

Business and Sustainability Policy

GAPNepal

October 2016

Table of contents

1. Preamble	3
2. Our philosophy	3
3. Scope and applicability	4
4. Business integrity and conflict of interests	5
5. Human rights	5
6. Community and environment	6
7. Sustainability for suppliers	8
8. Selection of destinations	8
9. Customer privacy and data protection	8
10. Contact	9
11. Initial Acknowledgement	10
Appendix	III
Appendix A: Sustainability Checklist for All Suppliers	III
Appendix B: Sustainability Checklist for Hotels	III
Appendix C: Sustainability Checklist for Airlines	IV
Appendix D: Sustainability Checklist for Car Rental Companies	IV
Appendix E: Sustainability Checklist for Restaurants	IV

1. Preamble

GAPNepal recognizes the importance of moving towards sustainable operations, and have thus created this policy, laying out the steps required to achieve our goal. Detailed instructions outline how we intend to move forward in all areas of our business. Upon completed implementation of this policy, GAPNepal will be participating in all aspects of sustainable operating and purchasing criteria.

2. Our philosophy

Since 2011 we help people from around the world during their stay in Nepal through various projects, such as teaching at schools, sports with children or with insights into the original agriculture. We link those projects with well-known attractions like hiking programs, day trips, cultural experiences and sporting activities such as rafting and paragliding.

We offer the traveler the opportunity to meet Nepal's origins and traditions and the Nepalese culture, but also bring their own knowledge to support the development of Nepal.

We, as GAPNepal, commit to connect people and to create unique experiences for locals and travelers. It is important for us to advance the sustainable development of Nepal and especially to allow the rural population to profit from the revenue of tourism. We have the opportunity offering children as well as adults education to grow and to develop their potential step by step to counteract unemployment on the countryside.

We firmly believe that a development can only take place when people learn from each other, get a chance to work and thus establish their independence.

In the long term, we want to ensure that many Nepali benefit of tourism and not only parts of the country are able to develop through tourism. We ensure that the Nepalese culture is lived and prefer a sustainable and inclusive development, where tradition, knowledge and progress take place.

We also support other sustainable guiding principles in tourism. We always offer our customers the most sustainable alternative for their stay in Nepal. We support and choose hotels and transfer companies that include environmentally and socially sustainable business principles. For example, eco hotels and transfer companies that use green transport possibilities. We want to contribute to work, exemplary in the traditional tourism and protect the environment and the people of Nepal and promote sustainable tourism.

In addition to our offer for locals and travelers, we are committed to a meaningful way of working in our own business. We want to use all available opportunities and beyond to work more sustainable.

With GAPNepal we want to work in an exemplary manner in our environment and be a part of a responsible long-term growing economy.

We live in the deep conviction that our philosophy supports Nepal holistically in its development and protects the people and their environment everlasting.

To make our philosophy tangible, we have set up rules which help us for our development and are regularly revised and updated.

3. Scope and applicability

This Policy applies to the management, all employees, contractors, and temporary personnel resources of GAPNepal, including all of its travel agents and suppliers (“applicants of this policy”).

All applicants of this policy must familiarize themselves with this Policy. Any applicant of this policy who learns of a potential violation of applicable laws or this Policy is required to report the suspicion promptly to the management. Any applicant of this policy who report potential misconduct or who provide information or otherwise assist in any inquiry or investigation of potential misconduct will be protected against retaliation.

Breaches of this Policy will not be tolerated and can lead to disciplinary and other actions up to and including termination of employment and contracts.

It is the responsibility of the management to adhere to this Policy within his or her area of functional responsibility, to lead by example, and to provide guidance to the applicants of this policy.

All applicant of this policy are responsible for adhering to the principles and rules set out in this Policy.

4. Business integrity and conflict of interests

All of GAPNepal's business shall be conducted in an open and honest manner, and in accordance with applicable law and, as appropriate, with the laws of each country in which GAPNepal operates its touristic activities. Each applicant of this policy and especially the management is accountable for ensuring that their actions are lawful.

GAPNepal does not tolerate any form of bribery or corruption. GAPNepal will neither give nor accept bribes nor permit others acting on its behalf to do so. This policy sets out GAPNepal's approach to unacceptable business practices, including bribery and corruption.

