

## SUSTAINABILITY GUIDELINE OF SALZKAMMERGUT TOURISTIK GMBH

As a family-run incoming travel agency – with more than 30 years of experience – we are aware of our special role and our responsibility.

We work with customers, tour operators, travel agencies, hotels, transport companies, restaurants, museums and many stakeholders in the field of tourism. Our employees are also part of this.

### 1. Our philosophy:

We treat each other with appreciation and attach great importance to mutual loyalty. A high moral and ethical standard in dealing with customers, suppliers and each other is a prerequisite for the positive development of the individual employees, but also of the team, and thus also for the company.

Environmentally friendly tourism is important to us. The award of 1st place in the category "Green Tourism" in 2011 is motivation for us to continue to work in a resource-saving manner in the future. This applies to the design of the trips as well as the design of the offices and business premises as well as the workplace.

Back in 2018, the heart project of Salzkammergut Touristik – A tree for your booking – was initiated by Franz and Brigitte Stumpner – the parents of the current managing director Barbara Ahrer. For every cycling or hiking tour booked with us in the Salzkammergut, a tree is planted. In doing so, we face up to our responsibility and consideration for the limited resources of our planet. In cooperation with the Austrian Federal Forests, we plant several hundred trees in the Salzkammergut every year

Together, the following 3 goals were defined:

- Preserving biodiversity in the region
- To create food for bees
- Designing natural spaces in a visually appealing way



Our first assigned area for planting was along the newly created connecting cycle path between Bad Ischl and Lake Attersee in the Weißenbach valley and along the brine pipeline path from Mitterweißenbach to Bad Ischl. Spearling, thorn, spindle tree, wild cherries and honeysuckles were planted here.



The project boards of the Austrian Federal Forests refer to the project.

In the years that followed, we were assigned an area in the Weißenbachtal, a beautiful natural area between Bad Ischl and Lake Attersee.

Storm Kyrill in 2007 destroyed most of the forest there. In the meantime, we have been able to contribute – together with our customers – to the successful reforestation of this area. The small plants - which are

always planted in May - are trees that delight the eye and attract wild bees. In addition, the Austrian Federal Forests have set up bee hotels in the area.

In 2023, mainly cherry, maple, fir and beech will be planted, explains DI Christoph Reischenböck from the Austrian Federal Forests.

#### WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE WITH OUR "A TREE FOR YOUR BOOKING" CAMPAIGN?

- The preservation of our beautiful natural landscape
- Contributing to reforestation
- Increasing awareness of nature and the environment among our customers

Each customer receives information about the project with the travel documents. Below you can see a selection of the trees planted in recent years and the area.

By 2023, 1,440 trees had been planted.

Our hikers and cyclists can experience our campaign up close if they take the time to visit the planted area. Weißenbachtal – Fischteich – at road kilometre 11.0 (please note the possible detour to the planned routes).

Through our campaign "A tree for your booking" - where we plant a tree for every booked hiking or cycling tour in the Salzkammergut, the topic of sustainability has occupied us from an early age. Sustainability in the broadest sense accompanies us every day in our actions and actions. Therefore, in 2024, after the handover of the business has taken place, we have decided to subject the company - with all its stakeholders - to a certification process, which will conclude with a Travelife certificate. Travelife is a worldwide association that certifies travel agencies and tour operators in the field of sustainability.

Fair to the customer, the supplier and the employee!

An essential part of our social commitment is the idea of bringing different peoples and cultures together in order to bring about peaceful, appreciative and respectful understanding. One of the company's main projects is the International Choir Competition & Festival, which was regularly organized by Salzkammergut Touristik GmbH from 1994 to 2014 with corresponding financial outlay. Since 2014, the event has been held together with INTERKULTUR. On the one hand, it serves as a competition and on the other hand, it has the goal of connecting peoples through music and takes place every 2 years.

## Travelife:

### 2. Sustainability Management - General

We are committed to sustainability management at Salzkammergut Touristik GMBH.

Barbara Ahrer, BA as Managing Director is responsible for sustainability management.

- The corporate mission statement reflects the topic of sustainability, which is communicated to our stakeholders.
- We have a clear and written sustainability policy aimed at reducing the negative, social, cultural, economic and environmental impacts of our business activities.
- A basic assessment – Quick Check by Travelife – of the company's performance in the area of sustainability is carried out.
- Creation of a sustainability plan with clear goals, measures, responsible persons and timing as well as monitoring of implementation and documentation.
- Introduction of a rating system to determine the sustainability performance of key suppliers and partners.
- We are committed to further developing the expansion of sustainable travel and increasing sustainable offerings.
- Our employees complete the basic Travelife training within the 1st year of service.
- We ensure that all employees are fully aware of our sustainability policy and are committed to implementing and improving it.
- All national laws, regulations and codes of conduct are complied with.

