



## **ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW POLICY**

### **1. POLICY STATEMENT**

The Gondwana Collection, its companies, board of directors, shareholders and employees are committed to the philosophy, principles and pursuit of sustainable development and wise environmental management in all their endeavours.

The Company recognizes that tourism in Namibia is largely environment based. This is encapsulated in Namibia's wide-open spaces, scenery, wilderness, diversity of habitats, biomes, wildlife, cultures and friendly people - and the accessibility of all these attributes. The growth and long-term sustainability of tourism, with an increasingly environmentally conscious tourism clientele, is therefore dependent on Namibia maintaining healthy, open, diverse and clean ecosystems.

The Gondwana Collection is committed to achieving this ideal, not only within its own operations and on its own land, but also within its sphere of influence.

This Overview Policy sets out Gondwana's environmental Vision, Objectives and Strategies. This is within the paradigm that a triple bottom line approach recognizes the inescapable interconnectedness of environmental, social (including human capital) and financial components that are essential for long-term business sustainability. The impacts of all three components on the business should be valued equally, both on the short-term and long-term.

### **2. VISION**

The Gondwana Collection will manage its land, natural resources and tourism enterprises, as well as its supportive infrastructure and marketing, in a manner consistent with sound environmental and business practices. This will promote sustainable development, economic growth and the rehabilitation and wise use of Namibia's natural resources to provide a superior tourism product and experience for its clients.

### **3. STRATEGY**

The Gondwana Board of Directors have appointed a Sustainability Committee that advises the Board on matters relating to the financial, social and environmental sustainability. The Committee includes independent experts in the fields of sustainability.

The Company employs a dedicated Environmental and Social Impact Manager qualified in the field of environmental management and contributes to the sustainability aspects of community-based tourism and conservation. The Environmental and Social Impact Manager



further serves as liaison between the Company and the governmental and non-governmental environment management entities and further facilitates adherence to environmental standards and legislation.

The onboarding of specialist skills and knowledge allows the company to truly demonstrate its commitment to environmental protection and sustainability.

#### **4. OBJECTIVES**

- 4.1. To restore, rehabilitate and wisely manage land and natural resources under Gondwana's custodianship
- 4.2. To minimise the Company's negative footprint on the environment
- 4.3. To maximise socio-economic benefits from the land and natural resources
- 4.4. To contribute to and influence the management, rehabilitation and wise use of Namibia's natural environment

These objectives contribute to Gondwana's commitment to sustainable development.

#### **5. GONDWANA OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND WISE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**

Gondwana will manage its environmental resources by implementing operational strategies to address each aspect of the natural environment in accordance with the principles as set out below:

##### **5.1. To restore, rehabilitate and wisely manage land and natural resources under Gondwana's custodianship**

###### Principle:

The Gondwana Collection strives to manage the land and natural resources under its custodianship in a manner that promotes and values ecological biodiversity in a balanced ecosystem for now and the future.

###### Strategies:

- The wise management of its land holdings and their associated landscapes and biological diversity to promote ecosystem stability and resilience under highly variable and globally changing climatic conditions, and where viable, strive for open co-managed landscapes.
- Restoration and rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems towards their natural and productive states, where necessary and practical.



- Reintroduce and rebuild populations of plants and animals indigenous to the respective areas within historic times where practical and desirable.
- Continuously plant appropriate trees in the effort to sequester excess carbon from the atmosphere and thus offset carbon emissions.
- Plan and implement appropriate land and natural resource uses that are compatible with the above objectives, including appropriate levels of protection, tourism development and activities, consumptive and non-consumptive use of natural resources, research, and environmental education.

## 5.2. **To minimise our negative footprint on the environment**

### Principle:

The Gondwana Collection will practice responsible and sustainable consumption of natural resources and minimalist production and/or use of anthropogenic waste to ensure its environmental footprint is continually reduced.

### a) Energy Strategies will include:

- Wherever feasible, the Gondwana Collection will strive to use only green energy (particularly solar). However, practical and economic realities will mean that until off-grid storage becomes economically viable, it will be necessary to combine energy from the national grid with solar. During this interim phase, Gondwana will take measures to limit its usage of the national energy grid.
- At smaller, boutique offerings where access to the national grid is distant, the use of solar energy and off-grid storage will be practiced.
- Gondwana will drive to be energy efficient and economically and practically conscious and with all appliances it uses.
- The Gondwana Collection will monitor its daily energy usage. This information will be used to adaptively manage and further reduce the use of this resource.
- To encourage future improvement on the conservative use of energy, information will be provided to guests and staff on the respective energy usage and how to improve upon it.
- Passive heating and cooling will be a design consideration in construction of all infrastructure.



b) Water Strategies:

- The Gondwana Collection will install water recycling plants at all lodges and where it is practical to do so, reuse grey water for gardens.
- The Gondwana Collection will continue to explore innovative ways to reuse water and reduce the amount of water pumped from fresh water sources.
- The Gondwana Collection will monitor its daily water usage and water source yields. This information will be used to adaptively manage and further reduce the use of this resource.
- Information will be provided to guests and staff on the respective water usage and the importance of conservative use of water resources.

c) Solid Waste Management Strategies:

