WALKING AND TREKKING

Managing waste

In situations where no toilets are available, bury waste in a hole in the ground, at least 6 inches deep, and at least 100 metres away from water bodies or campsites.

Utilise defined tracks

Maintain track log-books and install a monitoring system to ensure updated information on existing tracks.

In the absence of defined tracks and to the extent feasible, avoid wet or soft ground.

Instruct guests to spread out so that no two walkers follow in the same path and to the extent feasible, avoid walking through vegetation or on fragile soil.

For Overnight Camps

For a day walk that does not involve an overnight camp stay, the maximum group size should be 25 people.

For overnight walks or treks, the maximum group size should be limited to eight members or less.

If camping or preparation of meals is involved, adhere to minimal impact camping criteria.

CAMPING CODE

The following measures should be followed:

Whenever possible, use existing formal (already constructed and approved) campsites.

Where there are no existing campsites, avoid using areas of high conservation value and ensure camps are set at least 30 metres away from the nearest water body.

Bathing and washing with soap and detergents should be carried out at least 100 metres away from the nearest water body.

All other waste material should be carried away. Campsite fires, if necessary, should be set in existing fireplaces and made from firewood that has been brought in or collected from a field. It should be completely extinguished after use. Campfires are generally discouraged.

BEST PRACTICE

This includes regular monitoring of the condition of tracks and trails, by filling in log books and/or photographic records, making sure that human waste is suitably disposed off and by rotating tour routes in heavily used areas, to minimise impact.

Fuel stoves should be used for cooking. The condition of the campsite should be monitored by filling in log books or taking photographs. Data from the monitoring programme should be provided to the relevant management agency and the use of campsites must be a rotated event.
POWER BOAT USE CODE

The following measures should be followed:

- Boat wash should not erode river banks, shores of lakes or coastal environments, or affect the enjoyment of other people.
- Boats should not be anchored or grounded on sensitive environments.
- Ensure that along regular routes and on regular stops, mooring rather than anchoring is used.
- Ensure that bilge water contaminated with oil, grease and fuel is not discharged.
- Ensure that untreated ballast water is not discharged.

Where pump-out facilities for sewage/sullage exist, sewage and sullage should be taken to shore and pumped out.

Where no pump-out facilities exist, sewage/sullage must only be discharged where there will not be significant impact on receiving environments (i.e. not in small lakes, near coral reefs or in landlocked coastal lagoons).

To achieve the previous two objectives, boats must be fitted with holding tanks.

Maintenance of boats (spray painting, abrasive-ballasting, application of anti-foulants etc.) is only done in appropriately designed and managed facilities.

Anti-foulants that contain heavy metals or biocides should be scrubbed and removed in an appropriate facility (where fouling organisms, paint scrapings and sludge are collected and appropriately disposed off).

Anti-foulants must not be used in small freshwater bodies and only organotin-free anti-foulants should be used in marine environments.

BEST PRACTICE

- Sewage/sullage and bilge water must not be discharged into open water.
- Ballast water must not be discharged unless it is treated, to ensure that potential diseases and exotic organisms are destroyed.
- Anti-foulants that release heavy metals or biocides must not be used and tar epoxies should be used in preference.
- If feasible, diesel, four-stroke or electric engines should be used instead of two-stroke engines.
- Noise suppression equipment should be used in situations where noise might disturb wildlife or lessen other people’s enjoyment.

MINIMISING IMPACTS OF SNORKELLING AND SCUBA DIVING CODE

The following measures should be followed:

- When snorkelling or diving, care should be taken not to stand on or damage fragile organisms (e.g. coral).
- Free swimming animals must not be chased, ridden or herded.
- Living or dead items that are picked up must be returned to their exact position.
- Collecting of seashells etc. should be discouraged, and only undertaken in accordance with local laws and guidelines.
- Souvenirs must not be taken from historic wrecks or historical sites.
- Spear fishing and other collecting must not be undertaken.

BEST PRACTICE

- Pre-planned routes or underwater “trails” that are designed to minimise environmental impact must be provided to people who snorkel or dive.
- Resting stations or sites must be provided for snorklers.
NON-POWERED BOAT USE CODE

The following measures should be followed:

Portage of craft must follow routes selected by natural area managers, to minimise long-term environmental damage.

Portaging of canoes and rafts around white water or low water areas must be along routes managed for such use and must involve minimal damage to the bank and vegetation.

