

Sustainability policy of Tongass Rainforest Expedition



Purpose

The company is committed to preserving the health and beauty of the Alaskan wilderness. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that sustainability remains a top priority.

Scope

This policy applies to all operations of the company.

The owners are responsible for implementing the company's sustainability policy.

Sustainability management & legal compliance

Sustainability commitment

TREX 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 communicating our sustainability performance every two years via Travelife.

Sustainability management & legal compliance

TREX 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.

TREX 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

- TREX supports both career-related and job-related professional development activities.
- TREX 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.
- TREX is committed to fostering a safe, healthy, and inclusive work place/work culture where all employees are able to perform their duties/to recognise their potential.
- TREX is committed to a zero-tolerance policy for acts of bribery, corruption, discrimination, and violation of human rights, including forced labour, human trafficking, and all rights of children.
- TREX further expects this commitment from all partners and suppliers.

Internal management: environment

Environmental management of office operations

- TREX is committed to managing environmental impact as an integral part of our operations. It is our policy to assure the environmental integrity of our processes and products at all times by:
- Continuously seeking opportunities to improve our environmental performance by establishing objectives and targets, measuring progress, and reporting our results, including but not limited to energy, water, paper, and carbon.
- 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.
- Minimising 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

- TREX 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
 - 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.
 - Implementing procedures such as maintaining the vehicle fleet and using electric transportation wherever possible.
 - Installing energy efficient equipment and appliances where possible.

Land use

- TREX offices are located in a 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

- TREX 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.
- TREX 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.
- TREX 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, TREX prefers to select partner companies that comply with tourism-specific, internationally recognized certifications, or other sustainability certifications like B Corp or ISO.

- TREX offers incentives for partners that are actively engaged in sustainable operations.
- TREX expects its suppliers to adhere to follow responsible business practices such as:
 - 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 exploitation through tourism
 - Protecting the environment and natural resources
 - Acting in the best interest of local communities
 - Protecting the interests of TREX
- Following a zero-tolerance policy, TREX will immediately terminate any relationships with suppliers that violate our policies, specifically through acts of bribery, corruption, discrimination, and violation of human rights.
- TREX raises awareness amongst its suppliers to adopt sound social and environmental practices, and to minimise their carbon footprint.
- TREX 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.
- TREX 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

- TREX only works with partner agencies that commit to socially and ecologically responsible practices.
- In the entire process of developing and operating our travel packages, TREX expects partner agencies to act in the best interests of the surrounding communities and environment as well as our guests.

- TREX provides partner agencies opportunities for sustainability learning and management, including free access to the Travelife online learning and reporting platform.

Transport

- TREX only works with transport providers that adhere to the company's sustainability practices.
- When selecting transport for guests and business related travel, TREX 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.
- TREX 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
 - Using appropriate vehicle sizes for group sizes and purchasing most efficient vehicles available
 - Training drivers on eco-driving techniques
- TERX 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

- TREX only works with accommodations that adhere to the company's values.
- In the accommodation selection process, TREX considers the sustainability practices of an accommodation by taking into account their sustainability management and social and environmental footprint.
- TREX 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

- TREX only works with excursion providers that adhere to the company's values.
- All excursions and activities run by or on behalf of TREX respect local customs, traditions, cultural integrity, and natural resources.

- TREX commits to not offering any excursions that harm humans, wildlife, environment, or natural resources such as water and energy.
- TREX gives preference to excursions and activities that benefit local communities, respect animal welfare and support environmental protection.
- TREX 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.

Tour leaders, local representatives, and guides

- TREX 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 TREX.
- TREX 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 TREX 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.
- TREX provides guides with learning opportunities on sustainability topics including providing free access to the Travelife online learning platform.

Destinations

Sustainable destinations

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

Contribution to local communities / local economic network

- TREX 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

- TREX 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 to ensure
 - Legal compliance in all regards
 - Customers and their data are protected
 - Customers know how their information is being used

Marketing and communication

- TREX 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
- TREX 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, Morgan Wilhelm, who can be reached at morganw99901@gmail.com.

Definitions

“TREX” is defined as “Tongass Rainforest Expedition.”

Effective date

This policy is effective from 6/1/2023.

Revision history

This policy was revised on 5/29/23.

This policy will be revised by 5/29/24.