

# Ver 1.3

## Asian Overland Services Sustainability Policy



Asian Overland Services Tours & Travel Sdn. Bhd.  
(30613-D) (KPL/LN:0281)  
[www.asianoverland.com.my](http://www.asianoverland.com.my)

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# Asian Overland Services Sustainability Policy

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We aim to be a leader advocating sustainability practices in the industries where we are involved. We will constantly rethink and realign our behavior, innovation and technology in a sustainable manner for our environment and our businesses. We will seek to influence others to follow us. By infusing our strong beliefs in being culturally, socially and environmentally conscious, we will offer unique experiences, incorporating sustainable elements to our clients.

## **1. OVERVIEW**

Asian Overland Services Tours and Travel Sdn. Bhd. (AOS), is committed to running our business sustainably. We care about the impact we make on the environment, economy and social culture framework in the destinations we operate and promote. We aspire to increase and share our knowledge on sustainability through training. Our actions will respect the environment, the biodiversity and habitat through green practices such as recycle and reuse. We aim to support and elevate standards of living of the local communities by promoting local products, culture & traditions. We will influence our partners to do the same through knowledge sharing.

## **2. OBJECTIVE OF POLICY**

The objective of this policy is to provide the framework for expressing Asian Overland Service's commitment to the incorporation of sustainability principles and practices in the way we run the business.

## **3. SCOPE OF POLICY**

This policy will apply to all activities of our organization. Our employees and contractors are expected to uphold objectives under this policy on an optimal basis subject to practical and budgetary considerations. Though we are not in the position to make decisions of third parties that we work with, we commit to educate them of our policy and encourage them to align their operating practices with our policy objectives. Our attention to environmental, culture, social and economic responsibility includes working within the law and voluntarily exceeding legal requirements in order to be innovative and demonstrate leadership on the issues that are important to our stakeholders and us.

## 4. PRINCIPLES

AOS's Sustainability Policy based upon three main scopes: environment, social-cultural and economic is outlined below:

### 4.1. Environment

We are committed to protect the environment and conserve biodiversity through sustainable activities. Sustaining the environment and biodiversity is a prime consideration in all aspects and stages of our operations.

#### 4.1.1. Habitat and natural protected areas

AOS will ensure that in such protected areas, our activities will have minimal impact on the biological diversity and its natural and cultural resources. AOS will strictly comply with legal requirements which aims for the same.

#### 4.1.2. Animals, wildlife and threatened species

AOS's activities will ensure that they contribute to the appreciation of threatened species with the hope to reduce any harmful action that could occur towards them. AOS will not promote in any tour program related to animals unless the program organizer, sanctuary or the facility comply with the welfare quality criteria which is acceptable. AOS will promote the facilities only if they comply with the following principles:

##### 4.1.2.1. License/permission

The sanctuary/facility should have all relevant regional, national and local government permits and licences.

##### 4.1.2.2. Welfare and care

All animals should be kept in clean, comfortable, species-appropriate and enriched environments. Animal welfare at the facility should be under the active supervision of a licensed veterinarian.

##### 4.1.2.3. Animal acquisition

Animals may not be purchased. Animals may only be accepted as a result of official

confiscation, by donation or by rescue. All records should be kept of the source of all animals.

#### ***4.1.2.4. Removal of animals from facilities***

No sale of animals is allowed. An animal can only move from a facility to another facility that is demonstrably of equal or better standards and then only if relocation is in the animal's best interests. Records should be kept of any disposition (including death) of animals.

#### ***4.1.2.5. Commercial activities***

No commercial exploitation, including performances, shows or use of animals as photo props, is allowed.

#### ***4.1.2.6. Handling of animals***

No physical contact is allowed between visitors and animals. Physical contact is only permitted between staff and animals when necessary for essential management/veterinary purposes.

### **4.1.3. Forbidden souvenirs**

AOS will never promote illegal souvenirs. or even don't send the clients to the destination or tourist attractions which provides forbidden souvenirs. The "AOS Forbidden Souvenirs List includes "Threatened flora and fauna species", provided by WWF Malaysia.

Generally, the AOS forbidden souvenir is any product which is created from undomesticated animals' organs (such as skin, tooth, horn, shell, ivory, etc...).

### **4.1.4. Waste Reduce/Reuse/Recycle**

All employees in AOS are encouraged to apply the practice of REDUCE, REUSE and RECYCLE in the workplace. In order to achieve this goal, AOS provides recycle bins in our offices.