We are committed to this by:

- Already in the offers - put respect for the local culture, nature and environment in the foreground;
- We use qualified and/or certified tour guides who take our guests to sensitive cultural sites, cultural monuments or ecologically sensitive destinations.
- not offer excursions that harm people, animals, plants or natural resources such as water and energy, or are socially and culturally unacceptable;
- not offer excursions that captivate wildlife, except for duly regulated activities in accordance with local, national and international law;
- We promote and advise our guests on excursions and activities that directly involve and support the local population by promoting services or goods, traditional crafts and local (food) production methods or visiting social projects.
- We promote and advise our guests on excursions and activities that promote the local environment and biodiversity, such as visiting protected areas or environmental protection projects.

### 3. EMPLOYEES - Internal Management:

We are committed to the following principles of internal management:

- Employees have the freedom of employment, to give notice of termination with notice (ideally at least one month) and without penalty.
- Each employee receives an employment contract in accordance with national law and the collective agreement for travel agencies, employees valid from 01.01.2025.

The following is regulated in every employment contract :

- Notification of the employee provision fund, start of the employment relationship incl. agreement on a probationary period, tasks, areas of responsibility and team membership, working time agreement on the weekly hours to be worked, classification and remuneration - including overtime pay - this corresponds to or is above the national legal provisions, as well as inability to work - employees received a fixed paid sick leave, holiday entitlement - employees received a fixed paid annual leave, and the termination of the employment relationship is also regulated in the employment contract
- Every employee receives a written training and activity report at the beginning of his or her work at Salzkammergut Touristik.

In addition to each employment contract, Salzkammergut Touristik agrees with its employees on the following points in the supplement to the employment contract, current version 5/25:

- A clear disciplinary procedure that is effectively communicated to employees;
- Health and safety guidelines for employees that comply with national legal standards, i.e.
  - Annual training/repetition of security and protection documents
  - 2 trained and certified first aiders in the company are available
  - In addition, the prescribed equipment – such as fire extinguishers, first aid kits – must be serviced annually
  - Notice of the responsibilities of Salzkammergut Touristik

In addition to our employment contract, we agree with our employees on the following points in writing in an ADDENDUM to the employment contract, where the following topics are regulated:

- Arrival and departure to the company – since we have a convenient location - close to the train station, we recommend that our employees travel to and from the company by public transport. In addition, there is the possibility to get to work on foot - depending on where you live, or by bike. Bicycle parking spaces are available.
- Commencement of duty, uniform, information about the premises: lounge, meeting room, cleanliness in the company, meeting times, use of IT, instructions in the event of technical defects, are agreed in the supplement.

- Our knowledge databases are like a department store shelf. They can be called up at any time, but everyone can also put a new folder on the department store shelf at any time. In this way, we ensure regular data comparison.
- Information on annual planning in the company, which concerns marketing activities per department, as well as annual vacation planning, whereby it is important to us that employees plan regular recovery periods and consume their vacations
- Regulation on work records (e.g. also at trade fairs/sales events, training courses), Saturday shifts, as well as what must be taken into account in the event of sick leave or incapacity for work and visits to the doctor.
- Payroll accounting is handled by our tax office Kanzlei Vockenhuber&Co Steuerberatungs GmbH, Bad Ischl
- The substitution rule – with management Barbara Ahrer, BA and Mr. Peter Seebacher as authorized signatory including the respective telephone number – is also regulated in writing.
- Finally, confidentiality, theft and embezzlement as well as what needs to be considered when leaving the company are recorded.
- Mothers prefer to receive vacation during the school holidays, so we allow a maximum of 2 weeks of vacation for mothers even in the high season
- Pay attention to regional products in our gifts to employees
- Company outings, training courses take place by public transport if possible

In general, we are committed to:

- The national minimum age for admission to employment is met
- Employee appraisals between management and employees take place at any time if necessary, at least once a year, which are also documented. If complaints are expressed, the management will endeavour to remedy the situation as quickly as possible.

In addition, we grant our employees various **benefits**:

General:

- Annual company outing – to get to know a product
- 1 time a year birthday present
- Advent calendar with little surprises
- Christmas party and Christmas gift
- Team Leader Evening – 1x a year dinner invitation
- Further training costs – seminars in the amount of EUR 500
- 1x per year for an employee + accompanying person a trip from our travel offers
- Discounts for private travel/employee benefits from our travel packages
- Discounts also for family members of our employees
- Benefits on European Travel Insurance for Employees
- Complimentary tea, coffee is provided in the office

### Service anniversaries:

- 05 years - Theatre tickets for 2 pers. + flowers or bottle of organic wine worth EUR 200.00
- 10 years - special dinner for 2 pers. + flowers or bottle of organic wine - worth EUR 400.00
- 15 years – 2 nights for 2 people with event
- 20 years - 2 nights for 2 people with event and dinner