The applicants of this policy and especially the management shall not use their position within GAPNepal for their own personal gain nor engage in any personal business or other activity that conflicts with the interests of GAPNepal. The applicants of this policy and especially the management must not influence decisions relating to the recruitment, reward and/or personal development of any friends or family.

GAPNepal understands that avoiding a conflict of interest may not always be possible or practical. The required action for the applicants of this policy who do not or cannot avoid a conflict of interest is to disclose it.

5. Human rights

GAPNepal is committed to developing an organizational culture which implements a policy of support for internationally recognized human rights and seeks to avoid com-

plicity in human rights abuses. We support the principles contained within the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the ILO Core Conventions on Labour Standards.

GAPNepal respects the human rights of its employees, including non-discrimination, prohibition of child and forced labor, and freedom of association and the right to engage in collective bargaining.

GAPNepal respects the cultures, customs and values of the people in communities in which we operate. GAPNepal contributes to promote the fulfillment of human rights through improving economic, environmental and social conditions and serve as a positive influence in communities in which we operate.

We require that our suppliers treat their employees in a manner that respects human rights and is consistent with the spirit and intent of this policy. The same applies to their interaction with communities.

6. Community and environment

GAPNepal believes that tourism can be a force for good and our type of small group, off-the-beaten track tourism can bring benefits to many communities, help preserve the environments and provide real and positive social exchanges. As a small tour operator, we are in an ideal position to help some of the less fortunate communities that we visit, whilst also encouraging them to protect the very environments and wildlife that we travel to see. Selecting responsible tourism projects located in Nepal that we visit means we can get actively involved in delivering real practical benefits on the ground.

GAPNepal aims to minimize water and atmospheric pollution from any specific tourism development that is used and to work closely with all relevant local bodies and authorities to help preserve or improve the environment and deliver a long-term benefit for the communities. GAPNepal promotes environmental responsibility along the value chain

by encouraging its suppliers, contractors and customers to make environmental friendly decisions. GAPNepal seeks to ensure that our type and scale of tourism is appropriate to local conditions and does not overload local infrastructure.

For its internal business operations GAPNepal aims to reduce disposable and consumable goods and strongly focuses on making sustainable purchases. It is given preference to products that have been produced with respect for people and the environment and for service providers who have implemented a sustainability policy. In selecting products and service providers we give preference to products with a recognized environmental or sustainability certificate or proved sustainability qualities, prefer products which have been locally produced, we buy from local suppliers when possible and prefer to work with suppliers and service providers who have a sustainability reputation. In purchasing key products, we investigate possible (more) sustainable alternatives and compare these alternatives on price, quality and availability.

GAPNepal commits itself to actively reduce the energy consumption in its internal business operations (i.e. efficient lighting system, switch-off policy for office equipment and lightning). In that sense, GAPNepal only uses sources of sustainable energy such as solar power and hydroelectricity. The reduction of energy consumption is monitored monthly by assessing the consumed units of energy.

GAPNepal actively supports the reduction of water consumption for its facilities (i.e. collection and use of rain water).

GAPNepal has installed a system for waste management that includes the recycling of plastic and glass materials and fertilization of organic waste. We strongly aim at reducing and managing waste in our business operations.

Where applicable and locally practicable, we seek to minimize and substitute the use of harmful substances and properly handle the disposal of chemicals and other substances.

GAPNepal encourages its staff to use sustainable means of transport for long-distance staff travel and generally choose more sustainable modes of transport.

7. Sustainability for suppliers

GAPNepal has developed and implemented a long term strategy to improve the sustainability of its contracted and frequently used suppliers and partners. The strategy is merely build on checklists for suppliers and partners in different areas of tourism. The checklists include general guidelines for suppliers, hotels (accommodation), airlines, car rental companies and restaurants. The onboarding of new frequently used suppliers, contractors and partners is accommodated by the completion of the respective checklist.

The checklists are to be renewed every two years for the frequently used suppliers, contractors and partners.

The checklists are comprehensively included in the appendices of this policy.

8. Selection of destinations

GAPNepal seeks to consider sustainability aspects in the selection process of new destinations. We strongly focus on the integration of the local community and offer possible alternative non-mainstream destinations to our clients. We avoid destinations in which tourism leads to structural negative local effects. We support biodiversity and consider green aspects in choosing our destinations. In contrary, we do not support the purchasing of forbidden souvenirs and if we found that one of our clients has purchased a forbidden souvenir we may take the necessary action to inform the authorities in case the client is not cooperative.

