EXPLORE!

# RESPONSIBLE TOURISM POLICY FOR OVERSEAS OPERATIONS 2010

Explore has been committed to operating in a responsible way ever since it began. On tour we aim, through working with suppliers, tour leaders, local crew and customers to:

- ensure local crew are treated well and fairly and paid a fair wage
- encourage positive relations with local people and be an economic benefit to them
- respect wildlife and minimise our impact on the environment

The aim of Explore's Responsible Tourism Policy is to

- educate our staff, Tour Leaders, local agents, guides, crew, suppliers and clients on the importance of sensitivity to environmental, cultural and economic matters in the countries visited
- give practical guidance on how to achieve our objectives and
- set goals to work towards together.

We recognise that we are not perfect; but through feedback from clients, leaders and suppliers we endeavour to drive up standards and performance in every field.

In addition, our People Environment and Energy Policy provides office staff with information, targets, policy and guidelines as to how we may perform our duties and operate in a more responsible way in our Farnborough office.

Below is Explore's full Responsible Tourism Policy for overseas operations. This is issued to our suppliers and leaders and available to the public on our website. The policy is constantly being reviewed and we welcome feedback from all sources which may enable us to perform better in this field.

## HOW WE WORK WITH LOCAL STAFF

Where possible and practical, Explore seeks to use locally owned and operated suppliers and employ local people as leaders and crew to operate our tours. Each year we are increasing the number of tours led by local leaders as opposed to leaders recruited in the UK. This increases employment in country, gives our clients an invaluable source of local information and cuts down on the number of flights and thus carbon dioxide emissions we create.

We believe and try to ensure that our suppliers and local crew are;

- free to join a workers union if they wish
- provided with health and safety training for the job they do, have a clean and safe working environment and are not involved in dangerous practices whilst carrying out their job.
- not given an unreasonable workload. Working hours should be reasonable, safe, within local regulations and overtime should be the choice of the employee.
- provided with understandable and acceptable information about their employment conditions and wages e.g. a contract of employment.
- paid at least the national minimum wage or industry standard wage on an agreed timescale.
- tipped fairly and appropriately for their efforts. Tips should not be an excuse for low pay.
- not discriminated against for reasons of race, colour, gender, disability or religion.
- not disciplined by harsh means or financial penalty
- treated as equals socially in the working environment. Where the crew work with or accompany the group, our tour leaders encourage interaction, whilst respecting the individual's wishes for privacy
- given practical support by our tour leaders

Explore is committed to supporting initiatives which improve working practice and conditions such as the International Porter Protection Group guidelines and the work or Tourism Concern in this field.

## OUR INTERACTION WITH LOCAL PEOPLE

Key to an Explore tour is the chance to encourage positive interaction with local people, in order to foster mutual respect and understanding and be an economic benefit to the local people

On our tours we try to;

- Plan tours in a way which maximises the opportunity to meet local people and learn about the local culture
- Provide employment for local people by using local guides and locally owned and operated services rather than international chains
- Present talks and discussions on all aspects of the history and culture to present a balanced view of the country
- Encourage clients and Tour Leaders to dress appropriately to the local norm, even if other visitors do not
- Brief clients on the significance of local customs, traditions, religion, body language and eating habits in the country visited, so as to foster respect and understanding and avoid causing offence
- Encourage and initiate contact with local people as much as possible. We prefer to promote cultural exchange through playing games, showing photos and conversation to avoid the awkwardness of the 'human zoo'. Where there is local contact, learning a few words of the local language can be a great way to make contact.
- Ask permission before taking photos. We don't condone giving money for photos as it can encourage a begging culture. In some cases, being photographed is the individual's income and in such cases it is up to the individual to agree to this BEFORE taking the photo.
- Discourage giving to beggars. Whilst in many countries some people depend on begging for their livelihood, we regard giving money as a short-term solution to a more fundamental problem. Explore tries to find ways we and our customers can offer more long -term support to the communities visited by supporting local charities and projects.
- Ensure that gifts customers bring for local people (pens, t-shirts etc) are presented in an appropriate situation - eg to a teacher in a school or in return for hospitality when visiting a local house. We oppose giving directly to children as this may encourage begging and can undermine parents who cannot afford to give their children such items.
- Be an economic benefit to the communities visited by using a variety of local restaurants, shopping in local markets and buying locally produced goods but also by avoiding any overuse which may deprive locals of goods
- Advise tour leaders and customers about local bargaining customs and give guidelines to reasonable prices where possible. Neither customers nor Tour Leaders nor crew should haggle too aggressively as their saving may be somebody else's shortage.

