

Sustainability Policy

Georgian DMC



GEORGIANDMC

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Chapter 1: Our Sustainability Mission

Georgian DMC is dedicated to empowering rural communities, preserving local traditions, reducing our ecological impact, and ensuring a healthy working environment for our staff by implementing sustainable practices and procedures.

This policy applies to Georgian DMC's senior management, employees, and the local service providers. Its impact will be experienced by families living in rural areas within the scope of our cooperation, as well as the company's workforce.

Chapter 2: Internal Management: Social Policy & Human Rights

Freedom of Association

Georgian DMC does not to hinder trade union membership, representation of members by trade unions and collective labor negotiations.

Health and Safety Policy

Georgian DMC adheres to all relevant national laws and regulations aimed at safeguarding the well-being of both visitors and employees. We expect all our employees to demonstrate a proactive and positive approach in upholding health, safety, and environmental protection standards.

- Make the workplace safe
- Prevent risks to your employees' health
- Ensure safe working practices are documented and implemented
- Make sure that all materials are handled, stored, and used safely
- Provide adequate first aid facilities
- Inform employees about any potential hazards of the job and provide adequate information, instructions, training, and supervision to safely perform the job
- Set up emergency plans
- Ensure that ventilation, temperature, lighting, toilet, washing and rest facilities all meet health, safety, and welfare requirements
- Regularly check that equipment is being used as intended and is well-maintained
- Prevent or control exposure to substances that may be a health hazard
- Avoid potentially dangerous work involving manual handling (and when this work is absolutely necessary, take precautions to reduce the risk of injury)
- Provide health supervision as needed
- Display warning and health and safety posters appropriately
- Report and record accidents, injuries, diseases, and dangerous occurrences
- Making sure premises are properly ventilated with clean and fresh air
- Keeping temperatures at a comfortable level (e.g., a minimum of 13°C (55°F) where the work involves physical activity)
- Making sure facilities are well lit
- Keeping the workplace and equipment clean and well-maintained
- Ensuring that areas are big enough to allow easy movement (at least 11m³/388ft³ per person)
- Providing workstations suitable for the employees and their tasks
- Keeping floors, walkways, stairs, roadways safe to use
- Protecting people from falling from high levels or into dangerous substances
- Storing things properly to avoid injuries
- Fitting windows, doors, and gates with safety devices
- Providing suitable washing facilities and clean drinking water
- Allowing employees proper breaks and leave
- Assuring safety of employees who work alone, or off-site

Equal Opportunities

Our employees and others around us are treated with dignity and respect, without discrimination based on racial or ethnic background, ability or disability, neurodiversity, language, socioeconomic status, citizenship or country of origin, faith or spiritual affiliation, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, or marital status.

Recruitment Policy

Georgian DMC does not employ children (14 year or younger) to complete work which is normally undertaken by adults.

Chapter 3: Internal Management: Environment and Community Relations

Reduction of Disposable and Consumable goods

The consumption of disposable goods is directly correlated with greenhouse gas emissions and climate change. To address this issue, Georgian DMC commits to promoting a company culture that encourages mindful consumption of disposable and consumable goods. Our goal is to actively reduce consumption, especially of disposable products, and in doing so, lessen our environmental impact and resource usage. Georgian DMC will adhere to the principle of 5R

Refuse	We will ask ourselves if we truly need a disposable item before acquiring it
Reduce	We will assess whether we can minimize our usage or opt for more sustainable alternatives
Reuse	We will explore opportunities to use items multiple times, extending their lifespan
Repurpose	We will consider whether disposable items can serve a different purpose after their original use
Recycle	We will aim to send materials back for processing to a previous stage in their life cycle

Sustainable Purchase Policy

As part of our commitment to sustainability, Georgian DMC has developed this Sustainable Purchase Policy to guide our procurement practices. This policy outlines our principles and objectives for sourcing products and services in a manner that minimizes our environmental impact and supports socially responsible initiatives. We assess the necessity of a purchase by considering the following questions:

- Do we really need this product?
- Can it be rent/leased/borrowed instead of purchased?
- Will this product last or is it single-use and/or breakable?
- Does it create superfluous waste or harm to the planet?
- Can we purchase from locally owned reputable companies (sustainably certified)?
- Can we combine orders or purchase in refill/ bulk to reduce their carbon footprint?

