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1. INTREPID GROUP ANIMAL WELFARE AND WILDLIFE POSITION

We actively discourage Intrepid Group customers to participate in activities that exploit or harm animals, whether they are wild, domestic or working animals.

2. PURPOSE OF THESE GUIDELINES

These guidelines aim to provide guidance for responsible interaction with animals on our trips. These guidelines may be used by Intrepid Group staff, leaders, contractors and customers to assist with:

- Designing trips and managing requests for experiences which involve wild or domestic and working animals.
- Understanding the difference between wild and domestic/working animals and outlining how interactions with each are different.
- The assessment of the health, safety and best management of wild, domestic and working animals during Intrepid Group trips.

Intrepid Group would like to thank World Animal Protection for their guidance and advice in the development of these guidelines.

3. ANIMAL WELFARE BASICS

Animal welfare concerns the health of the animal’s body and mental state. The following five universally accepted pillars of animal welfare have been considered in forming these guidelines:

- Freedom from hunger and thirst
- Freedom from discomfort
- Freedom from pain, injury or disease
- Freedom to express normal behaviour
- Freedom from fear and distress

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WILD AND DOMESTIC ANIMALS

Intrepid Group recognizes that there is a difference between wild and domestic animals. Domestic/working animals are animals such as dogs or horses that have been kept, tamed and have undergone selective breeding over many generations to be notably and genetically different to their wild ancestors. This process has not happened for wild animals such as elephants, tigers and monkeys, that are only kept for tourism and entertainment purposes and remain wild.

Intrepid Group accepts that the welfare of wild animals is compromised in captivity and captivity is only acceptable when it is in the animal’s best interests and the highest possible standards of care are given. (see Section 6).
4. RIDING & USING ANIMALS FOR TRANSPORT

Intrepid Group believes domestic / working animals such as horses, donkeys/mules and camels encountered on our tours should have a decent life, where they are properly cared for, enjoy the Five Freedoms, and the positive aspects of their existence outweigh the negative.

Some general guidelines for domestic/working animals:

• The animals should look well fed.
• Their coats should be in good condition without sores (check near the mouth, shoulders, spine and belly, these areas are typically in constant contact with harnessing equipment). Wounds may also be hidden under a saddle or harness.
• The animal’s eyes should be clear, bright and alert.
• Handlers should not use physical force (including hitting or beating with crops, sticks or hands) to control or manoeuvre the animal.

Please note that it is never acceptable to ride wild animals on our trips.

A. ELEPHANT RIDES: NOT PART OF OUR ITINERARIES

Intrepid Group supported an extensive research project concerning the welfare of captive elephants, conducted by World Animal Protection. Because of the research findings, Intrepid Group does not offer elephant rides as part of included or optional activities.

As a staff member or leader, you are not expected to stop customers from doing what they insist on doing, however it is expected that you inform them as to why we do not recommend or endorse elephant rides (or rides on any wild animal).

Elephants are not, and never have been, domesticated. The methods involved in keeping elephants in captivity are very psychologically and physically harmful to the animals.

These are the reasons we DO NOT offer elephant rides on our trips:

• To be trained, all elephants undergo a cruel, painful and intense process that forces them to accept human control.
• To be ridden, elephants often need to be restrained using bull hooks (by the handler) to maintain control of the elephant. These can cause serious injuries to the elephants, including sores and cuts that are likely to become infected.
• Elephants may display sudden outbursts of human targeted aggression, leading to injuries and fatalities.
• Captivity can cause significant health and behavioural problems.

While we no longer offer elephant rides, we do support elephants and other wildlife and conservation projects through The Intrepid Foundation.
4. RIDING & USING ANIMALS FOR TRANSPORT

B. RIDING CAMELS AND DONKEYS/MULES

Donkeys/mules and camels are considered domestic or working animals. These are the only animal rides that are offered as an included activity and only offered in the itinerary where the wellbeing of animals has been previously established. Tour leaders have a right (and obligation) to refuse service if animals are in poor condition. General things to look out for:

- When riding donkeys/mules or camels, helmets are generally not available to customers (Please refer to our Health and Safety policy). We therefore need to ensure that only slow moving and even-tempered animals are provided by the operator.
- Riders should choose an animal that is appropriate to their size.
- Animals should not carry more than approximately half their body weight and less during extreme heat or on steep declines. If extreme temperatures are experienced animals should not be ridden.
- Animals should not be fed by customers.
- Are the animals healthy? Leaders are responsible for alerting the Operations Manager if there is risk that the animals are not being well cared for.

Some of the things to consider in your assessment are:

CAMELS:

- Their coats should be in good condition without sores (check near the mouth, shoulders, spine and belly, these areas are typically in constant contact with harnessing equipment) Wounds may also be hidden under a saddle or harness.
- Handlers should not use physical force (including hitting with crops, sticks or hands) to control or manoeuvre the animal.
- There is a species of camel (the Wild Bactrian Camel - Camelus Ferus) which is not a domesticated species. This species should not be used for rides or close encounters with people. If you are not sure, best to alert the operations team.