## OUR IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Small groups may 'leave fewer footprints' but they still leave footprints! We are aware that wherever we go we are having an impact on the environment. We endeavour to minimise this impact and, where possible, engage in projects and activities that not only make the environment sustainable but contribute to improving it.

We consider our impact on the environment throughout the tour planning, contracting and operation process;

### Tour planning

- Tours are planned to visit destinations which are sustainable
- Group sizes are determined by what is appropriate to the area we are travelling to. Tours involving wildlife visits, significant cultural interaction and walking are often smaller in order to minimise disruption to local people, wildlife and the natural habitat.

**Hotels**

On tours where hotels are used, we endeavour to;

- Advise clients to turn a/c, lights, TVs and fans off when not in room and consider not using a/c if possible. TVs should be switched off, not left on stand-by as this uses electricity
- Be aware of and work within the limitations of local plumbing! In some countries toilet paper and sanitary protection cannot be put down the toilet as the sewage system is not able to cope with non-human waste. Ignoring this could cause a nasty blockage or flood! In these cases we advise clients appropriately and ensure that bins are emptied regularly.
- Look out for any hotels that use more sustainable resources - eg hotels which use renewable energy sources
- Ask our agents and tour leaders to talk to hoteliers about towel washing options and encourage them to introduce a system where clients fold towels for reuse rather than wash every day
- Ask our agents and Tour Leaders to check if hotels recycle any goods and encourage others to adopt the system if it works.
- Work with external organisations in best practice schemes, where such exist, eg The Travel Foundation Every Drop Counts, Rainforest Alliance tourism project, Tourism Concern Social Impact Assessments and Travel Operators for Tigers PUG Audit.

**Use of vehicles**

- It is part of Explore's Standard Operating Procedures that vehicles used on tour should comply with local vehicle emission regulations. Where regulations are not sufficiently strict or do not exist, we will endeavour to use the cleanest vehicles available.
- We ask our suppliers to ensure that vehicles are well maintained so they minimise emissions
- If measures exist to reduce the existing level of emissions (eg by using alternative vehicles, means of transport or public transport), we will always consider this option
- Public transport is used in many countries where possible and practical, but care is taken not to take up facilities/seats that may be required by local people
- We use a/c only when necessary on vehicles as this uses extra fuel

**Use of water**

Water should ALWAYS be used sparingly. Even in countries with seemingly ample water supply, energy is used in sewage and clean water processing; overuse could be depleting the water table and causing further pollution. ALL should follow the following policy;

- Consider taking a shower rather than a bath
- Consider whether you really need two showers a day or if one would suffice
- Do not leave water to run - use a plug as you generally use less water and try turning off the tap when you shampoo!
- Don’t leave the tap running when brushing teeth.
- Drivers should avoid excessive washing of vehicles during the trip. Vehicle should be clean at the start of the tour and interiors and windows kept clean thereafter.
- We request that leaders and agents talk to hoteliers about towel washing options and encourage them to introduce a system where clients fold towels for reuse rather than wash every day. If such a system exists, clients should be encouraged to support it.

