

# RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL POLICY



## **Aims, Ethos and Mission Statement**

At the core of every trip and destinations that Lost Earth Adventures explores is the ethos of responsible travel. A successful trip is one that leads our clients on an unforgettable journey that which also benefits the communities and areas we visit. Simply put, we endeavor to leave as little impact on the culture, local communities and fragile environments we go to. We encourage our clients to do the same.

Lost Earth Adventures aims to:

- Preserve the culture of the destinations we visit and to respect different cultures, values and beliefs
- Positively impact the communities and destinations we visit
- Minimize the ecological and environmental impact of the places we visit
- Leave places as we found them and to dispose of waste in a responsible manner.
- Only work with suppliers and organizations that adhere to our own high codes of conduct
- Leave nothing but footprints, take nothing but photographs
- To give back to the communities we are so privileged to visit and explore

We understand the impact that tourism can have on the local communities, culture and fragile environments that we are privileged to visit and explore. We want to see the world become a better place and see Lost Earth Adventures as a company with high morals and ethics. We believe that travel can be beneficial for the communities we visit but also for the people that join us on our trips.

## **Environmental**

### *At Work in the UK*

- We only use energy efficient light bulbs in our offices
- All paper, cardboard, plastics, and tins are recycled
- Lost Earth Adventures' employees are encouraged to only print what is absolutely necessary and reduce/reuse materials whenever possible
- Lost Earth Adventures does not have any brochures and aims to keep printing of paper materials to a minimum. We encourage our clients to do the same.
- Our office printer has a 3\* energy rating and is energy efficient
- Lost Earth Adventures' staff walk or cycle to work
- Paper is sourced from sustainable forests and is 100% recycled
- Ink used in all of our materials are eco-friendly, vegetable based inks

### *Bottled Water Guidelines*

Bottled water has an immensely negative impact on the areas we visit, as they are not recyclable. We recommend purchasing water-purifying tablets or a water filter to treat drinking water whilst on tour. Clients on tour are made aware of water refilling stations where available. For example in Kathmandu, clients can refill drinkable water at the K.E.E.P. (Kathmandu Environmental Education Project) Visitor's Centre. Local and international guides are encouraged to follow the same practices.

### *Leave Nothing But Footprints...*

We stand by the adage of “leave nothing but footprints, take nothing but photos” and encourage clients to do the same. Lost Earth Adventures travels through remote, fragile eco-systems and their preservation is of the utmost importance.

### *Take in What You Take Out*

We always dispose of our rubbish in an eco-friendly manner and ‘take out, what we put in’. We encourage our clients to take batteries back to England to dispose of properly.

### *Bio-friendly & Biodegradable Detergents, Soaps & Shampoos*

Lost Earth Adventures’ guides only use detergents that are environmentally friendly and biodegradable. This practice is also recommended to our clients whilst on holiday and before their trip departs. We recognize that it is difficult to find some of these products whilst in the countries we visit, which is why we communicate to our clients before departure the importance of minimizing our environmental impact.

### *Firewood*

We do not purchase or use firewood in areas where resources are scarce, such as in the Himalayas. When we must use firewood, we obtain it by using fallen branches or driftwood.

### *K.E.E.P. (Kathmandu Environmental Education Project) – Nepal*

K.E.E.P. is a not-for profit, non-governmental organization based in Kathmandu, Nepal. The mission of K.E.E.P. is to ensure the future ecological and cultural prosperity of Nepal and its people by maximizing the benefits and reducing the negative impacts associated with tourism.

Their objectives are to:

- Promote sustainable tourism and provide environmental and cultural education to travelers and the tourism industry through free, impartial information and training programmes
- Enable sustainable development through outreach projects, training and resources in order to seek a more equitable distribution of the economic benefits of tourism for the people of Nepal
- Conduct research and development activities on environmental and associated social issues

Our clients are informed and encouraged to visit their Visitor’s Centre in Kathmandu whilst on tour. The Visitor’s Centre provides unbiased and invaluable local knowledge of the areas we visit and is an excellent resource for information and insight into the environmental and ecological issues in Nepal.

### *SAELao Project*

SAELao Project is a community-based project based in Vang Vieng, Laos. Clients on our South East Asian Odyssey tour are encouraged to visit the project’s farm, restaurant/café and community centre. SAELAO’s primary purpose is to set an example of sustainable development in Laos, by using environmentally friendly methods (e.g. biogas, permaculture) and minimizing the use of natural resources.

## **Economic**

### *Local Guides and Suppliers*

- Lost Earth Adventures employs local suppliers and guides.
- We only use reputable suppliers that adhere to the same high standards as ourselves.
- We use suppliers that train and educate younger employees to international standards, gaining international certifications thus raising the standards of the respective industries.

### *Accommodation*

We stay in small family run guesthouses and at home-stays (the homes of local families), thus ensuring that money is driven back into local communities. At all other times we aim to stay in independently owned hotels.

### *Food, Drink and Local Products*

- Generally we do not provide food in our trip prices. We encourage our guests to explore local options whilst eating, and to eat in independent and family run establishments. Not only does this assist in spreading out income for a variety of different families/businesses it encourages our clients to experience new/local cuisine and provides a genuine experience
- In circumstances where we do provide food, produce is locally sourced and we employ local cooks and cook assistants
- We encourage our guests to buy local, shop at local markets and purchase souvenirs/handicrafts and authentic goods that are produced within the region we are exploring.

## **Social**

### *General*

Before departure clients are given an in-depth trip dossier that outlines the where we visit, how we get there and what types of accommodation we stay in. Within this document is extensive information on 'responsible travel' recommendations and information in regards, to culture and lifestyle. We also have in-depth country profile pages available on our website that highlights valuable country information (these pages also relay the political situations in the countries we visit). Clients can upon request receive our complete Responsible Travel policy and also read an abridged version on our company website.

### *Local Suppliers*

Lost Earth Adventures insists on using local suppliers on our holidays, as well as using local guides. When visiting villages and communities we employ local guides and stay in the homes of villagers. Using a local guide with a good knowledge of English is a brilliant way to gain insight into a community and gain a better understanding of the culture, community and destination that we visit. This local connection allows our clients to interact more with the people of the community we visit, and vice versa. With more understanding of the cultures we visit we are assisting in reducing the negative impacts of tourism.

### *Purchasing Goods & Handicrafts*

We encourage our clients to act responsibly when making their purchases, to not buy banned products such as ivory nor to purchase animal skins or marine life. We make our clients aware of the fact that purchasing and exporting antiques is considered illegal and reiterate the importance of a nation preserving its history.

### *The Share the Load Foundation*

After seeing first hand the poor treatment and conditions porters often work in, we decided to create our own foundation, dedicated to providing proper clothing and equipment for porters, their families and the remote mountain communities we visit. *Clients are encouraged to donate/bring useful goods and equipment with them on their holidays.* More information about the foundation can be found on our company website.

### *International Porter Protection Group (IPPG)*

We are proud to follow the guidelines of the International Porter Protection Group (IPPG). This is an organization dedicated to endorsing the fair treatment of mountain porters worldwide. More information about this organization can be found on their website [www.ippg.net](http://www.ippg.net).