In addition, Salzkammergut Touristik GmbH undertakes to do the following:

- We offer pupils and students the opportunity to participate in internships and apprenticeships at our company
- We also offer the opportunity for practical days of a professional internship for the training as an office clerk, currently from April 2024 to July 2025
- We offer schools and teachers the opportunity of a company presentation including cooperation – e.g. Bad Ischl Salzkammergut Tourism Schools and Altmünster Agricultural School
- We offer people with special needs an opportunity to work, currently we employ an autistic resident for 1.5 hours in cooperation with Lebenshilfe Bad Ischl. weekly in summer
- We have formed a sustainability team with our managers so that all employees can be fully informed and the sustainability initiatives developed are carried and implemented in the departments.
- Every new employee has to complete the Travelife training courses in the 1st year of service.
- Our sustainability policy is integrated into the annual management activities and is evaluated at the end of each financial year and new goals or changes are agreed.
- We organize training courses and other events on the topic of sustainability. In order to make the sustainability policy in the company understandable to the employees, examples of this 1x annually Hui instead of Pfui participation = corridor cleaning campaign, 1 afternoon at the Federal Forests for "forest research"
- We use the Travelife Action Plan
- Furthermore, we communicate the company's sustainability policy to suppliers and customers – such as e.g. during our personal meetings with customers at trade fairs, visits to our accommodation facilities or via social media and our homepage.
- In general, we are committed to respecting human rights by implementing the applicable regulations and laws (collective agreement, etc.) and adhering to industry-wide structures.
- As well as prohibiting discrimination in recruitment, employment conditions, access to training and management positions or promotion on the basis of gender, race, age, disability, ethnicity, religion/belief or sexual orientation,
- Ensuring equal opportunities and access to resources and opportunities for personal development for all employees through regular training and development

#### 4. Sustainability in the company

We are committed to practicing environmental protection and improving community relations by ensuring the implementation of the following practices:

As part of our Travelife cooperation, which we started in 2021, we have committed ourselves to the following approach:

- Reusable: Use products/bulk packs, reuse the packaging, avoid single-use – e.g. the paper is ordered in bulk packs of 2,500 pieces each,
- Sustainable purchasing policy: prefer regional partners – e.g. We get toilet paper from our neighbor, a small Spar branch (Spar Austria is a private family business)
- Paper/printouts/copies: We avoid unnecessary printouts, we print/copy in duplex and black and white if possible. Paper printed on one side is reused as scratch paper. The colour printer with colour is only used in exceptional cases.
- Standard setting of photocopiers and printers to double-sided printing and black and white, color only in exceptional cases
- Use of detergents that are non-toxic, non-eutrophication, biodegradable and certified with an ecolabel
- Avoidance of printing brochures, we offer all our offers, product overviews online or as pdf
- Active commitment to measuring, monitoring and reducing energy consumption in water, electricity and gas
- Energy saving: i.e. each workstation / island is equipped with a power strip, care is taken to ensure that all power strips are switched off in the evening, similar to the power supply. applies to our LED lamps in the room, if possible we save electricity in our company.
- Minimise water consumption – in the form of a hand mixer and toilets with energy-saving flush buttons, monitoring of water consumption monthly
- Use of small towels for the employees in the washrooms, which are washed weekly, no disposable towels, thus avoiding resources and waste
- We comply with national laws on waste disposal.
- Waste: avoid and separate correctly: we are committed to avoiding waste as far as possible and to separating the waste generated correctly into our designated waste containers. Black bin = residual waste, green bin = organic waste, yellow bin = plastic and metal and red bin = paper, glass and batteries are disposed of separately at the Bad Ischl waste collection centre.
- Ceramic coffee and tea cups are available, as well as glasses and water jugs for drinking water - measures to reduce plastic bottles for office use.
- Wall paint used in the rooms is water-based. (as of 2022)
- Shipping packaging in our parcel shop is recycled – e.g. when shipping for our online shop, brochure distributors, etc.
- Repair instead of disposal of various technical devices

- Mobility of employees: Due to our good accessibility, they are encouraged to use sustainable means of transport on their way to work and home. Such as: Train, bicycle, bus, etc.
- Proper inspection of motorized company vehicles to reduce emissions and energy consumption and ensure that they meet legal emission standards. We own two electric cars, one of which is refueled only with self-generated solar power.
- Financial support for social institutions and local associations: we undertake to support local associations to the best of our ability, these are e.g. Musikapelle Mitterweißenbach, Bad Ischl fire brigade, Bad Ischl running club etc. and this is a fixed part of our annual budget etc.
- Through our membership in the Bad Ischl Heritage Association, the Bad Ischl Originals and the "Path of Salt" association, we ensure the preservation of local historical, archaeological, culturally and spiritually significant buildings and sites.

