

# Sustainability Policy

ANDAMAN DISCOVERIES is committed to growing our company in a sustainable manner. We work towards addressing global issues such as climate change, human rights, nature conservation and sustainability through community based tourism. Our programs are created in collaboration with the communities in which we work and use local resources to have a positive human, environmental and financial impact. We pledge to always take into consideration the impact on both the environment and culture, and aim to provide a better quality of life for our communities, guests and partners. We seek to create innovative approaches to help foster knowledge sharing, environmental stewardship, and cultural exchange through sustainable tourism practices. We have also made a firm commitment towards social and environmental sustainability throughout our supply chain. To further adhere to our commitment to sustainability, we pledge to follow our below policies:

## **Environmental Policy**

Andaman Discoveries pledges to integrate sustainable practices into our daily working environment by following the Environmental code of conduct listed below:

- only run the air conditioning during the very hot season for 5 hours a day
- shut down computers each evening
- use Thai style toilet with bucket water to flush
- recycle all paper, plastic, glass, cans
- use plastic boxes or banana leaves for take away meals, instead of Styrofoam or plastic bags
- use reusable bags and water bottles when traveling
- use local hand made soap for cleaning the office
- when we have the option drink coffee that was made in Thailand
- print on both sides of the paper and use recycled paper for printing
- encourage our guests to bring reusable water bottles and bags when they travel
- Provide guests with appropriate pre-departure information and environmental code of conduct so they can be informed, respectful and sustainable travelers.

## **Sustainable Practices to our Employees Policy**

Andaman Discoveries values its employees as they are the heart and spirit of our company and we pledge to treat them with dignity, respect and follow all ethical policies in regards to human recourses as per below.

- Andaman Discoveries pledges to follow our Human Recourse Procedural Manual, Ethical Code, Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy, Health and Safety policy to ensure the rights of our employees are protected.
- Andaman Discoveries aims to provide its staff with a safe and inspiring working environment. We believe in developing an atmosphere of peer support through which we encourage personal development.
- We support personal development through regular opportunities to attend trainings. Opportunities are also made available to students and interns.
- At Andaman Discoveries we respect the importance of family and personal situations. The company offers schemes for maternity leave and provides medical insurance for employees as per their contract conditions.

- Andaman Discoveries opposes all forms of forced labor within its offices and within its supply chain. Additionally, we do not employ minors and adhere to the principles of Thailand's Labor Ministry.
- Andaman Discoveries does not tolerate discrimination in terms of gender, race, age, disability, ethnicity, religion/beliefs or sexual orientation. Additionally, employees enjoy the right to representation by trade unions and to make complaints to the management without fear of reprisal.
- All staff members have a written employment contract that includes labor conditions, a description of duties, details of annual leave and overtime.
- Additionally, employees receive periodic guidance and training in Health and Safety and first aid kits are available at all offices.
- Andaman Discoveries embraces social and environmental sustainability and aims for its employees to embrace this agenda through training and education.
- Send an AD staff member to at least one village community-based tourism meeting per month. Meeting attendance will help ensure AD maintains close ties with villages, and keeps village interests at the forefront of AD's agenda.

### **Andaman Discoveries Guests Policy**

We pledge to give the best information about our company and programs so that guests are prepared for their cultural experience. This encourages sustainable travel and allows guests to have an ethical, respectful experience while giving back to the local communities.

- Andaman Discoveries staff will speak directly with guests before arrival to give program information and utilize written codes of conduct for guests, volunteers, interns, and researchers. Codes will ensure guests provided by suppliers are aware of village cultural and environmental expectations, help maintain healthy relationships with local communities, and avoid inequitable interactions.
- Our guests directly support our North Andaman Network Foundation as 50 percent of Andaman Discoveries profits are donated each year.
- We evaluate the quality of our service through feedback forms that are documented and given back to our community based tourism members.
- Andaman Discoveries will provide pre-departure guides and in-village guides to promote cultural sensitivity

### **Partner Sustainability Policy**

Andaman Discoveries is committed to ensuring its supply chain adheres to sustainable practices. Supply partners, accommodation providers and excursion providers

- We always promote local guides and their training as well as education initiatives.
- Andaman Discoveries does not offer products or services of excursions, lodging and other touristic suppliers who damage or hurt human beings, fauna or flora, or other natural resources (water sources, etc.).
- We ensure supplier commitment to sustainability through signed contracts with clauses stating they must abide by current government legislation and practices including: Sexual Exploitation and Child Labor, License, Labor Conditions and Living Wage, Sustainability, Animal Welfare and Protection of Biodiversity, Local Communities Recourses.