9. Customer privacy and data protection

The protection of your personal data is of great importance to us. Naturally we comply with the legal provisions. The collection of personal data includes information such as your name, your postal address or email address. We acquire personal data only if you voluntarily provide us with such details, for example if you register for personalized services or if you fill out contact forms. In this case your data will be acquired only to

the extent necessary and solely for carrying out the intended purpose. If the necessity arises we will ask for your consent before saving your data. Forwarding data or any other data transfer will be done only if it is necessary for performing the intended purpose and only if you have consented to the forwarding of the data.

10. Contact

In case you have any further questions about our Corporate and Sustainability Policy do not hesitate to contact **Anish Neupane** via mail info@gapyearnepal.com.

11. Initial Acknowledgement

This initial acknowledgment is a sign of commitment of the management and the current staff members to the philosophy and the policy. The management and all staff members acknowledge this policy and its content. They agree to have familiarized with its contents and comply with the information. They acknowledge that this policy is neither a contract of employment nor a legal document. They understand this policy is not intended to cover every situation which may arise during the employment, but is simply a general guide to the goals, policies, practices, benefits, and expectations of GAPNepal in accordance with its philosophy.

Name	Position	Date	Signature
Anish Neupane	Director	11/01/16	
Santosh Dhakal	CEO	11/01/16	
Shiva Rimal	Research & Development	11/01/16	
Bijaya Basnet	Accountant	11/01/16	
Pradlip Khadka	Sales and Marketing	11/01/16	

Appendix

Appendix A: Sustainability Checklist for All Suppliers

- Do you have a sustainable tourism or responsible travel policy?
 - Do you have regular scheduled audits on this policy to ensure compliance?
 - Is this policy measurable, tangible, and manageable?
 - Do you have fair employment practices and competitive wages and/or benefits?
- Do you have a responsible waste management system?
- Do you have efficient recycling systems?
- Do you support or sponsor any local community organizations or projects?
- Do you create meaningful job opportunities for locals?
- Are your workplace conditions and training sufficiently adequate and safe?
- Do you have a carbon offsetting or neutralization program?
- Do you have any professional positions that monitor/manage social responsibility?
- Do you have water management or conservation schemes in place?
- Do you have energy management or conservation schemes in place?
- Do you practice sensitivity toward local cultures and religions?
- Do you use any sort of conservative or sustainable modes of transportation?

Appendix B: Sustainability Checklist for Hotels

- Do you purchase food and supplies locally, organically and/or fair trade?
- Does your golf course or pool have a water conservation system and/or use a lot of chemicals?
- Do you purchase supplies with “eco-labels”?
- Do you have e-brochures instead of paper or video brochures?
- Do you have energy saving or energy conserving appliances?
- Do you use cool-water air conditioning or any other large-scale energy saving techniques?
- Does you wash sheets and towels daily, or do you leave them as requested, to conserve water?
- Do your rooms have electronic sensing equipment for the lights or thermostat?

Appendix C: Sustainability Checklist for Airlines

- Do you purchase supplies with “eco-labels”?
- Do you use environmentally friendly de-icing fluid?
- Do you have an on-board collecting program that funds any NGO’s or charities?
- Do you tow to the runway, or do you taxi the craft?
- Are you taking any steps towards re-designing your aircraft or become more fuel efficient?

Appendix D: Sustainability Checklist for Car Rental Companies

- Do you purchase supplies with “eco-labels”?
- Do you have e-brochures instead of paper or video brochures?
- Do you offer a hybrid car option to customers?
- Do you use cool-water air conditioning or any other large-scale energy saving techniques?
- Do you offer fuel-conservation tips/techniques to customers?

Appendix E: Sustainability Checklist for Restaurants

- Do you purchase food and supplies locally, organically and/or fair trade?
- Do you purchase supplies with “eco-labels”?
- Do you have energy saving or energy conserving appliances?
- Do you use cool-water air conditioning or any other large-scale energy saving techniques?
- Do you compost or donate food scraps or leftovers, or do you throw them out?
- Do you participate in any community or NGO funding programs in-house?

Appendix F: Sustainability Checklist for Tour Operators

- Do you have e-brochures instead of paper or video brochures?
- Do you employ local guides, drivers or porters on some or all expeditions?
- Do you teach and encourage employees to practice responsible travel?
- Do you consider sustainable practices when choosing suppliers for all-inclusive packages?