting sustainable tourism practices and minimizing our environmental impact. We believe in responsible travel that benefits both travelers and local communities. As part of this commitment, we have established the following sustainability guidelines for accommodations:

- Communicate our sustainability policy and requirements to contracted accommodation.
- Prioritize accommodations with strong sustainability practices, considering their management systems and
- environmental impact. We prefer accommodations that have obtained sustainability certifications.
- Share our policy with all accommodation providers, addressing child labor, anti-corruption, bribery, waste management, and biodiversity protection.
- Encourage Contracted accommodations to participate in available local or international sustainability training.
- Proactive engagement in collaborative efforts with other stakeholders, when requested, to promote sustainable practices in the destination.
- Extend incentives and benefits to accommodations that actively engage in and promote sustainable practices.
- Uphold and protect the rights of minors. When selecting accommodations, we ensure that no children under the age of 14 are employed. We express our zero-tolerance stance on the sexual exploitation of children. We reserve the right to prematurely terminate the contractual agreement if accommodation suppliers fail to implement adequate measures to prevent child sexual exploitation.
- Give preference to accommodations that feature sustainably or locally crafted souvenirs that reflect the area's rich history and cultural heritage.
- Favor the selection of accommodations and restaurants that incorporate elements of local arts, architecture or cultural heritage to give an authentic experience to the guests.
- If there is clear evidence that contracted accommodations are threatening the availability or integrity of essential services—such as food, water, energy, healthcare, or soil— to neighboring communities, this may justify terminating the partnership.

Activities & Excursions

- All excursions and activities run by VE Travel Services respect local customs, traditions, cultural integrity, and natural resources.
- VE Travel Services commits to not offering any excursions that harm humans, wildlife, environment, or natural resources such as water and energy.
- VE Travel Services actively seeks to support local communities through the integration of excursions and activities that directly benefit local businesses and residents. This includes promoting the purchase of local goods and services, supporting traditional crafts and local food production methods, and facilitating visits to community-based social projects.
- VE Travel Services does not offer excursions in which wildlife is held captive, except for properly regulated activities in compliance with national and international laws.
- Wildlife species are not harvested, consumed, displayed, sold, or traded, except as part of a regulated activity that ensures that their utilization is sustainable and in compliance with local, national and international law.
- Excursions involving wildlife interactions are conducted in accordance with relevant codes of conduct, with a strong emphasis on minimizing any negative impacts on wildlife populations. Cumulative impacts are carefully considered, and any disturbance to natural ecosystems is minimized, mitigated, and offset through appropriate conservation contributions.
- To ensure responsible and respectful visitation, guests will be accompanied by skilled and/or certified guides when visiting sensitive cultural sites, heritage sites, or ecologically sensitive destinations.
- VE Travel Services commits to offering products and services that are environmentally and socially responsible. No activities that harm humans, animals, plants, or which are culturally unacceptable are offered. Any potential disturbance to natural ecosystems is minimized.

Tour leaders, local representatives, and guides

- VE Travel Services commits to hiring qualified local guides, porters, drivers or other local staff, paying them living wages and providing safe and fair working conditions. We expect the same from our suppliers that are hiring local staff on behalf of VE Travel Services.
- VE Travel Services understands that guides are the intermediaries between the guests and the socio-cultural and environmental context of the destination, conveying the appropriate behavior to them. Therefore, we make sure that all guides hired by or leading tours on behalf of VE Travel Services are trained regularly and knowledgeable in the sustainability topics of the destination.
- VE Travel Services provides guides with learning opportunities on sustainability topics including providing free access to the Travelife online learning platform.



Destinations

Sustainable destinations

- VE Travel Services prefers to work in destinations that have been committed to sustainability as an integral part of community and destination development.
- VE Travel Services aims to send visitors to secondary or lesser-known tourist areas to avoid overtourism.
- VE Travel Services does not support destinations that have a questionable human rights track record.

Contribution to local communities / local economic network

VE Travel Services commits to positively contributing to the destinations in which we operate, by:

- Sourcing locally and responsibly, and supporting local and traditional arts and culture.
- Encouraging guests to shop responsibly and educating them about illegal/prohibited/forbidden souvenirs.
- Collaborating with other local tourism stakeholders [including local government, other tourism businesses, academia, community groups] to further the sustainable tourism development of the destination.
- Respecting and advocating for all human rights (i.e. children's rights, women's rights, labor rights, etc.) as well as land rights.

Environmental stewardship in destinations

VE Travel Services commits to environmental stewardship in the destinations in which we operate by:

- Ensuring natural resources remain intact
- Educating guests about the principles of responsible travel and responsible visitor behavior
- VE Travel Services prohibits the purchase of any forbidden souvenirs, including but not limited to those derived from threatened or endangered flora and fauna species and illegally obtained historical or archaeological artifacts.

Customer communication and protection

Marketing and communication

- VE Travel Services maintains the highest standards of ethical marketing and advertising. All marketing materials, statements, and publications shall accurately reflect the services and experiences offered.
- VE Travel Services is committed to providing accurate and informative communication to our clients. All emails, promotional materials, and website content are reviewed for accuracy and completeness. Furthermore, we ensure that clear and accessible contact information is provided to facilitate customer inquiries and address any questions promptly.
- All travel product information provided to clients, including marketing materials and website content, must be accurate, complete, and free from any misleading claims. Sustainability claims must be verifiable and supported by credible evidence.
- As part of our commitment to ethical and responsible tourism, we ensure that all destination information provided to clients is accurate, balanced, and complete. This includes a transparent presentation of sustainability aspects, enabling travelers to make informed choices that minimize their environmental impact.
- VE Travel Services recognizes the global nature of child sexual exploitation and condemns this abhorrent practice in all its forms. We are committed to upholding the highest ethical standards and actively work to prevent any form of child sexual exploitation within our operations and throughout the entire travel experience.

Customer experience

- VE Travel Services aims for all customers' experiences to be positive, and follows strict health and safety, marketing, and excursion policies to ensure customer satisfaction. These policies cover specific topics of (but not limited to):
 - Health and safety
 - Emergency procedures
 - Sexual exploitation
 - Children in tourism
 - Satisfaction and complaints
- VE Travel Services maintains open lines of communication with our customers and encourages feedback at any time and on any topic, particularly sustainability.

Contact / Responsible person

- All staff are responsible for the ownership and undertaking of this policy.
- All staff are responsible for the promotion and implementation of this sustainability policy within their departments.
- The implementation of this policy will be led by the Sustainability Coordinator, Jasmine Isam, who can be reached at info@vacanzegiziane.com

Effective date

This policy is effective from 1 January 2025.