AOS also request the clients to apply this practice in our programs by putting "Green Practice Notes" in the clients' itinerary and installing notices in the vehicles.

### **4.1.5. Water usage reduction**

AOS tries to reduce its water consumption, which is monitored and based on a water

risk assessment. The office water use is measured on a monthly basis for benchmark purposes. Air-Condition water is recycled for urinals.

#### ***4.1.5.1. Water-Saving Initiatives***

AOS is committed to water-saving practices, such as reusing air-conditioner condensate and installing water-efficient fixtures wherever possible. These efforts are designed to reduce unnecessary water usage across our facilities.

#### ***4.1.5.2. Awareness and Engagement***

AOS encourages staff to be mindful of their water usage and adopt habits that conserve water. Regular reminders and awareness campaigns highlight simple steps, such as turning off taps promptly and reporting leaks.

### **4.1.6. Paper usage reduction**

The company's policy is to avoid unnecessary paper consumption. To achieve this goal, we focus on the following areas:

#### ***4.1.6.1. Paperless systems***

AOS plans to have a paperless office by the beginning of the year 2025.

#### ***4.1.6.2. Efficient printing***

All employees in AOS must apply the practice of reducing paper usage in the workplace. We encourage our staff to change the print setting for all copiers to 2-sided printing and multiple (two pages in one A4 sheet paper), removing unnecessary space, margins and photos from documents before printing.

#### ***4.1.6.3. Digital/Online promotional materials***

Hard copies of our Company's brochures will be supplied on a need basis and we encourage our clients to access them electronically.

For our conference department, all conference information, keynote speaker, abstract, exhibition manual will be uploaded in each Conference website. Registered delegates are provided with a special password to download the conference contents.

### **4.1.7. Energy usage reduction**

In order to reduce energy consumption, AOS has established the Energy Usage

Reduction Policy which includes the below steps.

#### ***4.1.7.1. Energy Efficient Electrical Devices***

AOS is committed to use energy efficient electrical appliances including air conditioners, refrigerators, water heater/cooler, microwave oven, computer devices and other electrical items when replacing them.

#### ***4.1.7.2. Efficient lighting***

Regular light bulbs are being replaced with compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). Natural sunlight is also widely used in the office by opening blinds and curtains.

#### ***4.1.7.3. Using Solar Energy***

AOS plans to install solar energy panels by end of 2025.

#### ***4.1.7.4. Efficient energy usage practice and economization***

Computers, printers, radios & other machines will be turned off when not in use. Standby and energy save modes will be used when not feasible to switch off.

All lights and air condition will be switched off during lunch hour.

### **4.1.8. Air Pollution reduction**

As a responsible company, AOS recognises the importance of achieving sustainability by balancing our economic priorities with our concerns and priorities in environmental and social issues. Hence, we recognise the impacts of GHG emissions from our operation activities on global climate change and we are fully committed to reducing our carbon emissions as below.

#### ***4.1.8.1. Using Public transportation***

Besides offering different variety of transport options to the clients, AOS provided Kuala Lumpur Map, also public Transit Map in its “daily tour brochures” to help the travellers to use public transport in order to reduce the carbon footprint.

#### ***4.1.8.2. Eco-friendly tours***

AOS is committed to embed sustainability within its own daily operations for all activities, hence AOS offers different variety of walking or cycling tours in cultural excursions. Furthermore, AOS offers SIC (shared) tours with lower rates encouraging clients to use SIC



services instead of private tours, in order to reduce carbon footprint during the activities.

#### ***4.1.8.3. Overland transportation***

AOS offers SIC (shared) overland transfers with lower rates and encourage clients to use SIC services instead of private transfers. During the overland services, our driver must switch off the engine if there are no passengers onboard the coach when the coach has stopped for refreshment.

#### ***4.1.8.4. Air transfers***

For short distance we do advise clients that there is public transport which are sustainable alternatives such as ferry, bus and train.

#### ***4.1.8.5. Cleaner Fuel***

All company vehicles are required to use Euro 5 diesel or higher for cleaner emissions and improved fuel efficiency, helping to reduce carbon monoxide produced by the engine.

### **4.1.9. Plastic usage reduction**

Plastic pollution, accumulation in the environment of synthetic plastic products is to the point where they create problems for wildlife and their habitats as well as for human populations. AOS is committed to reduce Non-degradable products' usage, especially plastic such as bags, bottles, cups and lids, straws and plates in accordance to "Malaysia's Roadmap towards zero single-use plastics 2018-2030". In order to reach to the above goal, the below principles have been following:

#### ***4.1.9.1. Single-use plastics ban***

All employees are encouraged to avoid using single-use plastics and carry their own tiffin's if they wish to pack food.

