

RESPONSIBLE/SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Responsible tourism complies with the principles of **social and economic justice** and exerts full respect towards **the environment and its cultures**. It recognizes the **centrality of the local host community** and its right to act as a protagonist in developing a sustainable and responsible tourism. Responsible tourism actuates to foster a **positive interaction** between the tourist industry, the local communities and the travelers” (*defined by AITR’s members in 2005*).

According to the *Cape Town Declaration (2002)*, Responsible Tourism is about “making better places for people to live in and better places for people to visit.” Responsible Tourism requires that operators, hoteliers, governments, local people and tourists take responsibility, take action to make tourism more sustainable. Sustainable Tourism development requires the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders, as well as strong political leadership to ensure wide participation and consensus building. Sustainable tourism should also maintain a high level of tourist satisfaction and ensure a meaningful experience to the tourists, raising their awareness about sustainability issues and promoting sustainable tourism practices amongst them. *World Tourism Organization, 2004.*

The World Tourism Organization (WTO) recommend that each country should create its own program for sustainable tourism. In 2005, Namibia established the "**Eco Award Namibia**" which encourages sustainable development with the aim to create more awareness for the environment but also looks at the uplifting of local staff in terms of employment and training. The uplifting of local staff not only means to create jobs, but it means to give a higher standard of living to future generations.

Eco Award website: <http://www.ecoawards-namibia.org/>