Vessels must be moored so that there is minimum impact on vegetation. When tying to trees a soft wrap should be used to prevent rub; when the same location is used repeatedly the area must be firmly secured with use of mooring rings, pylons etc.

Portage routes or regularly used mooring locations must be actively rehabilitated or maintained (e.g., the re-vegetation of banks, and closing down of areas for rehabilitation).

Regularly used mooring locations must be carried out by way of photographs and log books and this information provided to the relevant authority.

A “carry in - carry out” policy should be strictly followed for all litter and waste (including food scraps, excluding human waste).

VEHICLE USE CODE

The following measures should be followed:

Designated tracks and roads should be used where they exist.

Where tracks and roads do not exist, travel routes should be selected to avoid sensitive areas such as grasslands, dunes, salt pans, steep hill sides; and if appropriate, the route should be approved by the relevant management agency.

Rivers and creeks should be forded only at designated crossings and undertaken at slow speed, and if possible, at a 90° angle to the bank.

BEST PRACTICE

Advice must be sought from relevant experts such as the staff of government agencies, universities, or NGOs, to ascertain the appropriate route and level of use.

Road and track conditions should be monitored in log books or via photographic records; and the data provided to the relevant management.

We must undertake remedial work where necessary on tracks and roads (provided this is approved by the relevant government agency).

Tour routes must be regularly rotated.

BEST PRACTICE

Human waste must be carried out.

The group size must be limited to 5 vessels or less, or the maximum number recommended by the relevant government or nature conservation agency.
SPOTLIGHTING CODE

The following measures are to be followed:

Low wattage lights or small torches (maximum of 60 watts or 30 watts in a closed forest) to be used to detect eye-shine of animals.

Low wattage lights are to be used for observations (30 watts recommended).

A maximum of two spotlights per group (with a maximum of 25 people per group) is to be used.

Red filters are to be placed in front of spotlights once an animal has been located.

Spotlights are not to be shone on animals for such a length of time that is likely to leave them dazed and susceptible to predation.

Group size to be limited to 25

When observing turtles laying eggs, the following measures should be undertaken:

Lights used are not more than three volts, or a two-cell torch.

Lights are not shone directly on the turtle’s face at any time.

Turtles leaving the water or moving up the beach are not approached, but are avoided until after the body pit has been dug and the turtle begins laying eggs.

Animals are not touched at any time.

Campfires are not lit on turtle-laying beaches.

When observing glow worms, all the following measures should be undertaken:

Lighting is kept to the minimum level necessary for safety.

Lights are no more than three volts or a two-cell torch.

Lights are not shone directly on the glow worms at any time.

Animals are not touched at any time.

Campfires are not lit near glow worm sites.

Flash photography is prohibited.

Prior to commencing the tour, visitors should be advised:

To keep noise to a minimum.

To keep on designated trails.

On the correct use of equipment (e.g. torches, red filters, binoculars).

Tours are to follow properly constructed trails.

Tours routes for mammal spotlighting are regularly rotated.

The playing of taped animal or bird calls is kept to a minimum.

BEST PRACTICE

Infra-red binoculars are used.

Group size is limited to 10 or less.

Familiarisation of the tour route is conducted, by surveying the route in daylight prior to the tour.

Flash photography is prohibited.
MARINE MAMMAL AND MEGAFUANA VIEWING CODE

The following measures should be followed while viewing whale, dolphin, shark, whale shark, dugong, manatee and other large marine animals:

Animals must not be chased or herded.
Animals must have unrestricted movement.
Particular caution must be exercised around any group of animals that includes mothers and young ones.
At least one staff member must monitor the animal’s behaviour while the activity is occurring.
Where vessels are used, ensure that they are not positioned directly in the path of animals, nor used to “leap frog” in a way that repeatedly places the vessel ahead of the animals.
Engines must not be started and vessels moved off until animals have departed.
Where several vessels are operating in the same location, radio communication between the vessels must be maintained to assist orderly management and safety.
All machinery, engines, etc. must be sound proofed.
Swimming with mega fauna (e.g. dolphins, seals) must occur only with the authorisation of the statutory authority responsible for the animal; and where swimming with mega fauna does occur, guests must be prepared for the reaction of the animals to being in close quarters with humans.
Customers must be advised not to touch the animals or swim directly towards them.
Floating lines must be used in open water, and wherever suitable at reefs.
When in use, customers must be advised not to leave the floating line.

Visitors must be advised to avoid rapid movements when the animals are in the vicinity.
At least one staff member must enter the water before visitors.
Snorkelling gear must be used in preference to scuba gear.
Flash photography should be prohibited.
A maximum of six visitors should be in the water at any given time.

