

## **Sustainability policy of Eco Events**



## **Purpose**

The company is committed to implementing sustainable practices in every service provided to its client. The purpose of this policy is to establish clear commitment and criteria to which the company complies, in order to deliver sustainable tourism products.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to all operations, from management to the executive level of the company. This Policy does not apply to suppliers and partners, unless otherwise stated.

## **Sustainability management & legal compliance**

### Sustainability commitment

EcoEvents leadership is wholly committed to the company's sustainability performance and endorses the company's sustainability mission statement and policy.

EcoEvents will use the Travelife platform to report on its sustainability progress and to monitor and evaluate progress. Ecoevents is committed to (publicly) communicating its sustainability performance (by means of the Travelife report) every two years.

### Sustainability management & legal compliance

EcoEvents commits to continuous improvement of sustainability practices, including the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of its sustainability policy, with dedicated personnel and resources to achieve its sustainability goals.

EcoEvents 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. EcoEvents follows a strict Code of Ethics, including a zero-tolerance policy for corruption, bribery, forced labor, and discrimination.

## **Internal management: social policy & human rights**

- ◆ EcoEvents supports both career-related and job-related professional development activities.
- ◆ EcoEvents is committed to the principle of fair and equal pay for like work and for work of equal value for all its employees and contractors, regardless of gender/sex, race, national origin, marital status, age, religion.
- ◆ EcoEvents is committed to fostering a safe, healthy, and inclusive work place/work culture where all employees are able to perform their duties/to recognize their potential.
- ◆ EcoEvents 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.
- ◆ EcoEvents further expects this commitment from all partners and suppliers.

## **Internal management: environment**

### Environmental management of office operations

EcoEvents is committed to managing environmental impact as an integral part of its operations. It is its policy to assure the environmental integrity of its processes and products at all times by:

1. Continuously seeking opportunities to improve its environmental performance by establishing objectives and targets, measuring progress, and reporting its results, including but not limited to energy, water, paper, and carbon.
2. Practicing a waste hierarchical approach to always reduce, reuse, and recycle commodities and products instead of waste, particularly waste to landfill.
3. Promoting participation and communicating its commitment to responsible environmental management by promoting environmental responsibility amongst its employees and stakeholders and soliciting input from them to better achieve its environmental goals.
4. Minimizing pollution including light, noise, and any soil, water, or air contaminants, and avoiding use of any toxic or hazardous substances.

### Carbon management of office operations

- ◆ EcoEvents is committed to reducing its carbon footprint and endeavor to reduce the amount employees travel as much as possible by:
  - Reduce the amount they travel to / from the office as much as possible (or use carbon free means of transportation, such as walking or bicycle).
  - Monitoring and measuring carbon footprint with the aim to reduce as much as possible and offset remaining amounts.
  - Incite ageing 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.
  - EcoEvents commits to offsetting its remaining direct and indirect carbon from travel and fossil energy use via any carbon offset company.
  - Implementing procedures such as [e.g. following proper maintenance for vehicle fleet, offering incentives such as bike rental stipend].
  - Installing energy efficient equipment and appliances [where appropriate/possible]

### Energy reduction policy

- All office lights are turned off when office is closed. LED lighting is in place. Natural lighting is promoted by all glass-door which permits the sunlight to lighten the office. The office building was insulated at its renovation, 2 years ago, making the use of air-conditioning unnecessary except for the hottest months (July / August).
- Every employee is responsible for switching off their personal working computer when their shift is over. The last employee to leave (last shift) is responsible for switching of the air-conditioning, if it is in use.
- The last employee to leave (last shift) is responsible for switching of the office lights.
- Our equipment is bought second-hand, in order to reduce production of new equipment / use of new material. If we buy new equipment, low-cost is preferred and we try to find the best compromise between price, low-energy consumption and effectiveness.
- All equipment is set by default to energy saving mode (screen switches off after 5 minutes of no use).

## Land use

- ♦ EcoEvents main office is located in an urban area and abides by all local land use laws, respects local cultural and natural resources in its business operations, and favors sustainable architecture and design.

## **General suppliers' policy**

- ♦ EcoEvents is committed to sourcing its products and services responsibly, avoiding harmful impacts on society, culture and nature as much as possible. EcoEvents prefers to work with suppliers that share the same level of engagement.
- ♦ EcoEvents prefers to work with partners that share the company's commitment towards sustainability. This means that the company prefers partners that have a written sustainability statement as an integral part of their business policy and/or a clear sustainability policy in place.

