



## Picos Rock and Snow Environmental Policy

The outdoor activities that we run - ski touring, snowshoeing and walking - are in themselves inherently of very little, if no, negative environmental impact. However, we also have an ongoing commitment to improving the sustainability of our operations – maximising the environmental, economic and community impacts of our business.

The following sustainability policy outlines all the areas in which we are currently taking action. Within sections we have specified measurable goals, targets and actions that we aim to undertake in order to further monitor, analyse and ensure our continual improvement.

### 1) Business model

**To ensure proper documentation of our business, goals and policies we:**

Use a local legal and accountancy advisor.

**Goals and actions planned:**

To incorporate optional client contributions to a local conservation NGO.

### 2) Communication with Guests

**To encourage client understanding of sustainable tourism we:**

- Provide information which relates to their interaction with surrounding natural, cultural and protected areas.
- Communicate our steps towards sustainable tourism through online marketing materials and our own website.
- Systematically collect customer feedback and have a system for documenting the feedback (both positive and negative).

### 3) Supply Chain Management

To ensure maximum sustainability throughout our supply chain we:

- Know exactly who all suppliers are for all aspects of our tours
- Use locally owned, independent accommodation and suppliers
- Work with suppliers to encourage and help improve the sustainability of their operations, set targets etc.
- Favour suppliers who have a responsible tourism/sustainability policy (such as businesses that don't encourage quad bikes!)
  
- Check their policy to make sure it covers key environmental and social issues and actions in specific detail, and follow up to fill in any gaps.

### 4) Energy – Climate Management

To move towards zero carbon emissions in our accommodation we:

- Have a system to regularly monitor energy usage and set reduction targets.
- Provide guidelines to guests on how to save water and energy.
- Housekeeping includes energy saving activities in their daily routines. In particular:
  - Switch lights, appliances, computers etc off at mains when not in use and never leave them on standby;
  - Use natural light first where possible;
  - Have a towel re-use program, not daily change;
  - Ensure heated towel rails are switched off when not in use;
  - Do laundry at a low heat;
  - Use clothes lines rather than tumble driers, outdoors and in;
  - Check radiators and air conditioning systems regularly to avoid over heating or over cooling;
  - Close windows when heating or cooling rooms; close curtains and shutters at night;
  - Only boil water as required;
  - Ensure grills and fans are not blocked and filters replaced regularly.
  - Have boiler and hot pipes insulated.
  - Have only energy saving light bulbs.
  - Have timers or motion sensors for lights in halls.
- Use energy efficient rated appliances (from fridges to computers to fans), and have a replacement scheme for old appliances.
- Select the right sized appliances for our needs when installing or replacing.
- Have wall cavities insulated (with natural materials).
- Have the roof well insulated (with natural insulating materials).
- Have most windows double-glazed.
- Use our local recycling centre.

## Goals and actions planned:

To convert an oil-fired boiler to eco briquettes.

### 5) Travel

To minimise carbon emissions from travel and transport we:

- Encourage and provide useful information on overland journeys to destination such as the ferries and trains available.
- Provide customers with information on low impact transport options, and encourage their use.
- Encourage driving in a consistent, fuel efficient manner, and combine tasks or car-pool.
- Do regular maintenance checks, oil changes and tyre pressure checks on our vehicles to ensure maximum efficiency.
- Design itineraries that minimise travel/transport required, and avoid internal flights.

### 6) Water

To minimise water usage we:

- Have a system to regularly monitor the volume of water usage and set reduction targets.
- Make regular housekeeping checks for leaks and drips and aim to resolve immediately.
- Have low-water usage gardens, e.g grow locally appropriate plants requiring little watering.
- Have dual flush toilets.

## Goals and actions planned:

To install water-saving shower heads and low-flow tap aerators.

### 7) Waste

To carefully handle, reduce, re-use and recycle waste we:

- Train staff to reduce, re-use and recycle waste.
- Compost organic and biodegradable waste.
- Recycle all waste glass, plastic, paper and card, cartons.
- Make recycling facilities available to guests and provide information.
- Ensure sewage and other waste is disposed of in a responsible manner.

