

Sustainability Policy

At Alternative Athens & at Back to the Routes, we recognize our environmental and social responsibilities. As a responsible tourism company, we are dedicated to fostering sustainable development by integrating ecological, social, economic, and cultural considerations into our activities. Our aim is to reduce environmental impact, support local communities, and deliver exceptional services to our customers.

Responsible management

We comply with all local, regional, national and international regulations relating to business, environmental protection, health and safety, labor rights and taxes, including the protection of human rights and children's rights.

We promote transparency and honesty in business activities, communicating openly with clients, partners, and employees. We promote our company responsibly, ensuring our messaging reflects the truth and avoids any form of greenwashing.

We only work with suppliers who meet the requirements of Greek law and international standards (in the field of human rights, children's rights, labor code, environmental law, health and safety, etc.)

Taking care of people

We adhere to equal treatment and non-discrimination principles in employment and business relations, ensuring equal opportunities for all.

We provide safe and healthy working conditions for our employees, and for guides and clients during our tours, by following health and safety regulations, best practices and emergency procedures.

We create good and inclusive working conditions, providing formal employment and fair pay, and offering professional development opportunities to all employees; we also take care of their well-being by organizing annual events, including team building and annual weekend getaways.

We ensure all guides and tour leaders have fair working conditions. We collaborate exclusively with local guides knowledgeable about the destinations and sustainable practices, especially for sites of natural or cultural significance, where we rely on licensed professionals.

We promote responsible purchasing. Souvenirs containing threatened plants or animals, illegally obtained artifacts, drugs, or other prohibited items are strictly avoided.

We promote responsible behavior among our customers by providing them with tips on how to travel in an environmentally friendly and ethical way.

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Taking care of local communities

We do not offer tours or services that harm humans, animals, plants, natural resources, or products that are socially/culturally unacceptable. We do not offer visits to schools or orphanages, or other activities that could potentially harm children.

We focus on areas less visited by tourists.

We travel in groups of no more than 15 people, minimizing any negative impact or disruption to the local way of life or the environment.

We prefer to work with local suppliers, family businesses, and partners who share our commitment to sustainable development. We support local businesses that promote high-quality Greek products. When choosing accommodations, we avoid chain hotels and prefer locally-owned, small or family-run hotels. We take customers exclusively to local restaurants and shops.

Our tours are accessible to everyone. We are the only tour company in Greece that offers tours to Acropolis for sight-impaired travelers.

We do not offer excursions or attractions involving captive wildlife. Activities involving interactions with wildlife follow strict codes of conduct to ensure animal welfare and minimize disruption to natural ecosystems.

We never harvest, consume, display, sell or trade wildlife, unless if allowed by law. Any interactions with animals are carefully managed to prevent any negative impact on the health, behavior, or survival of wild populations.

We strive to minimize any disturbance to natural ecosystems and contribute to conservation efforts when necessary.

Taking care of the environment

We minimize waste and practice waste separation. We purchase only necessary items. We avoid single-use items such as cups, plates, and cutlery. We drink tap water and store it in reusable glass containers. We follow a policy of double-sided printing and use FSC-certified or recycled paper. We opt for cosmetics in refillable or bulk packaging. We use fabric towels instead of disposable paper towels. We rely on reusable storage containers, and whenever feasible, we prioritize purchasing in bulk.

We aim at reducing energy use. When acquiring new equipment, we prioritize energy-efficient options, such as those with high energy ratings or certifications like Energy Star. We use only LED lamps. We turn off lights when they are not needed. Our workspace benefits from ample natural light, reducing the need for artificial lighting. We turn off devices when not in use and ensure that laptops and other equipment are set to energy-saving or efficiency modes by default.

We promote low-emissions transportation among our employees and clients, and have an electric car for office use. We limit (as much as possible) the use of motorized transportation. At Alternative Athens, our activities are mostly walking tours, and when we do need to rely on motorized transport, we promote the use of public transportation wherever

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possible. At Back to The Routes (our sister company), all our road trips are carbon neutral. This means that we compensate each time for the emissions each trip produces by reducing CO2 emissions in other parts of the world.

Policy implementation

Our sustainability policy, effective from October 1, 2024, outlines actions to minimize our environmental impact, support local communities, and promote responsible tourism. The Sustainability Coordinator, in collaboration with the management team, oversees its implementation. The policy will be reviewed and updated annually, with adjustments made to comply with new regulations or based on evaluation outcomes.