

Responsible Travel Policy

Policy aims

Company mission: Sundowners Overland is committed to showing their clients the best of Asia through the eyes of a local. Among our Tour Leaders we have many who are local to the destinations we visit, and also contract the services of Local Guides who are specialists in their region and who educate travellers on the culture, history, social and political background of the places that they visit.

We also have the concept of a City Ambassador who provides our clients with the opportunity to have the mysteries of a city unlocked for them from a local perspective. We use local suppliers, stay in locally-owned accommodation and visit privately-owned local restaurants during our tours. We encourage our clients to purchase local goods and services to enhance not only their experience but to ensure that we support local businesses. We protect and preserve the natural environments visited and ensure our clients do the same.

We have been operating tours throughout Asia for over 50 years and strive to build on our long-established reputation for having the utmost respect for the places and communities that we visit.

Economic responsibility

Sundowners Overland's unique proposition is to see the destination through the eyes of a local. We have a St Petersburg office which employs 4 people in a variety of roles.

We work with Local Partners and local communities in all our destinations to provide activities and accommodation. We contract the services of Local Guides and City Ambassadors through our Local Partners. In addition, we partner with local families to provide homestays and Mongolian ger stays which vastly enhance the experience and understanding of the local people for our guests.

Because of the nature and remoteness of our destinations (eg Mongolia, Iran, Caucasus) nearly all our suppliers employ only local people and use local sources of food, drinks and other materials.

Environmental responsibility

In our head office in Melbourne we have recycling bins for paper and printer toner. We recycle out of date brochures and have a cap on the number of brochures that we print and have a policy to use these sparingly and send digital copies as much as we can.

We advise our clients to travel with refillable water bottles to reduce plastic waste in our destinations. Our Tour Leaders (and the information we provide) advise travellers how to minimise water usage and reduce our environmental impact in the destinations we visit.

On visits to national parks you visit we brief our clients on environmental responsibility – asking them not to take anything away and to be mindful about litter – taking it away from conservation areas if possible, ensuring it is disposed responsibly if not.

We utilise the local transport network by using public trains for most rail travel, restrict the use of private vehicles and air travel, which reduces our carbon footprint.

Social responsibility

All our travellers are provided with accurate pre-trip information on the social, cultural, historical and political background of the countries that they are visiting. As part of this we advise our clients on ways they can maximise their interactions with local people and avoid causing offense.