- Donate or recycle old IT equipment and refill printer cartridges.
- Run as a paper-free operation: electronic communication, no brochures, double-sided printing, reuse free sides of paper as draft or scrap pads.
- Empty rubbish into one bin liner to avoid replacing all bin liners.
- Seek less heavily packaged products, and choose recycled/recyclable or biodegradable packages over plastic packaging where possible. In particular; buy refillable containers when possible.
- Provide reusable bottles for tap or our own spring water instead of buying bottled water and encourage guests to bring their own reusable bottle;
- Avoid disposable or single use items eg plastic cups, cutlery, disposable batteries;
- Don't use mini shower gel and soap bottles, provide refillable dispensers instead;
- Buy in bulk as much as possible;
- Use plastic containers for food storage rather than cling film.
- In building work we strive to avoid non-degradable products, and attempt to reclaim/re-use as many materials as we can.

## 8) Purchasing

**To support other ethical practices and local businesses we:**

Have a green purchasing policy. This includes:

- Use local suppliers and artisans wherever available.
- Reduce food/product miles by choosing local/regional products.
- Buy ecological cleaning products and washing detergents that have not been tested on animals.
- Purchase, when available, toilet paper from recycled paper or FSC wood.
- Prioritise organic foodstuffs over chemically-grown foods.
- Avoid buying products made from endangered plants or animals.
- Prioritise use of suppliers with a shared focus on sustainable practice.
- Encourage and support sustainable practice among our suppliers and ask where products come from.
- Source perishables from local organic suppliers so our menu is affected by the season.
- Source furnishings, fixtures and fittings made with local materials and by local suppliers.
- Prioritise conversion and renovation, rather than new build in any new developments
- In all construction and renovation work we try to incorporate green design principles and materials, and use locally appropriate materials and construction techniques, which reflect natural and cultural heritage.
- Design and construction of new buildings respects local land rights in siting, impact assessment, and acquisition.

## 9) Ecosystem Preservation

To be proactively involved in caring for the local environment we:

- Are actively involved in trying to prevent the building of a ski resort in the vicinity.
- Communicate with guests, when necessary, about appropriate behaviour in the natural environment.
- Ensure any other guides we work with are trained in appropriate behaviour in natural areas and ensure adherence to them.
- Are happy to explain issues affecting the ecosystems and wildlife.
- Carefully plan and prepare trips to ensure it meets skills and abilities of the group..
- Avoid environmentally stressed areas, such as honey pots, on tours; visit in small groups; avoid times of high use.
- Keep all rubbish until it can be properly disposed of.
- Encourage collection of any extra litter seen around;
- Leave what you find, don't take or purchase natural 'souvenirs';
- Never approach, feed or touch wildlife or fragile organisms;
- Never wash anything with cleaning agents directly in river or lake water;
- Ensure buildings comply with local zoning, protected and heritage area status.
- Support local environmental and conservation efforts. For example, local NGO's involved in wildlife protection. We are members of a national birdlife group, Greenpeace, and Fapas, a local wild animal conservation group involved in the protection of animals such as bears, vultures, wolves and ospreys.

**Goals and actions planned:**

To join a local river conservation group.

## 10) Community Impacts

To make sure we benefit the local economy and community as much as possible we:

- Establish good long term relationships with locally owned suppliers and service providers.
- Pay fair prices.
- Recommend local and ethical products and services to guests.
- Have targets to increase local supply, where locally owned suppliers not used, and offer assistance to local enterprises to encourage local supply.
- Employ the assistance of local residents.

- Are active in the local community and work in collaboration with them. We are aware of local issues and make sure our operations don't jeopardise provision of services to the local community.
- Donate a percentage of year-end profits to local charities or projects with annual subscription to the above mentioned charities.

## 11) Culture

### To respect and support local cultures we:

- Support traditional and grass roots cultural events such as local festivals.
- Adopt local art, design and architecture into developments.
- Promote and support destination stewardship amongst locals.
- Support and contribute to the protection of historical, spiritual and cultural sites, and don't impede local access to them.
- Integrate and support our children in local traditions.