We repair or reuse	- before purchasing new and try to find a new purpose to objects before discarding them
We give preference to	- Products & services that have been produced with respect for people and the planet. For example, local, fair-trade, organic or recycled goods - Locally owned suppliers that are sustainably certified or have implemented a sustainability policy - Suppliers that abide by all local, national, and international labor laws
We purchase in bulk	- to reduce packaging and add the following sentence to every supplier we contract with: "Please deliver our order without unnecessary or plastic wrapping, we prefer if you can provide reusable or no wrapping at all"
NOTE: We refuse to purchase archeological/historical artifacts and or/products that threaten flora and fauna as indicated in the CITES treaty and the IUCN Red list.	

Our purchasing criteria for specific products	
Paper	we buy environmentally certified paper
Light-bulbs	We buy LED lights and consider their energy use (in Watt) and light production(in Lumen). Standard: The more lumen per watt
Electronic Devices	We buy new, innovative, durable and energy efficient devices
Tea and coffee	we buy directly from producer or fair trade certified in bulk
Cleaning materials	we buy natural products less harmful to our environment and train ourhousekeeping personnel to use eco-friendly cleaning techniques
Office supplies	We look for sustainable options
Paint	we purchase lead-free and water-based paint for our offices to providea healthy working environment for our employees.

Energy Reduction Policy

Georgian DMC is dedicated to reducing energy consumption and, in turn, minimizing our environmental impact. To achieve this goal, we have developed a comprehensive policy. Our key objectives are following:

- Reduce energy consumption in our operations, from transportation to office facilities
- Optimize energy usage in all aspects of our business to minimize waste and associated costs
- educate our staff and partners about energy-efficient practices and their impact on our environment

our energy reduction policy is focused on the four main principles:
Staff is aware of efficient heating and cooling practices, implement procedures to minimize energy use during non-operational hours, and optimize temperature settings
We utilize energy efficient LED light Bulbs and implement SWITCH OFF policy
We utilize energy-efficient computers and printers, and set equipment to energy-saving modes.
We will promote concise email communication, encourage the use of links instead of heavy attachments, and ensure that our mailing lists are up to date

We will regularly monitor our energy consumption and assess the effectiveness of our energy reduction efforts. Any feedback or suggestions from our staff, partners, or clients will be considered and integrated into our energy management strategy. Georgian DMC is committed to continually improving of energy performance.

Every member of the Georgian DMC team shares the responsibility for energy reduction. Compliance with this policy is mandatory. This policy will be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect changes in technology, regulations, and best practices.

Sustainable Energy

Georgian DMC currently utilizes renewable hydropower energy. However, we remain vigilant regarding technological advancements and are open to adopting sustainable green energy sources when feasible

Switch Off Policy

In 2021, Georgian DMC introduced a robust "Switch Off" policy aimed at promoting energy conservation and sustainable practices. This policy encompasses several key guidelines that employees are expected to follow:

Computers	employees are required to power off their computers completely instead of leaving them in sleep mode when they finish their work or during lunch time
Air Conditioner	employees must switch off the air conditioner when leaving a room. Additionally, it is important to close the door when the air conditioner is in use to maintain efficient cooling
Heating System	During colder months, employees are responsible for closing balcony doors when the heating system is active
Ventilation and Heating	In rooms that require ventilation for fresh air circulation, employees are advised to turn off the heating radiators
Appliances and Equipment	Employees are encouraged to power off any non-essential appliances and equipment when not in use

Low Energy Equipment

In our commitment to environmental sustainability, Georgian DMC actively promotes responsible energy consumption practices when procuring new equipment, prioritizing energy-efficient options guided by EU energy labels or the Energy Star symbol.

Waste Reduction Policy

Our Waste Reduction Policy is founded on the principles of the 5R rule for achieving zero waste: Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repair, and Recycle. Our policy includes the following guidelines:

- Use recyclable and refillable products
- Use bulk packaging instead of many small packages
- Avoid excessive packaging
- Use high quality, long lasting, and easily repairable products;
- Use single-use products as much as we can before be tossing;
- Avoid harmful or hazardous products or products which need careful storage and handling, and give preference to environmentally friendly alternatives;
- Use food materials with environmentally friendly packaging such as refillable bottles, paper/cardboard packaging, etc.;
- Avoid drinks in paper cups, bottles, and cans, and give preference to (refillable) bottles, mugs etc.;
- Sell old furniture or equipment at discounted rates and/or donate them to charitable organizations with recycling programmess in place;
- Donate waste to eco organizations
- Avoid single use plastic water bottles by encouraging guests to use refillable bottles at water stations.

Our commitment to effective waste management begins with the proactive assessment of waste types and quantities. By establishing a baseline, we aim to prioritize initiatives, identify quick wins, and set measurable targets, ensuring a systematic approach to minimizing our environmental impact and fostering sustainability.