## 5. Partners

### a. Accommodation

We maintain a list of the sustainability practices of our partner properties. Our goal is – since sustainability certification is still very rudimentary in our rural region – to help expand it and offer it more often.

How do we want to do that?

- In our written contracts with partner accommodations, ensure that all relevant national laws protecting workers' rights are complied with, in particular human rights, child labour, waste management and anti-corruption, etc.
- Record and update the different certifications when creating the contract
- List of partner accommodations – with information about the certification (ranging from Eco label, to Austrian Ecolabel, to Travelife), to be updated regularly
- Motivate partners to participate in sustainability training;
- important partners = "stars" about Travelife and national tourism standards, are encouraged and motivated to adopt sustainable practices.
- Assistance and ideas for implementation
- regularly evaluate the sustainability practices of our key partners = "STARS" (= family-run, long-term, good collaborations where there is a regular, good exchange defined 21.9.23) to ensure that they are truly sustainable;

The following criteria are asked of our partner accommodations:

- Is there a sustainability certification? If so, which ones?
  - Does the accommodation have water and energy saving programs?
  - Does the property have a waste management program?
  - Does the property have sustainable supply chains?
  - Are the applicable child protection guidelines being observed?
  - Are employees regularly trained in health and safety?
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- Clear preference for properties with internationally recognized certifications (e.g. GSTC certified) and/or Travelife certifications where possible
  - Prefer and select accommodations that are locally owned and managed by local businesses; if possible
  - Choose accommodations that employ local community staff where possible
  - Clearly and actively communicate our sustainability goals and requirements for properties to contract properties and other relevant properties;
  - Working with accommodations that integrate elements of local art, architecture or cultural heritage while respecting the intellectual property rights of local communities where possible

#### **b. Service Partners**

By this we mean all purchasing partners except accommodations – i.e. these are transport companies (by train, boat, bus, car, etc.), tour guides, museums, restaurants, etc.

We are committed to this by:

- already refer to public transport connections or alternatives in our offers,
- sustainable alternatives in the choice of means of transport for transfers and excursions at the destination, taking into account availability, price, comfort and practicality; offer
- offer several sustainable holiday offers that can only be carried out with sustainable means of transport, including sustainable accommodation and activities e.g. A train journey
- prefer local transport companies, local guides and tour guides if possible
- involve as many locals as possible in the tourism industry and stand for a fair and safe working environment that supports and respects the local population.
- have us confirm that the service partners comply with the laws, pay according to or via collective agreement and that the applicable law is complied with.
- To ensure that our guides and tour guides are qualified and regularly trained and remunerated according to the agreed fees. Since many of the guides are self-employed, they are not subject to a collective agreement in Austria.
- Educating customers through our tour guides, local representatives and guides about relevant sustainability topics here on site – protection of animals and plants or cultural and natural sites that need to be protected, in addition, guests receive information about the history and development of the destination as well as customs and traditions of the local population e.g. the daffodil festival in the Ausseerland

- We try to motivate other service partners such as museums, restaurants, events to get certified
- We strive to take sustainability aspects into account when selecting destinations and, if necessary, to offer alternative, non-mainstream destinations or at least alternatives (e.g. Insider Tips)

## 6. Customers

By customers, we refer to tour operators in the B2B sector and consumers in the B2C sector  
The well-being and information of our customers are very important to us. Prior to booking, we undertake to do so by:

- ensure that customer privacy is not compromised;
- adhere to relevant standards and voluntary codes of conduct in marketing and advertising messages and only promise and sell what can be kept = authenticity
- present product and pricing information relating to the Company and its products and services, including sustainability claims, in a clear, complete and accurate manner;
- Offer customers alternative arrival, departure and transport options
- Inform customers about sustainable alternatives to accommodation, excursions, package holidays and transport options, where available;
- (Potential) Clearly inform consumers about sustainability commitments and measures; e.g. We inform our hiking and cycling guests about how to behave on the alpine pasture with a dog, as well as that the garbage should be taken back into the valley or the hut etiquette of the Austrian Alpine Clubs are part of the documents
- Inform customers about the destinations and nature, local culture and heritage;
- Inform customers about risks and precautions related to health and safety issues at the destination;
- 24/7 availability for emergencies;
- Training of personnel and provision of guidelines for dealing with emergency situations;
- Motivating customers to use local restaurants and shops (where possible);
- Informing customers about sustainable transportation options at the destination, where possible;
- We collect feedback about travel, be it complaints or positive feedback, and analyze it in the annual marketing meetings and draw conclusions for the products and service providers
- In the case of complaints, there is also a fixed process that must be followed.