



## Animal Welfare Policy

With appreciation of wildlife in its natural setting as an important part of our focus, it is vital to us that none of our product adversely impacts the conservation or welfare of any animals which our clients encounter during their travels.

Wherever possible, our trips are structured in such a way that they make a viable contribution towards the continued protection of wildlife – as well as to protection or restoration of the remaining wild places where the animals naturally exist. The comprehensive animal welfare guidelines created by ABTA are among the directives which we follow. Additional resources include the authoritative *Global Guide to Animal Protection* of which one of our staff is a contributor. We do not knowingly include harmful activities or unethical practices as part of the holidays we sell.

[View ABTA's full Animal Welfare Guidelines.](#)

We will continue to support the ongoing monitoring of animal interactions and recommend improvements to our suppliers, assisted by experts in the field of animal welfare.

### Viewing wildlife

In line with maintaining ecotourism integrity, we adhere to the following:

- We do not arrange for our clients to visit animals held in captive conditions unless the facility is part of a reputable sanctuary and we undertake to ensure that all our suppliers adhere to the highest standards of welfare for working animals.

**Registered Address:** Bridgetown House, Lower Bridge Street, Chester, CH1 1RU **Website:** itc-uk.com

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- Small group sizes: to deliver its promises, ecotourism is by necessity low volume, especially in frail ecosystems located in developing tropical countries. Our groups viewing wildlife are kept to a reasonable number of participants – for example in the Afro-tropics and Madagascar, group size is restricted to a maximum of 8 participants.
- Tour participants viewing wildlife are to keep a reasonable distance from the wildlife. We understand that occasionally wild animals – which are not aware of set barriers – may of their own accord approach tourists very closely. This is fine, so long as the animal is then free to move off as and when it wishes to do so.
- Clients viewing wildlife will always be accompanied by experienced, professional guides, rangers or other staff who can inform tourists on how to behave appropriately around the wildlife.
- Animals must never be charged, chased, or cornered and wildlife is not to be touched or fed by tourists.
- Wild animals' welfare takes priority over the visitor's experience. Some specific examples where care should always be exercised in this regard, include the use of playback by birders and birding guides, and etiquette involved with whale-watching.

In maintaining this ethic, we aim to focus on meaningful personal experiences of nature which lead to more appreciation and deeper understanding. With this comes increased environmental awareness via interpretation. Positive contributions to conservation of biodiversity in wild places then inevitably follow, in tandem with economic and socio-cultural benefits among resident communities.

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