- Our goal is to keep 100% double sided printing;
- Reduce paper consumption by 95%
- Maintain brochure printing at zero level
- Increasing our bulk purchasing to 25%;
- 30% of all office waste is recycled;
- Reduce reliance on plastic items in the office and business by 25%

Chapter 4: Partner Travel Agencies

Partner agency policy

Georgian DMC prefers to cooperate with organizations that have a written sustainability statement as an integral part of their business policy and with a clear sustainability policy in place. We expect partners to comply with GSTC-accredited certifications.

Chapter 5: Transport

Transport to Destination

Georgian DMC tries to ensure that vehicles used on tours do not cause more than average pollution. We believe that transport is an important aspect of sustainable tourism, and we do our best to decrease the average pollution-level. We try to:

- Select the most efficient routes for both time and carbon efficiency.
- Use railways wherever possible.
- Give priority to buses as a means of transportation.
- Offer public transportation to our clients.
- Use an appropriate vehicle for the size of the group.

Chapter 6: Accommodations

Child and Compulsory Labor

Georgian DMC ensures that, through its accommodation supply chain, the rights of children are respected and safeguarded. We do not contract accommodations, directly nor indirectly that are involved in compulsory labor, or that employ children to complete work that is normally undertaken by adults. If businesses employ children, their working times and conditions must comply with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ILO Convention 138.

We adhere to the definition of Child Labor provided by The International Labor Organization: “Child labor deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development. It refers to work that: is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children; and/or interferes with their schooling by: depriving them of the opportunity to attend school; obliging them to leave school prematurely; or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.”

Sexual Exploitation of Children

Georgian DMC requests its suppliers to condemn the exploitation of children on the premises and facilities of subcontracted accommodations. We reserve the right to terminate the contract if the supplier fails to take adequate measures to prevent and address child sexual exploitation within the direct supply chain.

Local Communities Resources

If a contracted accommodation has been found to jeopardize the integrity of and the local community's access to essential resources, essential services, access to livelihood, and access to important sites, Georgian DMC reserves the right to terminate the contract without warning.

Chapter 7: Activities

Wildlife Featuring

Excursions and attractions in which captive wildlife is held are not offered, except for activities that are properly regulated and are in compliance with local, national, and international laws. Excursions that include interactions with wildlife, comply with relevant codes of conduct. Any disturbance of natural ecosystems is minimized.

Wildlife Harvesting

Wildlife species are not harvested, consumed, displayed, sold, or traded, except as part of a regulated activity that ensures that their utilization is sustainable and in compliance with local, national and international law. Georgian DMC does not promote souvenirs or food that contain threatened flora and fauna species as indicated in the CITES treaty and the IUCN 'Red List'. Should any such criminal behavior come to light, Georgian DMC reserves the right to terminate the contract without notice.

Wildlife Interactions

Georgian DMC is dedicated to the preservation of local communities and the environment while providing travelers with the opportunity to explore the wonders of Georgia. Our goal is to safeguard our natural and cultural treasures, which is why we have formulated guidelines rooted in international best practices.

- Emphasize the significance of minimizing ecological impact and educate tourists on the importance of preserving ecosystems
- Advocate for responsible wildlife viewing and discourage any activities that disrupt or harm local flora and fauna
- Encourage the use of reusable and eco-friendly products to reduce environmental litter
- Provide tourists with information highlighting the natural and cultural significance of the areas they are exploring
- Designate tour guides to conduct briefings on appropriate behavior in natural settings
- Implement measures to prevent overcrowding in delicate natural areas, such as group size limitations and reservation systems

Chapter 8: Tour leaders, local representatives and guides

Employment conditions

Tour leaders, guides and local representatives are formally employed, ensuring they receive the benefits, rights, and protections mandated by local and international labor laws. Their duties and benefits are clearly outlined in written contracts or agreements, even if they are operating as freelancers.

Customer Communication

Tour leaders, local representatives, and tour guides employed by Georgian DMC provide clients with information regarding relevant sustainability matters in the destination, societal norms and values, and fundamental human rights.

Forbidden Souvenirs

Georgian DMC and its direct service providers do not promote souvenirs which contain threatened flora and fauna species and historic and archaeological artefacts. List of Forbidden Souvenirs:

- Bear pelt
- Fox hide
- Wolf hide
- Horns of Caucasian ibex
- Horn of Alpine chamois
- Any type of taxidermy trophy
- Fragment of stalactites and stalagmites
- Seeds of plants facing the threat of extinction.
- Coins, paintings, jewelry, inscriptions, and armor with cultural heritage significance
- Any stolen art item

Chapter 10: Customer Communication and Protection

Customer Privacy

Georgian DMC is committed to ensuring customer privacy and information protection. Sensitive information is stored electronically within our database, which is secured and only accessible by accredited staff who follow strictly privacy procedures. If any documents containing personal data are printed for internal purposes, they are kept in a filing system in our office that is only accessible by our most trusted employees. If documents are no longer applicable, they are shredded before disposal.

