

SouthernXplorer Sustainability Policy

Last updated: September 2025

1) What we stand for

- Community empowerment. We work first with local guides, hosts, and small suppliers so income, knowledge and decision-making remain local.
- Direct contribution model. On co-branded, purpose trips we curate with our NGO partners, 50% of profits go to the partner organisation (e.g., Viva con Agua South Africa, Surfpop). We've also run tourism workshops with Surfpop for youth from Masiphumelele to spark interest in tourism careers.
- Environmental stewardship. We plan efficient routes, keep groups small, reduce waste, promote refills/reusables, and encourage optional carbon-offsets through credible, South Africa-based programmes.
- Respect for culture & nature. We celebrate living heritage (e.g., San, Mpondo) through authentic, community-led storytelling, and follow strict wildlife & nature ethics.
- Responsible business. We operate transparently and fairly across our value chain and safeguard human rights, especially children.

2) Our standards & status

- Travelife: We are working toward Travelife Partner certification (stage 2 of the programme).
- Fair Trade Tourism: We are not Fair Trade accredited, but align with fair, transparent, community-benefiting practices.
- Child protection: We maintain a zero-tolerance stance on the exploitation of children and align our practice to The Code.

3) How we implement this (what we do)

Community & culture

- Prioritise local hiring (guides/drivers), community-owned stays, and locally produced food/crafts.
- Build profit-share journeys with NGOs (50% of profits to partner on dedicated co-branded tours).
- Offer career exposure for youth (e.g., Surfpop tourism workshops).

Environment & climate

- Small groups; efficient routing; no single-use plastics in our operations where practical; refill points on tours.
- Encourage carbon-offsets via vetted local schemes and share tips for low-impact travel.

Ethical business & child protection

- Contracts include human-rights and child-protection clauses; staff training aligned to industry best practice.

Animal welfare

- No direct interaction with wild animals unless it meets recognised welfare standards; no baiting; no rides; no handling.

Supplier code

– We favour small, locally owned partners and ask suppliers to meet baseline standards on labour, safety, waste, water, and wildlife ethics.

Traveler-Facing Summary

Travel with Purpose: what your trip supports

- Local livelihoods: Your guide, driver, host and artisans are locals—keeping income in the community.
- NGO impact: On our purpose trips with Viva con Agua SA (clean water) and Surfpop (youth development), 50% of profits go directly to the organisation.
- Youth pathways: We help run tourism workshops with Surfpop so kids from Masiphumelele can explore careers in tourism.
- Lighter footprint: Small groups, refill stations, plastic-lite practices, and optional carbon-offsets with reputable SA programmes.
- Respect first: Ask before photos, buy local, follow your guide's lead in cultural and natural spaces.

Your low-impact checklist

- Bring a refillable water bottle and day bag.
- Pack out what you pack in; skip single-use plastics.
- Choose locally made food and crafts.
- Keep a respectful distance from wildlife.
- Consider offsetting your trip's emissions through credible South African projects.