

Code of Ethical Conduct for Responsible Tourism in Protected Areas of Guatemala

1. Introduction / Objective

This Code of Conduct aims to promote responsible tourism that respects the environment, culture, and host communities in Guatemala. It is based on the principles of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism and the guidelines issued by CONAP for protected areas.

2. Scope of Application

This code applies to tourists, guides, tourism service providers, host communities, and any other stakeholders involved in tourism activities within the protected areas of Guatemala.

3. Global Ethical Principles (UNWTO)

- • Promotion of mutual understanding and respect among cultures.
- • Personal and community development.
- • Sustainable development.
- • Protection of cultural heritage.
- • Benefits for host communities.
- • Responsibility of tourism stakeholders.
- • Right to accessible tourism.
- • Freedom of tourist movement.
- • Labor and business rights in tourism.
- • Ethical application and monitoring.

4. Specific Guidelines from CONAP

For visitors/tourists:

- • Stay only on designated trails and public areas.
- • Maintain silence and avoid disturbing wildlife.
- • Remove or dispose of garbage in designated places.
- • Avoid any behavior that affects the natural or cultural values of the environment.

For service providers / guides:

- • Hold accreditation and valid identification card.
- • Provide accurate and educational information about the protected area and its biodiversity.
- • Highlight the importance of conservation and codes of conduct.
- • Report any observed illegal activity to the competent authorities.

5. Recommended Rules of Conduct

Environmental and cultural respect

- Do not disturb ecosystems or damage species, archaeological or cultural sites.
- Do not collect plants, minerals, or artifacts.
- Respect local customs and traditions.

Personal responsibility

- Learn about the destination and local laws before traveling.
- Act with sensitivity and avoid inappropriate or disrespectful behavior.
- Avoid sexual tourism, exploitation, or illegal activities.

Community benefit

- Prefer local products, services, and accommodations.
- Hire accredited local guides.
- Participate in community development initiatives if available.

Inclusion and universal access

- Facilitate tourism experiences for people with disabilities or reduced mobility.
- Do not discriminate based on gender, age, social condition, ethnicity, or religion.

Safety and professionalism

- Guide and provide services with professionalism, safety, and clarity.
- Provide complete information on risks, routes, regulations, and emergencies.
- Encourage attention to hygiene, nutrition, and first aid standards.

Ethical transparency

- Offer clear prices, complete contracts, and fair cancellation policies.
- Protect vulnerable tourists and prioritize their well-being.

6. Implementation and Monitoring

This code will be disseminated among all actors of responsible tourism. Channels will be established to report non-compliance to CONAP or other competent authorities. In complex cases, the World Committee on Tourism Ethics may be consulted as an advisory body.

7. Commitment and Signature

By signing, I commit to comply with this Code of Conduct, promoting responsible and ethical tourism in Guatemala.

