

Sustainability policy of Cacao Travel



Cacao Travel Group
Cacao Travel Group panama

Purpose

The company is committed to implementing sustainability at all levels where possible. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that sustainability is implemented in all our activities and accommodations offered in all aspects by applying it and updating it every day.

Our goal is to contribute to a sustainable society and tourism.

Our objectives are to reduce the negative environmental, sociocultural and economic impact of our product by adapting our travel policies and standards. We support our suppliers to adopt stricter sustainability standards and stimulate greater awareness among our customers and motivate them for more sustainable travel behavior.

Scope

This policy applies to all entities involved in our operations, so we expect everyone to apply and comply with it to the best of their ability.

Cacao Travel Group Panamá is responsible for implementing the company's sustainability policy.

Sustainability management & legal compliance

Sustainability commitment

Cacao Travel Group Panamá, leadership is wholly committed to the company's sustainability performance and endorses the company's sustainability mission statement and policy.

We will use the Travelife platform to report on our sustainability progress and to monitor and evaluate progress. We are committed to publicly communicate our sustainability performance (by means of the Travelife report) every two years.

Sustainability management & legal compliance

Cacao Travel Group Panamá commits to continuous improvement of sustainability practices, including the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of our sustainability policy, with dedicated personnel and resources to achieve our sustainability goals.

Cacao Travel Group Panamá 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

Employees

- We recognize that our employees are our biggest asset for delivering meaningful travel experiences to our customers. Therefore, we maintain a clear human resource policy to ensure:
 - Legal compliance in all regards.
 - A safe, healthy, and welcoming workplace.

- Fair contract conditions including fair compensation.
- Training opportunities including trainings on topics of sustainability, sexual harassment and exploitation in the workplace and in the industry.
- Participation in the sustainability planning activities.
- Inclusion and equal opportunity for all employees, particularly with regard to compensation, promotion, distribution of benefits, and professional development opportunities.

Internal management: environment

Environmental management of office operations

- We are committed to keeping the direct footprint of our business operations as minimal as possible and actively follow circularity, the 5Rs (refuse, reduce, reuse, repurpose, recycle)/sustainability/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, energy, and carbon.
 - Procure office supply. locally, seasonally, fair trade, in bulk, with limited packaging, sustainability certified whenever possible.
 - Print only when absolutely necessary, and when printing, always print double-sided on grayscale. Paper must always be FSC or equivalent certified, 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.
 - Water saving measures are in place in all common areas and restrooms, including water capture in external areas.
 - Waste is separated into the following categories: plastic, organic, paper products, metal, hazardous, glass, e-waste, waste to landfill and is disposed of properly by a private company/municipality.
 - Noise, light, and air pollution is minimised.

Carbon management of office operations

- Cacao Travel Group Panamá is committed to reducing our carbon footprint and endeavours to reduce the amount we travel as much as possible by:
 - Reduce the amount we travel as much as possible.
 - Monitoring and measuring carbon footprint with the aim to reduce as much as possible and offset remaining amounts.
 - Encouraging remote work whenever possible, and when it is not possible, making it easier for employees to limit their carbon footprint by use of eco modes of transportation.
 - We commit to offsetting our remaining direct and indirect carbon from travel and fossil energy use via [carbon offset company].
 - Installing energy efficient equipment and appliances (where appropriate/possible).

Land use

- Cacao Travel Group Panamá offices are located in a [urban/suburban/rural] area and abides by all local land use laws, respects local cultural and natural resources in our business operations, and favours sustainable

architecture and design.

General suppliers policy

- Cacao Travel Group Panamá is committed to sourcing its products and services responsibly, avoiding harmful impacts on society, culture and nature as much as possible. We expect the same level of engagement and commitment from our suppliers.
- Cacao Travel Group Panamá prefers to work with partners that share the company's commitment towards sustainability. This means that we prefer partners that have a written sustainability statement as an integral part of their business policy and/or a clear sustainability policy in place.
- Cacao Travel Group Panamá prefers to work with suppliers in the destinations that are locally owned or managed, use local and seasonal products and services and benefit the local community by hiring locally and equitably and by providing fair working conditions.
- Whenever possible, Cacao Travel Group Panamá prefers to select partner companies that comply with tourism-specific, internationally recognized (GSTC-accredited) certifications, or other sustainability certifications like B Corp or ISO.
- Cacao Travel Group Panamá offers incentives for partners that are actively engaged in sustainable operations.
- Cacao Travel Group Panamá expects its suppliers to adhere to a Code of Conduct/Code of Ethics, that includes the following responsible business practices:
 - Complying with all local, regional, national and international regulations
 - Respecting all human rights including labour rights, children's rights, and women's rights.
 - Committing to fair employment conditions.
 - Following anti-corruption, anti-bribery, anti-extortion, and anti-discrimination policies.
 - Protecting children from (sexual) exploitation through tourism.
 - Protecting the environment and natural resources.
 - Acting in the best interest of local communities.
 - Protecting the interests of Cacao Travel Group Panamá.

Our complete supplier (Code of Conduct) is available here: [link to actively collaborates with suppliers to improve their sustainability performance.](#)

We encourage our suppliers to continuously learn about sustainability and provide/support this learning whenever possible.

- Cacao Travel Group Panamá maintains open lines of communication with our suppliers and partners and encourage feedback from our stakeholders at any time and on any topic, particularly sustainability.

Inbound partner agencies

Cacao Travel Group Panamá, does not work with inbound partner agencies.