**Respecting animal life**

# EXPLORE ANIMAL WELFARE POLICY

***Created in conjunction with the Born Free Foundation***

**Note 'animal' refers to birds, marine creatures, reptiles and animals**
**Wild' means any animal which is not domesticated, including elephants and wild animals in captivity**

**For further information see** **FTO Animal Attractions Handbook.pdf**
**www.bornfree.org.uk**

| WE DO NOT PERMIT VISITS TO THE FOLLOWING ON OUR TOURS; | REASON |
|---|---|
| **Animal shows where animals are trained to do unnatural activities for the sake of entertainment. ie dolphin shows, circuses using animals, parrots on bikes…** | Keeping animals in captivity and training them to display behaviour which is not natural to them for the sake of a tourist show is not acceptable. Training can be cruel and distressing to the animal. Some activities can be harmful (eg elephant balancing on trunk). Due to the continuous travelling and the extreme nature of many circus training regimes, animal welfare in travelling shows and circuses may be below the standard of most zoos. |
| **Snake charming** | There are serious concerns for the welfare of the snakes. This activity is illegal in India. |
| **Tiger farms** | Tiger farms perform no conservation function. Tigers are kept in inadequate conditions. It is believed these facilities are stockpiling animals should the current ban on the use of tiger body parts in Traditional Chinese Medicine be relaxed. |
| **Bear pits** | Bears are invariably kept in inadequate conditions. |
| **Crocodile wrestling** | Crocodiles are vicious carnivores and this is a highly dangerous activity. |
| **Cock fights, bullfights or other animal fights** | Making animals fight for entertainment is unacceptable. No animal shall be mutilated, abused, have cruelty inflicted upon it or killed in excursions visited by Explore. |
| **Rodeos** | Canadian animal welfare organisations oppose rodeo because fear and pain are used to motivate animals to perform. Animals are induced to buck by “flank straps” which causes distress. Horses die frequently in chuckwagon races. These events do not reflect genuine ranch practice, which aims to avoid stress or injury to the animals. |

| VISITS TO THE FOLLOWING MUST BE APPROVED BY EXPLORE | REASON |
|---|---|
| **Turtle hatcheries** | Previously seen as a practice to conserve marine turtles, hatcheries are now regarded as largely exploitive and commercial activities, where natural hatching behaviour is disrupted and adult turtles are kept in inadequate facilities. Acceptable practices are those that protect turtle nest sites and allow natural hatching and migration to take place, or if nest relocation is necessary to protect the hatchlings, once hatched, the animals should be release immediately (i.e. not kept for display purposes). **Please check with Explore if you propose to visit a hatchery so we can ensure the hatchery is working to good practice** |

| WE DO NOT PERMIT EXPLORE CUSTOMERS OR TOUR LEADERS TO ENGAGE IN THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES ON OUR TOURS; | REASON |
|---|---|
| **Swimming with dolphins & other marine animals in captive environments** | Keeping dolphins or other marine mammals in captivity for the sake of tourist entertainment is not acceptable. These are wild animals and there are risks of injury to both the public and the animals. |
| **Using wild animals as photographic props** eg dancing bears, performing monkeys, any opportunity to hold an animal for a photo | Human can be in danger of attack or transmission of disease to or from animal. This can be distressing for the animal who may be handled many times in a day and as a result is unable to engage in normal behaviour. Animals often taken from the wild as infants, drugged and beaten into submissive state, kept in unacceptable conditions where they are unable to display natural behaviour, and killed once they get too large or unmanageable; just for the sake of a tourist taking a photo. |
| **Making noises to attract an animal into sight** eg clapping, whistling, mimicking bird calls etc. | This disturbs the natural movements and patterns of animals, can frighten them or lead them into danger. |
| **Touching wild animals** eg petting captive animals in sanctuaries, guides picking up animals so customers can see better, stroking eels and rays in aquaria. | Human can be in danger of attack or transmission of disease to or from animal. Most wild animals are unpredictable and not used to the close proximity of humans. This can be distressing for the animal who may be handled many times in a day and as a result is unable to engage in normal behaviour. |
| **Feeding wild animals** eg throwing food overboard on boat trips, using food to attract animals, leaving food at camps / picnics for animals to eat | Feeding disturbs natural feeding patterns and can make animals dependent, rather than learning to find their own food. Many animals that are fed move to areas inhabited by humans and create problems raiding crops or affecting domestic or farm animals. |
| **Picking flowers, leaves, fossils, stones or shells** | The natural environment should be untouched. If everyone took a bit of it away, there would be nothing left. Taking plants or parts of plants threatents the survival of the plant. |
| **Hunting** | Hunting is not permitted as not not covered by insurance. |
| **Purchasing wildlife souvenirs from unsustainable products** | This includes coral, tortoiseshell, ivory, hippopotamus tooth, elephant hair/skin, shells, wild animal skins, hard woods, etc. These are endangered species and encourage the killing of wildlife for mere souvenirs. |
| **Ostrich riding** | The ostrich is a wild and therefore an unpredictable animal. Riding them will involve an element of coersion that will undoubtedly cause stress, as well as being dangerous to the rider. |

