

## **CAPE TOWN TOURISM AND RESPONSIBLE TOURISM: COMMUNITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

There has never been a more opportune time in tourism, but the tourism industry and our society has also never before been faced with such an urgent need to address the triple bottom line – investing in solid, practical and firm principles of ethical behaviour, management and lifestyle. It is time for action.

Cape Town Tourism is committed to playing a pro-active and co-operative role in the equitable development of tourism in Cape Town and the Western Cape.

We have entered an interactive age where a new generation of responsible travellers are influencing our markets and dictating what products and experiences they want to buy. These responsible travellers are seeking real, meaningful and authentic experiences and are in tune with responsible lifestyle practices such as the use of alternative energy, buying fair-trade products and experiences and supporting community tourism. Cape Town Tourism supports responsible tourism which by definition is “tourism that promotes responsibility to the environment through its sustainable use; responsibility to involve local communities in the tourism industry; responsibility for the safety and security of visitors and responsible government, employees, employers, unions and local communities”.

One of the most sensitive issues that the tourism industry faces is the phenomenon of commercial sexual exploitation of children mainly in developing countries, by tourists coming often from developed countries. In partnership with the UN World Tourism Organisation, ECPAT (End Child Pornography and Trafficking) has developed The Code ([www.thecode.org](http://www.thecode.org)), an international code of conduct intended to prevent child sex tourism by making the tourism and hospitality industry vigilant and aware. As a tourism industry membership association, Cape Town Tourism will play a critical role in driving the implementation of The Code of Conduct in Cape Town.

The Code is used in many countries in Europe, Asia and the Americas. In terms of the African continent, to date only Kenya has introduced The Code. Cape Town Tourism has committed itself and our members to work with stakeholders such as Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa to adopt the Code and develop a written company policy for Cape Town Tourism. We are taking hands with members and tourism partners to establish an ethical policy with practical guidelines regarding Sex Tourism and in particular the commercial sexual exploitation of women and children. These principles will be incorporated as part of Cape Town Tourism’s membership criteria and code of good practice with a dedicated member awareness programme and a recommendation "...to consider measures to prevent the use of their premises for the commercial sexual exploitation of children" and "to prevent ease of access to child prostitution or child pornography".

Cape Town Tourism encourages members to adopt responsible tourism principals in their businesses. We are in the process of finalizing simple guidelines that must be implemented by all members. We will also implement a responsible tourism code for visitors. We encourage you to engage with us to find out how you can bet involved in the equitable development of tourism.

We work with government and partners such as Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa to create awareness of responsible tourism issues.

If you would like further information, have any ideas, suggestions or would like to actively participate in Cape Town Tourism’s Responsible Tourism Initiative please contact Bronwen d’Oliveira on 021 4876800 or email [bronwen@tourismcapetown.co.za](mailto:bronwen@tourismcapetown.co.za). Further information can be found in the section on partners or on [www.talkingtourism.co.za](http://www.talkingtourism.co.za), [www.environment.org.za](http://www.environment.org.za), [www.fairtourismsa.org.za](http://www.fairtourismsa.org.za) and [www.ecpat.net](http://www.ecpat.net).

## **Quality assurance of establishments**

Cape Town Tourism, along with all other Local Tourism Organizations across the province, has been committed to a provincial quality assurance programme since our inception in 2004. Only products that agree to our code of conduct and fulfil the minimum standards criteria required for their category of membership are promoted by Cape Town Tourism to ensure a quality visitor experience.

The quality assurance programme is operated in partnership with the star grading system managed by the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA). The assessment is conducted by qualified grading council assessors. The cost of the assessment is included in the membership fees. Assessments are conducted every two years.

Assessment applies to all accommodation providers that are not graded and all tour operators that have not passed the SATSA minimum criteria. We are working with the province to expand these criteria to other categories including conference venues and restaurants. We are also working to include the following draft responsible tourism criteria:

- Evidence of an environmental statement and/or policy
- Evidence of a supply chain or procurement statement and/or policy including commitment to buy from local businesses
- Evidence of a community interaction statement and/or policy including a commitment to use local guides and assist guests in community engagement.