- Utilize written codes of conduct for guests, volunteers, interns, and researchers. Codes will ensure guests provided by suppliers are aware of village cultural and environmental expectations help maintain healthy relationships with local communities, and avoid inequitable interactions.
- Work with partners that share our principles and best practices towards community based tourism and development.
- In case of clear evidence that contracted partners jeopardize the provision or integrity of basic services such as food, water, energy, healthcare or soil to the neighboring communities we can terminate contracts immediately

### **Local Communities Policy**

We pledge to support our local community partners by facilitating programs that protect their cultural heritage, increase economic impact by CBT programs providing supplemental sources of income and by protecting their natural resources.

- Our programs will have a positive financial impact on the communities where we work by using local suppliers (transportation, restaurants, businesses, community groups)
- We will create innovative approaches to help foster knowledge sharing, environmental stewardship, and cultural exchange within the community based tourism teams
- We will respect both the community and guests by providing codes of conduct to all villagers, guests, researchers, interns and employees of Andaman Discoveries
- We will provide guide trainings and capacity development trainings for our local community partners
- We will properly inform guests about cultural standards and environmental sustainability in the villages to ensure villagers are respected

### **Animal Welfare Policy**

Andaman Discoveries has been awarded a certificate of commitment by the Animal Welfare Protection Organization. Andaman Discoveries does not condone the use of captive animals or animals to be used as entertainment or as a tourist attraction or excursion. If providing elephant experiences, we require a “no ride rule” and follow the Travel Life criteria for animal welfare and the [World Animal Protection Criteria](#) for ethical animal sanctuaries and encounters that promote the welfare of the animal. We partner with animal welfare and conservation organizations to raise awareness of animal welfare best practice with customers, suppliers and governments in the destinations in which we work.

- We strive to develop the means to assess and improve performance within our supply chain and likewise assist our industry partners to move in this direction.
- We oppose and do not support practices that are illegal and those that have a negative impact on animal welfare. As an organization, we believe that animals have rights also, such as the right to be free from hunger, thirst, pain and discomfort.

### **Child Protection Policy**

At Andaman Discoveries, we fully recognize our responsibilities for Child Protection and that Children and Young People have a fundamental right to be protected from harm. The safety and welfare of children involved in our programs is **always** paramount. Andaman Discoveries has implemented a [Child Protection Policy](#), which applies to all staff, partners and volunteers working in our projects and learning centers.

- To establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- To designate one staff member as responsible for child protection within the organization and identify a deputy who can act in his/her absence.
- To raise awareness of child protection issues with adults, children and young people, whilst empowering and equipping them with the skills needed to keep as safe as possible
- To support pupils who have been, or are likely to be, abused by following any protective measures (short or long term) in collaboration with appropriate authorities and agencies
- To review and update all policies and procedures annually
- To follow the current government legislature and practices including: Sexual Exploitation and Child Labor, License, Labor Conditions and Living Wage
- All employees, volunteers, intern and partners will adhere to our child protection policy and follow our volunteer code of conduct when working in direct relation to children
- To protect children that will be in contact with our volunteers, we require volunteers to complete a background check, complete a volunteer reference form, complete a letter of intent and send a copy of their resume or CV before being accepted as a volunteer

Andaman Discoveries follows the Global Good Practice Guidelines for Child Welfare published in 2018 by Childsafe . Andaman Discoveries staff and partners have received training from Childsafe and are a Childsafe partner. We therefore follow their Childsafe Tour Agency Policy as per below:  
As part of the ChildSafe Movement, we commit to respect and enforce the ChildSafe Tour Agency Policy in our premises. This policy is based on the 2001 ASEAN Tourism Agreement and Thai regulations.

- We ensure that key staff received ChildSafe training and respect ChildSafe policies.
- We ensure staff keep their “Eyes wide open” to protect children.
- In a situation of child abuse or a situation that could lead to a child being abused:
  - We immediately inform the police and the relevant authorities.
  - We intervene and keep the child safe until the relevant authorities arrive.
- We do not employ children under the age of 18 years old (or 15 with specific conditions).
- We do not provide any source of information on child prostitution.
- We do not bring, to its best knowledge, tourists to destination such as hotels, restaurants and bars which tolerate prostitution.
- We do not promote or sell activities that could potentially harm children, including but not restricted to: orphanage/shelter visits, slums visits, unsupervised activities with children and activities involving child labor.
- We avoid advertisements / communication that are abusive to children: for example, publishing sexualized images of children, children in situations of abuse (physical, emotional) or using pitiful and distressing portrayals of children.