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| **Cage diving** | Cage diving is not not covered by insurance. Animals must be respected at all times and not baited, provoked or tormented. |

| **THE FOLLOWING POLICY MUST ALWAYS BE OBSERVED ON TOURS INVOLVING WILDLIFE;** |
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| Always respect park laws regarding speed limits, times of driving and off-road driving etc. |
| Do not pursue animals or separate young from their parents, thus distressing them, for the sake of a photo / better look. Keep an adequate distance. With the exception of primates (5m), precise distance cannot be specified as this depends on many factors and thus judgement should be exercised. |
| Do not stand on or anchor on coral |
| Do not smoke near wildlife |
| Do not use flash when photographing wildlife |
| On night drives, avoid shining lights directly at animals for long. Use red filters on spotlights. |
| Do not approach breeding sites e.g. nests, burrows. |
| Try to approach animals from the side so as not to appear threatening |
| Do not encourage stray animals to follow you by feeding them. Best policy is to ignore them and get away. |
| Where animals are used for transport on tour, please inform Explore if you feel that animals are not well cared for and have signs of mistreatment, illness or malnourishment. |
| Explore should be advised if any local suppliers keep caged birds or animals in unsuitable conditions, if animals are being used as photographic props at places we visit or if you know of or suspect any mistreatment of animals or animal welfare issues on tour. |

**Special notes on equine animals**

*Information from the Born Free Foundation and Brooke Hospital for Animals*

**On tours where we use mules, donkeys or horses, the following guidelines are issued.**

**Identifying animal indicators of poor welfare**
Animals give indications of their welfare state through their physical appearance and their behaviour. It is important to highlight that an animal's welfare state depends on both physical and mental (emotional) components. Areas of concern are:
**Apathetic and depressed states:** head is lowered or level with their back when not eating; eyes half closed and not showing an active interest in either their surroundings or other animals.
**Eyes:** animals with painful eye conditions may have closed or watering eyes, be unable to see clearly and
may be fearful in new situations or whilst working on busy roads.
**Heat stress & dehydration:** when an animal's body is unable to function normally or regulate under times of increased temperatures. Heat stress can manifest as a combination of head nodding, increase in the speed and depth of breathing, flared nostrils and apathetic behaviour. This indicates thermal discomfort and
distress that can be alleviated or prevented by appropriate water intake, ensuring enough time to drink, resting the animal and providing it with shade.
**Poor body condition**: animals with prominent hip bones, backbones, pelvis or ribs do not have well-covered skeletons and are vulnerable to wounds or injuries. This may be caused by inadequate access to, and intake of, nutritionally balanced foods but may be caused by other human, animal, environmental or resource factors.
**Sores or wounds**: wounds and sores (especially in areas where equipment might rub) have the potential to become aggravated whilst the animal works, causing discomfort and pain.
**Limbs**: animals who do not evenly distribute their weight amongst all four limbs may be suffering from
pain or an injury. Indicators of a welfare problem may include swelling, frequently shifting weight, pointing or resting a foreleg, and/or any observable cracked or misshaped hooves.
**Movement**: animals seen stretching, straining, stumbling or staggering during movement are exerting

considerable effort – an indication of a potential or existing welfare problem. Similarly, if a cart runs into
an animal when it stops, there is a problem.