#### ***4.1.9.2. Plastic bottle***

AOS do not provide drinking water in plastic bottle during its tours and programs. Instead, a refillable water bottle is offered at the start of the trip to the guests. The tour guide also will discuss and educate the travellers about the environmental challenges caused by plastic waste. Any excess plastic that is still generated by guests is disposed through recycling centres.

### ***4.1.9.3. Shopping bag***

All employees are encouraged to bring their own shopping bag to reduce usage of plastic bags.

### **4.1.10. Chemicals**

AOS is committed to the substitution of all aggressive and eco-unfriendly products with more environmentally friendly solutions. We have completely abandoned the use of chemical cleaning agents for the benefit of ecologically acceptable cleansers from bio-production. We use only cleaning materials for office and toilet maintenance. Dangerous or aggressive materials and liquids are not in use, except for ordinary use of office equipment (ink, toners, batteries etc.).

## **4.2. Social-Cultural**

AOS is committed to the advocacy of minimal negative impacts towards social and cultural legacies. AOS endeavors to put in all efforts in the following areas in order to achieve this.

### **4.2.1. Working Environment**

AOS is committed to responsible corporate practices in the area of human rights and working conditions. AOS's human rights expectations apply to all our personnel, business partners and other parties directly linked to our operations, products or services.

#### ***4.2.1.1. Labour and working condition***

AOS is committed to align with practices established by the government and follow Laws of Malaysia Act 256 (Employment) and 350 (Children and Young Persons Employment). Living wage, working hours, breaks, holidays and leave periods, insurance and all HR policies will be established in compliance with local laws and agreements.

#### ***4.2.1.2. Equal opportunities and diversity***

AOS is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action company and committed to provide equal opportunities for all staff and applicants. All AOS employees and applicants are been considered without regard to race, color, religion, creed, sex, national origin, age, disability genetic information, or protected Veteran status.

### ***4.2.1.3. Harassment including sexual harassment***

AOS is committed to provide a work environment that is free from all forms of discrimination and conduct such as harassment, coercion, or disruptive behavior. Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's sex, race, color, national origin, age, religion, disability, will not be tolerated. We practice a zero-tolerance policy on sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is defined as: unwanted sexual advances, speaking and/or showing physical movements of a sexual nature to the opposite sex, gender-based harassment of a person of the same sex, requests for sexual favours made either explicitly or implicitly as a condition for continued employment, or used explicitly or implicitly as an inducement for recruitment. Any other conduct which has sexual connotations, the effect of which interferes with work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment for the opposite sex.

### ***4.2.1.4. Child Labour***

AOS is in full compliance with the Labour Law of Malaysia relating to labour of a child or young person under the Children and Young Persons (Employment)- Act 1966.

### ***4.2.1.5. Child sexual exploitation***

AOS has zero tolerance towards any program, or material that features or promotes child sexual exploitation in compliance with the Sexual Offences Against Children Bill 2017. AOS will also encourage employees to report any form of the same if they come across such.

### ***4.2.1.6. Maternity***

AOS offers schemes for maternity leave for female employees. The company ensures compliance with Malaysian legislation, which states 60 days maternity leave for female employees post-natal and up to the 5th child.

### ***4.2.1.7. Measuring employee satisfaction***

Employees are the base of our organization. Their knowledge and skills are crucial for successful business operations. But we also recognize as equally important their happiness and satisfaction with working conditions, teamwork and department cooperation. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to learn from their inputs what can be improved and what are their suggestions and complaints. For these purposes the company has developed questionnaires which are anonymous and distributed quarterly to all employees. Their results are analysed and presented to the management who take the results in consideration when planning.

#### **4.2.1.8. Anti-Corruption**

An employee shall not accept lavish entertainment, commission, emolument, service, gratuity, money, property or any pecuniary benefit or gift for his own personal benefit from any person/agent or representative having a direct or indirect business dealing with the employee. Nothing may be given or received which might distort commercial judgment of the employee and harm the reputation of AOS.

#### **4.2.2. Local communities Protection**

In order to support local communities and native people, AOS is committed to take the below steps.

##### ***4.2.2.1. Encourage travellers to stay with local communities***

AOS is committed to design and promote programs for travellers to stay in native houses, during their stay, local food is provided by local native people.