- The overriding policy is to firstly reduce and where possible eliminate all waste. Once that is achieved, remaining waste should be either sent to a responsible waste recycling facility or reused on site.
- In the unrelenting effort to reduce and ultimately eliminate all single-use plastic packaging associated with store-bought goods, The Gondwana Collection will develop and expand horticulture at all lodges where water availability and space permits.
- The Gondwana Collection will install infrastructure that allows for the elimination of all plastic bottles and other single use plastic, whilst not compromising the guest experience.
- For waste that cannot or has not been eliminated, all Gondwana Collection establishments will have easily accessible (for staff and guest) waste collection facilities.
- All Gondwana Collection properties will recycle their kitchen waste.
- The Gondwana Collection will actively and continuously seek alternative ways to reuse waste material, including glass, tins and plastics. Waste that cannot be eliminated or reused will be sent to a responsible waste management facility for recycling.
- The Gondwana Collection will build partnerships with its neighbours and waste management facilities to collectively carry the responsibility of responsible waste management through joint transport of waste and community clean-up projects.
- The Gondwana Collection will use its buying power to influence its consumables suppliers to reduce their use of single use packaging.
- The Gondwana Collection will track its recycling and waste elimination efforts, to keep on improving on it.



d) Pollution mitigation Strategies:

- The Gondwana Collection will not indiscriminately use any poisons or pesticides at its establishments.
- All Gondwana properties will implement strategies to minimise light pollution.
- All effluent water will be treated to remove impurities.
- Careful measures will be taken to keep aquatic systems serene and free of any pollutants.

e) Infrastructure development and management Strategies:

- In the planning and development of new infrastructure, a comprehensive Environmental Impact Study will be done, both internally and externally, to mitigate as far as possible any negative impacts of the proposed development, and in doing so to comply with the national legislation that prescribes the procedures to obtain an environmental clearance certificate from the Ministry of Environment and Tourism.
- Resulting from the Environmental Impact Study, an Environmental Management Plan will be developed for both the construction and operational phase of the project to ensure any impacts are mitigated or rehabilitated.
- Wherever possible, the Gondwana Collection will use areas which have already been impacted through development, by modifying and expanding existing infrastructure.
- Where feasible, lodges and associated infrastructure will be built as close as possible to service utilities such as roads and power lines, while still considering the need for tranquillity, a sense of place and "pristine wilderness".
- Tourism facilities will be designed taking into account local climatic conditions, orientation, cross-ventilation and shading and visual impact to the surroundings.
- Where appropriate, local and/or recycled materials will be used for construction.
- Road access will be routed to be as short as possible, but considering drainage lines, contours and the need to provide an interesting access route, avoiding possible soil erosion.
- The garden landscape of lodges will exclude all invasive alien species. Non-indigenous plants that are not invasive, but essential such as lawn grasses,



vegetables, fruit trees and herbs may be grown under controlled conditions such as in gardens inner courtyard areas around swimming pools etc.

- All plants planted around the lodges should add value to the setting in terms of aesthetics, shade (indigenous shade trees), nutritional value (fruit bearing trees) and not deplete resources, such as space and water, for other fauna and flora.

### 5.3. **To maximise socio-economic benefits from the land and natural resources**

#### Principle:

The Gondwana Collection will strive to innovatively diversify its operations to continuously provide attractive offerings to a wide variety of guests in order to maximise the social and economic benefits from the land and natural resources under its custodianship.

#### Strategy:

- The Gondwana Collection will continuously diversify its accommodation, travel and activity offerings to cater for an economically and culturally diverse clientele.
- New investments and innovations will be geared to give the company a competitive advantage and the ability to increase employment opportunities for local communities while meticulously being environmentally conscious.
- An array of attractive offerings will provide opportunities for skills development of the company's workforce and service and goods providers and enhance the financial stability of the company, its employees and the country as a whole.
- A strong focus will be placed on building equitable and sustainable partnerships with the communities that Gondwana operates in.

### 5.4. **To contribute to and influence the management, rehabilitation and wise use of Namibia's natural environment**

#### Principle:

The Gondwana Collection will use its sphere of influence as a leading tourism organisation in the country to bring about positive change to policy, management and attitude to sustainable and equitable tourism.



Strategy:

- Actively seek to influence policy makers and NGOs to improve the quality and accessibility of sustainable development to all communities.
- Advocate and publicise the company’s policies and actions on sustainable development to all Gondwana communities around the world.
- Engage Gondwana’s customers, communities and suppliers to participate in the company’s sustainability philosophy and practices.

**6. RESPONSIBILITIES**

6.1. Approval and Endorsement of Policy

EXCO must present the Environmental Overview Policy to the Sustainability Committee for review and recommendation to the Board for adoption and approval.

6.2. Communication to all Staff

EXCO must ensure that the Environmental Overview Policy is available to all staff and that all staff understand and are aware of the principles set out in the Policy and the operational guidelines and policies.

6.3. Annual Review of Policy

EXCO must conduct a review of the policy on an annual basis to ensure that the provisions of the Policy remain relevant and updated.

6.4. Policy Owner

Environmental and Social Impact Manager.

**7. VERSION CONTROL AND CHANGE HISTORY**

<b>Version number</b>	<b>Approval date</b>	<b>Changes approved by</b>	<b>Change history</b>
1.0			First draft