**Good practice:**
**Match sizes** – horses and donkeys are not always as strong as you might think, so always match the rider's size or the size of the load to that of the animal and ensure that weight is evenly balanced when riding.
**Pay a fair price for the ride** - encouraging owners to undercut each other only devalues the work of the horse or donkey – and means both owner and animal must work even harder to earn a living wage
**One person per animal** – no horse or donkey should carry more than one rider. The animal must accept any weight without discomfort and be able to start, stop and move easily. If it stumbles, staggers or appears to be struggling in any way, the rider should get off or the load reduced
**One wheel per person when riding in a carriage** - two people in a two-wheeled cart and so on. Carriages
should be driven at a walking pace only as the carriage can run into the animal when it stops
**Take a closer look** – it is important to look past the decoration or carriage and choose an animal that is fit
and healthy - with a good covering of flesh, rather than prominent hip bones, backbones or pelvis
**Offer praise** - if an animal seems well looked after, please praise the owner and tell him why you have
chosen to give him your trade
**Speak out** - if you see an owner mistreating his animal, by riding it hard or whipping it, we urge you not to use their services - and explain why. Please also advise Explore

**Special notes on captive elephants**

*Information from the Born Free Foundation*

Where we visit elephant sanctuaries or ride elephants as part of our tour, the following guidelines are issued:

Owners should act promptly to treat any sickness or injury affecting their captive elephants using recognized veterinary and/or indigenous medical treatment., Such treatment should be monitored by a recognized veterinarian.

No elephant should be beaten or deliberately injured or harmed for any reason.

Elephants should not be put to work if they

a. are over 55 years old
b. are under 10 years old
c. are wounded or injured
d. are ill or sick or malnourished
e. are receiving treatment for any illness or sickness
f. are known or suspected to be, or exhibit any symptoms suggestive of being pregnant
g. are lactating
h. have been instructed to not to be worked by a recognised vet
i. display signs of any abnormal behaviour
j. might present a risk of injury to themselves, the public, the mahout, the owner or any other person or animal

Mahouts should never work with captive elephants when they are mentally or physically unfit to do so e.g. under the influence of alcohol or any narcotic drug.

Captive elephants should not be put to work during the musth period.

Physical restraint should only be applied as a matter of last resort and always for the minimum possible time and at the minimum effective degree. Secure enclosures should be preferred over tethering. Restraining methods should not cause pain or distress to the animal, and should not cause any temporary or permanent injury, or be applied to any injured area. Tethers should not be less than three metres long and should not be used on more than one leg at any time except when the animal is in musth or when restraint is required for veterinary treatment or when under the instruction of a recognized vet following treatment or during recovery.

Elephants should not be taken into public places at night if doing so may put the animal or the public or the owner or the mahout or any other person or animal at risk of injury. If an elephant is taken out at night the following requirements should be fulfilled to ensure the protection of captive elephants and mahouts

i. Use of jingle bells
ii. The mahout and his assistant and the captive elephant should wear a luminous band or a set of such banded clothes.

**Daily working regime**

'Work' shall be defined as any activity conducted under the instruction of the mahout other than normal resting, free movement (without direction / instruction), feeding or bathing (unless these activities are undertaken at the same time as working activities) and specifically including carrying people or objects, taking part in a processions, performing prescribed actions under instruction (eg at a performance or to entertain spectators), traveling between the normal place of residence and a working site, and waiting at the place of work for working activities to commence or cease.