DONKEYS/MULES:

- Check the donkey over to see that it hasn’t been subjected to ‘firing’. This means burning with red hot metal to various parts of a donkey’s body, most often the legs. In some parts of the world, practitioners believe this ‘traditional healing’ method will make the animal ‘strong’.
- Never overload a donkey drawn carriage – if in doubt, walk away.
- Never canter or gallop a donkey drawn carriage.
- Never ride with more than one person on the back of the donkey.
- Consider your own weight before riding and aim to choose an animal appropriate to your size and weight.
- If the owner is treating the animal badly, ie excessive whipping, stop and find an alternative driver.
- An appropriate weight for a standard size donkey to carry is on average 120kgs (260 pounds / 18 stone) – smaller donkeys should take on less.
## 4. RIDING & USING ANIMALS FOR TRANSPORT

### C. HORSE RIDING

Horse-riding is considered a technical activity and requires an Activity Risk Assessment to be completed and signed off before it is considered. Even when included as part of a trip itinerary, Activity Risk Assessments are still required to ensure minimum safety standards are met, for both the customer and the animal.

**Before riding, consider the health of the horse and the following guidelines:**

- Riders should choose an animal that is appropriate to their size.
- Horses should not carry more than approximately half their body weight and less during extreme heat or on steep declines. If extreme temperatures are encountered, animals should not be ridden.
- Are the animals healthy? As with donkeys and camels, leaders are responsible for alerting your Operations Manager if you believe that the animals are not being well cared for.
- Is the horse obviously underweight? Horses which are underweight should not be ridden. An underweight horse can be identified by protruding or visible ribs, hip bones or spine.
- The horse's eyes should be clean, bright and alert.

### D. DOG AND REINDEER SLEDDING

Sled dogs are a group of dog breeds that were bred for pulling sleds as a form of transportation in Alaska, Greenland and northern Canada. Sled dogs today are still used for transport by some rural communities and for recreational purposes in some parts of the world. Reindeer have been used as a means of transportation by the Sami people for hundreds of years and continue to be used for this purpose.

**Before including dog or reindeer sledding as a form of transport or included/optional activity, the following requirements should be met by the sled operator:**

- The operator must have animal welfare policies and standards that they actively follow and require their staff to follow.
- Animals are physically fit and conditioned for the activity they are being asked to perform and of a breed that can tolerate cold weather.
- Animals should be given adequate periods of rest and not forced to work beyond their physical capabilities and willingness to work.
- Animals have access to clean water and receive a varied diet of nutritionally appropriate food (Tip: check to ensure food and water bowls are not empty or dirty).
- Animals are housed humanely, with space to turn around, clean and dry bedding, protection against heat and cold and the opportunity to socialize.
- If the animals must be chained or tied to a restricted area, they should have significant time every day to allow them to run, play and socialize.
- Teeth should not be cut to prevent injuries from fighting with other animals.
- Animals are trained using positive reinforcement (force-free, humane training techniques) vs aversive, punishment-based techniques.
- The welfare of the animals is safeguarded for the duration of their lives from breeding to when they are retired from this activity.
- They have an adequate number of workers to care for the animals, including during the summer months and regular veterinary assessments and care.
- They have a no culling policy. If animals need to be euthanized (put-down to relieve them from severe pain, an incurable disease or if they can't be adopted after retiring from sledding), this is done by a trained veterinarian.
5. VIEWING WILDLIFE IN THE WILD: LAND AND MARINE ENVIRONMENTS

As Intrepid believes wild animals should be viewed in the wild, the following guidelines have been prepared with the best interests of wildlife and the safety of our staff and customers when viewing wildlife:

- When swimming, diving or snorkelling, ensure that you keep your distance from marine life and respect their space as wild animals. Remember the 5 Freedoms and that this applies to marine life too.
- Respect the animals' personal space. If a visitor/vehicle causes an animal to alter its behaviour, then the visitor has invaded its space and influenced its normal behaviour. Observe nature as it occurs naturally and not as to how it responds to your presence there.
- Speak quietly - do not call out, whistle or in other ways try and attract the attention of animals. Avoid sudden movements.
- Remember that all wild animals can be unpredictable. If an animal charges you, it may be feeling threatened because it doesn't have enough space.
- Do not feed animals, marine life or birds. Feeding animals attracts them to humans and to human food, which upsets their natural diet, can shorten their life, and causes trouble for other people later by making the animals unnaturally aggressive.
- Do not touch wild animals, as you can unwittingly pass on diseases to wildlife, as well as placing yourself at risk. This includes marine/sea life.
- When in a safari environment, always stay in your vehicle as predators may be present.
- Night viewing: Minimise usage of a flashlight and never deliberately shine your light into an animal's eyes. Do not illuminate prey as this gives the predator an unfair advantage.
- Avoid marine parks or aquariums, especially those that keep large mammals, such as dolphins, captive as they are often taken from the wild and their confinement is both physically and psychologically cruel.
- Avoid lion walks as these animals are often taken from their mothers prematurely and kept in conditions that do not meet their needs. Venues will sometimes sell the lions on to commercial hunting operations once they become unable to be controlled. Lion walks also present considerable safety risks.