ROCK CLIMBING AND ABSEILING CODE

The following measures are to be followed:

Indiscriminate or excessive use of fixed equipment and chalk must be avoided.
Chipping of rocks, wire brushing to remove mosses and “gardening” in cracks and gullies must be avoided.
Use of bolts must be minimised and the use of galvanised bolts must be entirely avoided.
Sites of geological, cultural or scientific interest must be avoided.
Access to cliffs must be sought only via existing tracks.
A “carry in - carry out” policy must be strictly followed for all equipment and waste.
Vegetation, nesting birds and other wildlife must not be disturbed.
AIRCRAFT USE CODE

The following measures should be followed:

Private airstrips and helipads must be located as far as possible from public areas.

Flights over designated protected areas (e.g. National Parks) must maintain a minimum height of at least 2000 feet or other specified heights as required by relevant authority.

Flight paths and altitudes must be selected to ensure minimal impact on wildlife watching (i.e. whale watching, bird rookeries).

Aircraft use must not affect the ability of others to appreciate and enjoy the environment.

Bunding, drip trays, ground liners or hardstands must be used to reduce the impact of fuel and oil spillage.

Re-fueling of aircraft must not occur in areas of high conservation value.

Relatively undisturbed ecosystems, where native fauna and people on the ground are likely to be prone to noise disturbance, must be avoided.

CAVING CODE

DEVELOPED CAVES

In developed show caves the following measures should be followed:

Where an entrance has been created or enlarged for visitor access, a chamber needs to be installed between the cave entrance and the rest of the cave to minimise air and temperature flow.

Pathways or natural water courses within the cave must be avoided.

All lighting must be powered by electricity and should be switched off when visitors are outside the cave.

Prior to entering the cave, visitors are advised:

Visitors must be strictly prohibited from touching or removing any cave decorations, speleothems, bone and fossil remains, cave dwelling life forms or sediment within the cave.

Visitors must carry out all litter.

Eating and smoking in the cave must be strictly prohibited.

BEST PRACTICE

Flights over protected areas (such as National Parks) must maintain a minimum height of at least 2000 feet.

Aircraft use must be actively discouraged in scenic areas.

Other than at designated airports, aircraft must not land within audible distance of a local community.

BEST PRACTICE

All the following construction measures must be undertaken:

The cave route must be designed to minimise ascents and maximise descents.

All lights must be positioned at least 30 centimetres from the nearest formation.

All lighting must use the lowest possible wattage.

Coloured lights must not be used to light features.

Any algae or other biota created by lighting must be removed from the cave system.

Visitors must be supplied with coats or slip-on covers for their shoes to minimise lint and dust loss.
CAVING CODE

WILD CAVES

During caving in wild caves the following measures should be followed:

Avoid wild caving if the need for any of the following arises along the route:

1. Crossing of clean flow stone floors in boots.
2. Venturing within five metres of high value stalagmite dusters.
3. Venturing within five metres of cave-dwelling life forms: light must never be pointed directly on cave biota.

The following equipment must be used in all wild cave tours:

- Battery operated lights, rather than fuel-based systems.
- Soft material between ropes and natural anchors such as trees (e.g. carpet or cloth).
- Small tackle bags and packs, tightly fitted to the guide’s back.
- Cave-marking materials so that missing markers can be replaced and poorly defined routes can be clarified.

All the following measures must be taken to manage customer behaviour:

- Helmets must never be removed.
- Any food eaten must be consumed over plastic bags so that no crumbs or waste are left behind.
- Camping is prohibited.
- The maximum group size must be limited to 10 individuals, including the guide.

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BEST PRACTICE

Guides or visitors must take care not to walk on flow stone.

Visitors must not be left in the dark to find their own way through a section of cave that contains any cave decorations, speleothems, bone and fossil remains, cave dwelling life forms, sediment or watercourse.

The maximum group size must be limited to 10 individuals, including the guide.

Wild caving in sensitive caves and extensions must not use: tackle bags and packs, bolting, rigging and construction equipment.

Overalls and boots must be washed clean of dirt, lint, bacteria and fungi before taking them into the cave.

Litter patrols must be conducted by the operator to remove any litter left after tours.

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Disclaimer: ITC Hotels does not take responsibility for the accuracy of this information. The guidelines provided here are indicative. As rules and laws pertaining to conservation may vary from region to region, please refer back to local authorities and experts for any clarifications.