Whosoever is responsible for the daily work activities and care of the elephant shall follow the following stipulations:

- No elephant shall take part in work-based activities (see definition above) for a continuous period of more than three hours, or for more than eight hours in any 24 hour period.
- At the end of any continuous period of work the animal shall be allowed a period of rest not less than the duration of the period of work just ended.
- The animal shall not be allowed to go for more than four hours without access to clean, drinkable water in quantities sufficient for it to drink until sated.
- The animal shall not be allowed to go for a period of more than six hours without access to clean, fresh, suitable provisions in quantities sufficient for it to eat until sated.

**Litter and reduction of waste**

Litter is a huge problem in many countries where there is limited or no infrastructure for waste disposal, let alone recycling facilities. The first step is to ensure that we minimise our use of

resources in order to generate less waste. Then we try to ensure that waste is disposed of in the most appropriate way.

**Limiting generation of waste**

- We encourage customers to avoid accepting plastic bags for everything in shops and to reuse the ones they have (for litter collection, keeping kit dry etc). Locally made cotton bags can be purchased in some countries for very little. These can be provided by Tour Leaders and handed back at the end of the trip.
- Where possible, water is provided for clients to fill their own water bottles, selling cheap refills from a large container or purified water to reduce plastic bottle waste.
- Tour Leaders and local guides re-use hotel notices where possible, collect in handouts given to customers for re-use and bring all unused paperwork and folders back to Explore for re-use.
- Customers are encouraged to reduce the amount of packaging taken on tour as it is usually more effectively disposed of at home than on tour
- On camping tours, where possible we use reusable food containers rather than foil or plastic bags. We avoid using disposable plates, cups and cutlery.

**Litter**

- Litter should always be disposed of responsibly. If it is not clear that rubbish bins are emptied regularly, rubbish should be carried out to where it will be disposed of.
- Cigarette ends should not be dropped on streets / behind bushes / overboard boats etc. but put in a rubbish bin or in pocket until a rubbish bin is available. We recommend smokers carry a receptacle to collect their butts. Plastic film cases are excellent for this and reduce the smell!
- Food waste - including apple cores etc - should not be dropped behind bushes, overboard boats etc. but carried until they can be put in a rubbish bin. NB: orange peel takes 6 months to decompose in temperate climates and is therefore unsightly for a long time. It can also poison wildlife which may eat it and attract aggressive wild animals to areas used by humans. For these reasons dropping food waste like this is banned in many national parks.
- On walks, at sites or other areas where appropriate, we suggest a voluntary system where customers take a plastic bag and collect a few pieces of litter from the trail and dispose of it at the end of the walk, leaving the environment cleaner than we found it!
- On boats, rubbish must be carried back to facilities on shore and never dumped over the side of the boat or hidden behind rocks.

**Use of local shops and restaurants**

What is available in local shops and restaurants can have an impact on the environment! So:

- Do not buy items derived from endangered / fragile species eg coral, fur, ivory and bone etc. Be aware which goods are from sustainable sources.
- Be aware of goods that may be manufactured through child labour.
- Be aware of local laws regarding purchase and export of antiquities.
- In local restaurants, do not eat food from endangered / fragile species eg eating lobster in Cuba can have a detrimental effect on the breeding population. Ensure game is sourced from a managed cull. As with objects, be aware which goods are from sustainable sources.

**When visiting ancient sites**

It is important that we:

- Do not touch ancient monuments, as oils, acid and dirt from hands can cause erosion
- Respect laws against flash photography in sites as the bright light can cause damage to frescoes etc
- Do not pick up stones, fossils or potshards. These are part of the site!

- Keep to the set paths
- Never climb on or over ruins / walls

**On walks**

We try to ensure we and our Leaders are aware of local guidelines and regulations regarding walking. To avoid erosion, the following general guidelines always apply:

In popular areas

- Concentrate use on existing trails
- Walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy

In pristine areas

- Disperse use to prevent the creation of trails
- Avoid places where impact is just beginning to show

Only walk on planted ground if there is no other choice. Where a walk crosses a field or planted area, we recommend our groups go carefully at the edge, in single file and ask permission from the owner first if possible.