- Any personal data is only collected if relevant and necessary for us to provide the services sold
- All personal data is kept for maximum 1 year
- Our customers are informed on how we store data and where. They always have the option to be deleted from our database.
- We are committed to protecting the privacy of all of our guests and users, and we would like to reassure you that all of the information you provide us with is kept strictly private and confidential
- In cases where the service necessitates the transfer of personal data to a third party, the client will be duly informed of this requirement

Promotion and Communication

Georgian DMC ensures that no marketing and advertisement document, statement, or other publication, shall contain misleading information, over advertise and under deliver. We guarantee that all our staff are aware of and ensure that what is offered can be delivered to our clients with ease.

Prevention of sexual exploitation

Georgian DMC is committed to actively participating in the fight against sexual exploitation. We have adopted protection mechanisms to ensure the safety of vulnerable individuals.

- We develop comprehensive training programs for our staff, especially for tour guides, that specifically address the issues of sexual exploitation and harassment. Resources are retrieved from organizations such as TheCode.org, ChildSafe, UNICEF, and ECPAT.
- Our staff is trained to identify signs of exploitation and harassment and to respond appropriately
- Georgian DMC has a zero-tolerance policy towards any form of exploitation or harassment. Violations will result in immediate action, which may include reporting to the relevant authorities.
- Customers are encouraged to be vigilant and report any suspicious activities they may observe during their travels.
- We encourage customers to approach our trained staff if they have concerns or suspicions.
- Customers are informed about possible sexual exploitation scenarios during the debriefing provided by tour guides

In the event of witnessing a sexual exploitation act, travelers are encouraged to promptly inform tour leaders, who are equipped with clear guidelines on how to respond. They should immediately call the police and also notify the company to either terminate partnership with the specific service supplier or in other cases take appropriate action.

Within the contractual agreements related to services, it is explicitly incorporated that the discovery of any instance of sexual exploitation will result in immediate termination of the agreement

Georgian has implemented transparent reporting mechanisms for both employees and customers to report sexual exploitation. They can either send an email or make a phone call to the tour manager, who is then responsible for informing both the managing director of the company and the director of operations.

Guidelines For Informing Travelers During the Debriefing Session	
Tour leaders inform travelers about the types of sexual exploitation that may be witnessed during the trip.	Tour leaders inform travelers about where they may witness the sexual exploitation of children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - exchange of sex for goods, services, or money - production of pornography involving children - prostitution - exploit children through grooming, coercion, or the distribution of explicit content - sextortion - luring victims through social media - forcing or coercing minors into marriage, involving sexual exploitation and abuse - other forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Within the service providers booked by Georgian DMC in the tour program, including hotels, restaurants, wineries, sightseeing activities, and others. - Any service supplier out of the tour program
What we have to do?	What Georgian DMC will do?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promptly contact the tour leader and provide a detailed description of the observed incident of sexual exploitation - Attempt to capture photographic or video evidence - If necessary, directly contact the police by making a phone call 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will terminate cooperation with the accused service supplier. - Will document the case and provide staff training to equip them with necessary preventive skills. - Will develop additional guidelines

Illegal souvenirs

Georgian DMC recognizes the critical importance of preventing the acquisition of illegal souvenirs. Hence, our tour leaders provide guests with comprehensive guidelines on how to avoid unacceptable purchases.

Types of Illegal Souvenirs:

- artifacts or relics from archaeological sites without proper documentation or permission
- Items made from parts of endangered species, such as ivory, tortoise shell, or exotic animal skins
- Religious or cultural artifacts without appropriate permissions or legal documentation.
- Items that contravene international conventions, such as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
- Items that come with false or forged documentation claiming their authenticity or legality
- souvenirs that contain illegal substances, substances harmful to the environment, or those violating local laws
- Items sourced from protected natural areas, such as coral reefs or national parks

Recommendations to Avoid Purchasing Illegal Souvenirs:

- Understand local regulations and research the specific laws about souvenirs before you buy
- Always request proper documentation for any artifact or item you plan to purchase
- Refrain from buying products made from endangered species, as it contributes to illegal wildlife trade
- Choose vendors with a commitment to ethical and legal business practices
- Ask our guides or local authorities about the legality of souvenirs

Signatures of Georgian DMC Management