Transport

- Cacao Travel Group Panamá only works with transport providers that adhere to the company's [Code of Conduct attached].
- When selecting transport for guests and business related travel, Cacao Travel Group Panamá commits to choosing the most environmentally friendly options available for travelling to, from, and within the destination – taking into consideration distance, price, route, and comfort.
- Cacao Travel Group Panamá has implemented clear guidelines for reducing GHG emissions from transport and selecting the most environmentally friendly transport options, including the following measures:
 - 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.
 - Training drivers on eco-driving techniques.
- Cacao Travel Group Panamá endeavours and has a system in place to measure and compensate for the unavoidable GHG emissions produced from transportation. Compensation costs are either included by default in the package price or compensation is actively promoted to the clients as a booking option.

Accommodations

- Cacao Travel Group Panamá only works with accommodations that adhere to the company's [Code of Conduct attached].
- In the accommodation selection process, Cacao Travel Group Panamá considers the sustainability practices of an accommodation by taking into account their sustainability management and social and environmental footprint.
- Cacao Travel Group Panamá favours the selection of accommodations that respect and protect land use, as well as respectfully highlight elements of local architecture, customs and traditions.

Activities & Excursions

- Cacao Travel Group Panamá only works with excursion providers that adhere to the company's [Code of Conduct attached].
- All excursions and activities run by or on behalf of Cacao Travel Group respect local customs, traditions, cultural integrity, and natural resources.
- Cacao Travel Group Panamá commits to not offering any excursions that harm humans, wildlife, environment, or natural resources such as water and energy.
- Cacao Travel Group Panamá gives preference to excursions and activities that benefit local communities, respect animal welfare and support environmental protection.
- Cacao Travel Group Panamá has clear guidelines/Codes of Conduct in place for environmentally and culturally sensitive excursions offered by or on behalf of the company. These guidelines are actively communicated to guests as well as distributed and implemented by excursion providers and guides.
- Cacao Travel Group Panamá provides excursion and attraction providers opportunities for sustainability learning and management, including free access to the Travelife online learning and reporting platform.

Tour leaders, local representatives, and guides

- Cacao Travel Group Panamá 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 Cacao Travel Group Panamá.
- Cacao Travel Group Panamá understands that guides are the intermediaries between the guests and the socio-cultural and environmental context of the destination, conveying the appropriate behaviour to them. Therefore, we make sure that all guides hired by or leading tours on behalf of Cacao Travel Group Panamá are trained regularly and knowledgeable in the sustainability topics of the destination.
- Our guides are specifically trained on the critical issue of sexual exploitation of children in tourism.
- Cacao Travel Group Panamá provides guides with learning opportunities on sustainability topics including providing free access to the Travelife online learning platform.

Destinations

Sustainable destinations

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

Contribution to local communities / local economic network

- Cacao Travel Group Panamá commits to positive contribution 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, labour rights, etc.) as well as land rights.

Environmental stewardship in destinations

- Cacao Travel Group Panamá 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 behaviour.

Customer communication and protection

Privacy

- Our customer protection is our priority. Therefore, we maintain a clear privacy policy [add link] to ensure:
 - Legal compliance in all regards.
 - Customers and their data are protected.

- Customers know how their information is being used.

Marketing and communication

- Cacao Travel Group Panamá strives to be truthful in all situations and at all times. We offer products and services that do what we claim in our communications.
- We honour our explicit and implicit commitments and promises.
- We are anti-greenwashing and stand behind our sustainability claims 100%.
- We endeavour to be inclusive and representative in our marketing, and to always take into account cultural, religious, and ethnic sensitivities.

Sustainability communication

- Customers are informed about the social and environmental impact of their journey, and are educated about the sustainable choices they can make, including transparent communication on:
 - Certified accommodations.
 - Compensation of their trips CO2 emissions.
 - Activities and excursions that benefit the local communities and environmental protection.
 - Responsible shopping and illegal souvenirs.

Customer experience

- The company aims for all customer 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.
 - Privacy.
 - Group numbers.
 - Greenhouse Gas emissions and offsetting.
 - Transport.
 - Shopping.
 - Sexual exploitation.
 - Children in tourism.

- Satisfaction and complaints.

- Cacao Travel Group Panamá 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 lead by the Sustainability Coordinator, Anaemilia Oropeza, who can be reached at anaemilia@cacaopanama.

Definitions

- **Sustainability policy** for a business, is the way to document the company will handle sustainability issues in the organization.
- **Social Policy** is an interdisciplinary and applied academic subject concerning human needs, social justice and individual and collective wellbeing.
- **Human Rights** are rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status.
- **Enviromental managment** is the practice of organizing human activities in order to limit their impact on the natural environment.
- **Carbon managment** is an organized approach to gain the strategic advantages of CO2 emissions reductions.
- **Stakeholders** is an individual or group that has an interest in any decision or activity of an organization.
- **GHG emisions** or Greenhouse gas emissions from human activities strengthen the greenhouse effect, contributing to climate change. Most is carbon dioxide from burning fossil fuels: coal, oil, and natural gas.
- **Tour Leader** means a person responsible for taking care of and providing convenience to the tourists in travelling abroad.
- **Local representative** means an Employee appointed or elected by the Local to represent employees in matters relating to the Collective Agreement.
- **Tour guide** is a person who takes people on trips through an area and explains the interesting details about it.
- **Local economic network** is a combination of individuals, groups, or countries who pool resources and competitive advantages to benefit each other.
- **Enviromental Stewardship** refers to the responsible use and protection of the natural enviroment through active participation in conservation efforts and sustainable practices by individuals, small groups, non profits organizations, federal agencies and other colletive network.