Drivers/guides are instructed in the following (and customers must not ask them to do otherwise):

- Keep below the maximum speed limit. In most National Parks this is 40kph/25 mph, maximum.
- Never drive off the road in National Parks. This can severely damage animal habitat or the animals themselves.
- In a reserve that allows off-road driving, the guide needs to be aware of and adhere to where they can and cannot drive. This depends on the type of soil and vegetation of the area.
- When viewing wildlife, keep to a minimum distance of 20 meters and pull to the side of the road so that others can pass. The number of vehicles at a sighting should be controlled whenever possible; to be sensitive to other visitors’ viewing and ensure you are not crowding an animal on the move.
- When a pride of lions or a leopard is hunting, and they stop to listen or to smell the air, switch off the vehicle and ensure guests are quiet.
- Never cut an animal off. Remember they have the right of way in their environment. If an animal needs to change direction because of your vehicle, you are interfering.
- Never use your vehicle to get an animal to move. Try to anticipate what the animal is going to do and position your vehicle accordingly.
- In some parks, night game driving is not allowed, and you must make camp or leave the park before dusk.
6. SANCTUARIES FOR WILDLIFE

Intrepid Group itineraries should only include visits to facilities involving wild animals in captivity if the rationale for the sanctuary operation is in the best interests of the animals involved.

Genuine sanctuaries:

- Do not buy/sell wild animals
- Do not use the animals for interactions with customers or in performances/shows
- Do not breed wild animals – unless they are part of an official recognized breeding program in which the animals involved are being responsibly released back in to the wild (and may otherwise be extinct or endangered).
- Allow for appropriate veterinary care according to their specific needs.
- Do not allow physical contact between people and animals (e.g. Petting, grooming or cuddling wildlife or walking with lions)
- Do not keep animals without a good reason (i.e. they must have a defined conservation benefit to keeping the animals)

7. ANIMAL PRODUCTS

In most local markets, customers should avoid purchasing any wild animal products, especially anything from an endangered species, such as:

- Skins, including fur and reptile skins
- Horns eg. rhino
- Spiders and butterflies
- Turtle shell
- Sea shells, coral, starfish
- Ivory
- Traditional medicines made from endangered animal parts and products
- Turtle Soup
- Shark Fin soup
- Snake whiskeys
- Bear bile
- Tiger or Lion bone wine

Trade’s such as this are generally illegal but may not be enforced through relevant government agencies. It is important to discourage customers from purchasing such items as they are supporting an illegal trade. The wild animals used to produce these products often suffer significantly, and suffering is likely to occur regardless of if the animal has been bred in captivity or wild, or if the process is legal or illegal.

We would advise against customers purchasing food products & ‘medicinal’ products that are made from wild animal derivatives which can also fuel wildlife farming and illegal wildlife trade. Examples of such products include but are not limited to:

- Skins, including fur and reptile skins
- Horns eg. rhino
- Spiders and butterflies
- Turtle shell
- Sea shells, coral, starfish
- Ivory
- Traditional medicines made from endangered animal parts and products
- Turtle Soup
- Shark Fin soup
- Snake whiskeys
- Bear bile
- Tiger or Lion bone wine
8. ANIMAL PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOGRAPHY

Customers should be advised not to visit venues that offer animal shows, ‘selfies’ or direct interaction with wild animals. The animals involved in these activities are sometimes taken from the wild, often bred in intensive conditions, usually taken prematurely from their mothers as babies, and undergo cruel physical and psychological conditioning to make them compliant and perform.

Visiting these venues supports a cycle of animal cruelty. If you are not sure, it’s best to say no.

9. OTHER UNACCEPTABLE PRACTICES INVOLVING ANIMALS

Intrepid group customers should not visit, support or engage in any of the following exploitative activities during their trip:

- Commercial horse-racing
- Venues that have unnatural animal performances or sporting activities such as rodeos, elephant polo and dolphin/seal performances (or any other land and marine animal performances)
- Animals used for begging such as dancing bears, snake charmers or buying bananas for elephants and monkeys etc
- Trophy/game hunting of wildlife (eg. Lions)
- Ostrich-riding, Bull-fighting, Cock-fighting
- Any cage diving where baiting of any kind is used (eg. Shark or Crocodile cage diving)
- Restaurants or hotels that display captive wildlife

ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

For customers: if you have concerns about a supplier we use or an included activity, please advise your leader and provide details in the feedback survey sent to you at the end of your trip.

For operations staff: if you have concerns about a supplier we use or an included activity, use your Trip Report to alert your Operations Manager directly so the issue can be addressed.

If you are still unsure whether the facility has an appropriate standard of care for its animals or have any other questions on animal welfare, please contact the Responsible Business team at Intrepid Group for further guidance: responsible.business@intrepidgroup.travel