



**TOSCO's mission is to promote Responsible travel in Namibia,  
especially in Communal Lands.**

**Members recognize that as visitors we have a responsibility towards the places and people we visit.** We therefore endeavor to minimize negative impacts and maximize positive impacts, especially by working on three levels:

- **ECONOMICAL:** creating economic benefits to local communities
- **SOCIAL:** caring for and respecting local cultures
- **ENVIRONMENTAL:** protecting biodiversity (wildlife, landscapes, flora)

**We propose the following set of guidelines to translate these responsibilities into action:**

## **ECONOMICAL**

- Endeavour to develop a responsible tourism policy for your company and to select your suppliers (accommodation, supplies, e. g. food and craft, excursions/ activities, etc.) based on their social and environmental policies and practices. Try to use local products where possible.
- Give priority to accommodation and campsites where communities are involved
- Source as much as you can e. g. crafts and souvenirs, from local communities.
- Be ready to pay a reasonable and voluntary traverse fee for key areas, outside of classical tourist routes, where the cost of living with wildlife is particularly high. This is only applicable when, and if, a proper system is put in place in the near future by the responsible authorities.
- Use local guides where possible

## **SOCIAL**

- Care for the well-being and cultural identity of local people especially by respecting and recognizing their conservation efforts.
- Do not hand out sweets and pens to children (rather than helping them you may produce the opposite effect by creating dependence or expectations). Instead try to find ways to support e. g. the children's education by working with the community.
- Recognize that local people must benefit from tourism as well. Always ask before taking photographs of people

## **ENVIRONMENTAL**

- Contribute to mitigate Human/Wildlife conflict and support Research projects through TOSCO, this helps to assure that resources are looked after for tourism development

### ***Soliciting Feedback***

*Please note that these guidelines are basic recommendations only and that they are in a development phase. These guidelines are no substitute for assessing each situation individually and making responsible decisions. They are part of a process to promote responsible tourism in Namibia. TOSCO Trust also highly appreciates your input. Please work with us to constantly improve these guidelines.*

- Advise your guests not to buy products made from rare or endangered species and to prefer local quality souvenirs (many souvenirs now come from Asia). Advise them not to remove any plants. When meeting with wildlife, always keep a safe distance, do not harass the animals and give them enough space to move. Avoid entering their comfort zone where they will be forced to react. Keep wildlife wild: do not feed wild animals.
- Endeavour to minimize waste. Do not leave waste where it cannot be properly disposed of, e. g. in remote areas like Purros. Take the maximum with you back to towns (including toilet paper all so-called “biodegradable” items), preferably where there are recycling facilities. In remote areas the rubbish will be dumped or buried – thus endangering the sense of place.
- Use water wisely and try to conserve this valuable resource, ask your guests to use water sparingly.
- Reduce the impact of your activities by avoiding those which have a significant harmful impact on the environment, e. g. off-road driving.
- Avoid establishments with wild animals kept in captivity or ill-treated animals, if there is no recognized conservation work being done that justifies commercial activity with caged wildlife.
- Communicate and explain responsible behavior to your guests. This will enhance their experience and safety. Let them know what you are doing to be a responsible tour operator.
- Never create new tracks when off road driving. Slow your speed to not create correlation (that encourages to leave the track)
- Do not sleep in riverbeds and close to a spring (keep a distance of app. 2km, as otherwise wildlife will be prevented from using the spring) and always leave a camp cleaner than you found it.
- Take along your own firewood (resources are scarce).
- Protect wildlife and your food by securely storing your meals and rubbish, especially when camping outdoors overnight.
- Always use already existing bush camps

***Every action has a consequence, leave nothing behind except respect and good experiences. If you take care of the country and its people, they'll also take care of you.***

**Members who adhere to these guidelines are welcome to market their membership to TOSCO as an effort to promote and develop responsible tourism in Namibia.**

**Please make these guidelines available to your guests (on your website and while on tour).**

**OPERATOR NAME**

**SIGNATURE**

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