## TOURS WITH CAMPING

Camping can have a very visible impact on the environment. In addition to the above policy, we issue our leaders and crew with the following guidelines to operate the trip and share with clients and thus ensure our impact is minimised.

### Selecting camp area

In popular areas:

- Concentrate use on existing campsites
- Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent
- If camping by a river or stream, always try to camp downstream of a community so as not to pollute their water source

In pristine areas or wild bushcamps, consider moving pitches or camp to avoid creating a camp or trails. The essence is to leave no trace.

If camping near local community or other campers, keep the noise down.

### Bush toilets

If no fixed toilets exist at camps, a hole should be dug and a toilet tent should be provided where possible. This provides privacy, is more hygienic and better for the environment. The following is our guideline for the construction and use of the toilet tent;

- hole should be dug at least 30m (100ft) from any water source. The hole should be as deep as you can dig it. Pouring water on soft ground, eg sand, before digging will make the ground more solid and prevent the hole caving in
- a trowel should be provided for customers to lightly cover waste with the diggings
- a rubbish bin should be provided for toilet paper and burn and bury ashes. Ensure bin is emptied regularly
- The hole should be filled in before it overfills and a new hole dug if necessary

If there is no toilet tent facility, the following policy should be followed:

- trowel/s should be provided for customers to bury waste
- customers should be instructed to ‘go’ at least 30m (100ft) from any water source and dig hole at least 6ft deep to bury waste. NB: microbes are most active at this level and decomposition will be quicker.
- provide matches for clients to burn and bury paper where appropriate or suggest clients bring paper back to a central bin to be burned or disposed of. Tour Leaders and local crew should assess the fire risk and brief clients accordingly.

### Campfires

If these are a luxury (ie for camp ‘ambience’) try to have only an occasional fire as a treat, as it depletes natural resources / causes smoke pollution / may rob local people of their only fuel source. It is not really a valid argument to say that it is essential for heat / light as we can likely provide these by alternative means.

- If open fire used for cooking please advise EXPLORE and see if an alternative is available - eg a locally purchased gas stove?
- Charcoal is not an environmentally friendly fuel source as you cannot be sure that the wood it is made from is from a sustainable source
- Wood collected should be dead wood off the ground only. Do not strip branches from trees as what looks dead to you may be just dry or dormant
- Keep the fire small
- Use a pre-existing fire ring where possible or the site of a previous fire
- Only paper goods should be burned on the campfire. Even light plastics generate toxic fumes.
- Be aware of fire hazards and local fire regulations

- On leaving camp, the campfire should be 'dug in' so that (i) you can be sure it is out and (ii) it is not an unsightly mess.

**Waste disposal**

The following policy should be adhered to when disposing of rubbish from camps:

- Items that should be burned: paper & card
- Items that should be buried: vegetable & food waste*
- Items that should be carried out: plastics, glass & cans. Rubbish should always be disposed of where it is sure to be collected

*NB in national parks and where the local laws or guidelines stipulate, ALL waste must be carried out including vegetable matter. As the food waste is not indigenous, it can potentially make animals sick. Furthermore, it can attract animals to camp (bears, lions etc).

- Campsites should be checked for all litter before departing, including bottle tops and cigarette ends. Customers and crew should help in this respect.
- Check if any recycling facility exists locally and use it where possible. If it is possible to recycle cans, consider investing in a can crusher to save space.

**Use of water**

- In delicate areas do not take water from springs if not necessary - you may be depriving local people
- Does the provision of hot water for personal washing mean burning more fuel or is it solar generated? Restrict use if so
- If using 'bucket' showers or similar, turn off water supply whilst soaping up
- Dirty water, eg from washing dishes, should be disposed of by scattering over ground at least 30m (100ft) away from water source / river if a drain is not available
- Do not use non-biodegradable soap in lakes or streams. Locate sources selling bio-degradable products where possible and use these products
- Do not pour oily water into streams
- Wash dishes in a bowl / sink rather than running tap as this uses less water