## **General trip suggestion policy**

- ♦ Our first suggestion to all of our multi-day visitors are off the beaten track areas (small villages, cultural heritage areas, off-city destinations) and we also strongly suggest our own sustainable trips (visits to such areas and community participation, such as visiting a local farmer and assisting on his day). The final choice depends on our traveler's own desire and their budget.

- ◆ EcoEvents 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, EcoEvents prefers to select partner companies that comply with tourism-specific, internationally recognized (GSTC-accredited) certifications, or other sustainability certifications like B Corp or ISO.
- ◆ EcoEvents 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 labor 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 EcoEvents
- ◆ EcoEvents raises awareness amongst its suppliers to adopt sound social and environmental practices, and to minimize their carbon footprint.
- ◆ EcoEvents actively collaborates with suppliers to improve their sustainability performance. Ecoevents encourages its suppliers to continuously learn about sustainability and provide/support this learning whenever possible.
- ◆ EcoEvents maintains open lines of communication with its suppliers and partners and encourage feedback from its stakeholders at any time and on any topic, particularly sustainability.

### **Inbound partner agencies**

- ◆ In the entire process of developing and operating its travel packages, EcoEvents expects partner agencies to act in the best interests of the surrounding communities and environment as well as its guests.

One of EcoEvents' methods to select a supplier is if they engage in socially responsible actions and promote an ethical treatment of their employees.

## **Transport**

- ◆ When selecting transport for guests and business related travel, EcoEvents commits to choosing the most environmentally friendly options available for within the destination – taking into consideration distance, price, route, and comfort.
  
- ◆ EcoEvents 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 completely
  
  - Suggesting public transportation options in the destinations
  
  - Using appropriate vehicle sizes for group sizes and purchasing most efficient vehicles available
  
  - Training drivers on eco-driving techniques
  
- ◆ EcoEvents endeavors – 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**

- ◆ In the accommodation selection process, EcoEvents considers the sustainability practices of an accommodation by taking into account their sustainability management and social and environmental footprint.
- ◆ EcoEvents favors the selection of accommodations that respect and protect land use, as well as respectfully highlight elements of local architecture, customs and traditions

## Activities & Excursions

- ♦ All excursions and activities run by or on behalf of EcoEvents respect local customs, traditions, cultural integrity, and natural resources.
- ♦ EcoEvents commits to not offering any excursions that harm humans, wildlife, environment, or natural resources such as water and energy.
- ♦ EcoEvents gives preference to excursions and activities that benefit local communities, respect animal welfare and support environmental protection.

## Tits leaders, local representatives, and guides

- ♦ EcoEvents commits to hiring qualified local guides, porters, drivers or other local staff, paying them living wages and providing safe and fair working conditions.
- ♦ EcoEvents understands that guides are the intermediaries between the guests and the socio-cultural and environmental context of the destination, conveying the appropriate behaviors to them. Therefore, Ecoevents makes sure that all guides hired by or leading tours on behalf of EcoEvents are trained regularly and knowledgeable in the sustainability topics of the destination.
- ♦ Its guides are specifically trained on the critical issue of sexual exploitation of children in tourism.
- ♦ EcoEvents provides guides with learning opportunities on sustainability topics.

## Contribution to local communities / local economic network

- ♦ EcoEvents commits to positive contribution to the destinations in which the company operates, 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, and 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

- ♦ EcoEvents commits to environmental stewardship in the destinations in which the company operates by:

- Ensuring natural resources remain intact
- Educating guests about the principles of responsible travel and responsible visitor behaviors

## **Customer communication and protection**

### Privacy

- ◆ EcoEvents' customer protection is its priority. Therefore, the company maintains a privacy policy to ensure
  - Legal compliance in all regards
  - Customers and their data are protected
  - Customers know how their information is being used

### Customer experience

- ◆ EcoEvents aims for all customer experiences to be positive, and follows 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
- ◆ EcoEvents maintains open lines of communication with its travelers 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, Marina Tzortzakaki, who can be reached at [support@ecoevents.gr](mailto:support@ecoevents.gr).

**Effective date**

This policy is effective from 10/06/2023.

**Revision history**

This policy was revised on -.