##### ***4.2.2.2. Promote local handicrafts and souvenirs***

AOS is committed to encourage the clients to purchase hand-made souvenirs which are offered by natives.

##### ***4.2.2.3. Local communities' empowerment***

AOS is committed to support local communities such as the Dedari natives in Taman Negara where we promote and support their Community Based Tourism project.

##### ***4.2.2.4. Employ locals***

AOS strives to employ local nature guides, boatmen suppliers and operators in all destinations as much as possible.

#### **4.2.3. Heritage Protection**

AOS is committed to comply all its activities to laws of Malaysia ACT 645, in order to protect the conservation and preservation of National Heritage, natural heritage, tangible and intangible cultural heritage, underwater cultural heritage, treasure trove and for related matter.

According to the Act, cultural heritage includes cultural property, structures or artifacts, performances, dances, songs and music that are pertinent to the history or contemporary way of life for Malaysians as well as land or underwater cultural heritage of the tangible form.

Whilst natural heritage includes natural features of an area in Malaysia consisting of the earth's physical or biological formations or groups of such formations, geological or physio-graphical features, mountains, rivers, streams, rock formations, sea shores or any natural sites with outstanding value from the point of view of nature, science, history, conservation or natural beauty including flora and fauna. Malaysia's intangible cultural heritage comprises: (i) oral traditions (phrases and idioms, chanted hymns, folktales, narrated myths, and legends); (ii) performing arts (folk music, folk dances, and dramatic performances); (iii) customs (rituals, social practices including ceremonies and festivals) and (iv) material folklore (functional objects made by folk groups).

### **4.3. Economical**

AOS intend to motivate all employees and tourists towards social consciousness to defend the cultural legacies and promote access to different communities in order to benefit them by using all their resources and contribute to their economic development.

## **5. COMMITMENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

AOS is determined to ensure sustainability practices through the following commitment and sustainability activities:

### **5.1. Collaboration and Partnership**

The collaboration and partnership is a deliberate effort to enhance and support the company in establishing and developing linkages, partnerships and collaborations with not only other sustainable partners in the industry but also NGOs, and other international sustainability organization.

It is necessary to promote, strengthen and diversify sustainability initiatives through the synergies developed across partnerships and collaborations established within the industry.

### **5.2. Training and Communication**

As a responsible company, AOS helps employees understand how key sustainability principles apply to their specific job function, so they are better able to see opportunities and

take actions that contribute to the overall sustainability of the organization.

AOS is also committed to communicate with all business partners, suppliers and freelance service providers in order to encourage them to participate in all sustainability practices, activities and training.

### **5.3. Application & Execution**

AOS ensures the stringent application and execution of all sustainability efforts by the Company in accordance with the set AOS Sustainability Policy.

### **5.4. Supporting and Donation**

AOS is committed to support nature protection organizations and/or community development or other local/national sustainability initiatives.

AOS indirectly supports the local communities by employing local guides, nature guides, drivers and boatmen, suppliers and operators in the destinations as much as possible. AOS also encourages clients to support local products. Local natives are also supported through the Guide Course Sponsorship Program.

Each year AOS makes pledges and contributions to a number of charitable organizations which work to preserve the natural habitat of endangered species in Malaysia, the native communities, and wildlife sanctuaries.

AOS also encourage tourists to contribute through individual donations that can help the local social associations such as the refugees.

### **5.5. Monitoring, Measuring and Reporting**

AOS is committed to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the sustainability policy, objectives and targets and regularly communicate sustainability activities, efforts, achievements and future targets to our partners and clients through newsletters.

Besides that, AOS sustainability report, including our activities, achievements and future benchmarks will be published in the AOS website bi-annually..

## **6. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION AND RELEVANT POLICIES**

Act 265 Laws of Malaysia Employment ACT 1955	Last update: 30 Apr 2012
Act 350 Laws of Malaysia Employment ACT 1966	Last update: 1 Dec 2011
Act 645 Laws of Malaysia Employment ACT 2005	Last update: 1 Jun 2006
Malaysia's Roadmap towards zero single-use plastic	Published in 2018

## **7. VERSIONING**

AOS sustainability policy Version 1.0	Last update: 20 Dec 2018
AOS sustainability policy Version 1.1	Last update: 10 Oct 2019
AOS sustainability policy Version 1.2	Last update: 12 Aug 2024
AOS sustainability policy Version 1.3	Last update: 05 Nov 2024