



SimienEcoTours

Enjoy Ethiopian Diversity

WILDLIFE POLICY



CODE OF CONDUCT

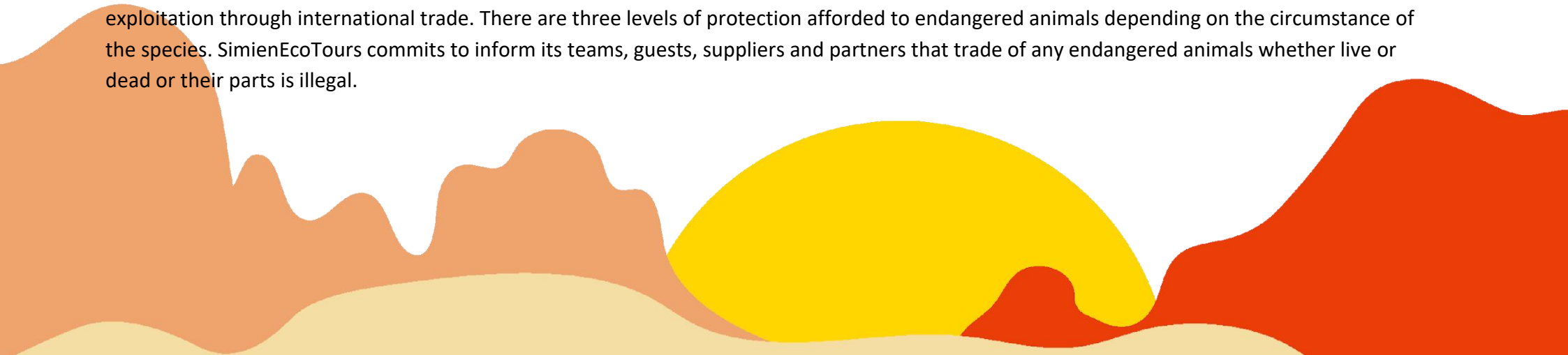
Our commitments

Whether implicitly or explicitly, SimienEcoTours does not contribute to the extinction of ecosystems, and we only work with sites and activities that treat animals properly. In accordance with our principled approach to animal and ecosystem welfare, we developed these codes of conduct as guidance. The Global Standards for Animals in Tourism involve 'Five Freedoms' to ensure that animals in tourism are treated with respect. SimienEcoTours has committed to gradually assess all of its suppliers and only work with your suppliers and excursion providers that ensure these five freedoms:

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

Conservation

Conservation issues concern endangered and threatened species. Animal attractions & wildlife excursions must comply with CITES requirements (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora). CITES is legally binding and protects wild animals from exploitation through international trade. There are three levels of protection afforded to endangered animals depending on the circumstance of the species. SimienEcoTours commits to inform its teams, guests, suppliers and partners that trade of any endangered animals whether live or dead or their parts is illegal.



Animal Welfare

Safeguarding the welfare of animals in captivity is a foremost priority for SimienEcoTours. In captivity, animals rely on humans to provide conditions suitable physically, socially and biologically as well as any other need requisite to their wellbeing. This is not a simple task, as captive animals are often held in unfamiliar environments; different climates, surroundings, vegetation, etc. Their normal behavior such as hunting, foraging, territorial defense and social dominance are difficult to replicate in captivity, leading to unusual behavior.

Because of these challenges, SimienEcoTours expects that animal attraction providers prevent cruelty to animals and hold the welfare of animals as their top priority. This means that:

- Animal attraction providers have a legal license for the type of attraction or activity they offer
- Animals are not held under cruel circumstances
- Animals are not 'humanized'
- Animals are not trained to perform unnatural tricks
- Animals are not forced to join activities
- Animals are held in enclosures large enough for this type of animal according to international guidelines
- Animals are fed healthily, enough and on a regular basis
- Animals have access to sufficient and clean drinking water
- Animals are regularly checked by specialized veterinarians.

Supply Chain

Whilst we believe that animals are better off in the wild, if care is taken regarding the animal's welfare, animal attractions can provide important learning experiences while helping to build awareness and support of conservation efforts.

We require that animal attraction providers adhere and ensure the Five Freedoms mentioned previously are respected and recommend avoiding animal attractions for the sole purpose of entertainment rather than conservation. Tourism activities should be developed to provide revenue for the care for and nurturing of endangered species and animal conservation on a whole.

We recommend that providers of wildlife activities gradually adjust their activities and interactions with tourists to focus on delivering more natural experiences (i.e. bigger enclosures and less human interaction). There is a rising public awareness regarding animal welfare and it is important to accompany our suppliers in developing more animal-friendly activities and practices.

Wildlife in the wild

Tourists are often attracted to destinations because of wildlife found there, and wildlife encounters are often a memorable highlight of their travel experiences.

Although tourist visits to National Parks often support conservation efforts, they can also be damaging to wildlife living in these fragile ecosystems if not properly managed.

In many developing countries, wildlife-related activities form an important source of income. As such, these activities need to be framed as sustainable for both animals and locals.

Animals in the wild should remain wild, meaning that tour suppliers and providers of wildlife excursions make sure that wildlife:

- is not lured and habituated with food
- is not chased after is not touched
- is not hunted and
- is not scared with loud noises or bright lights

SimienEcoTours strives to ensure that:

- National Park guidelines and rules are communicated and respected by all visitors and excursion providers.
- Health & Safety of employees/tourist and wildlife are amongst the main priorities of the tour suppliers & excursion providers.
- Animals/wildlife and human-beings are not put into dangerous situations.

The good news is that, by taking part in responsible travel, holidays may be memorable whilst at the same time encouraging and supporting wildlife conservation efforts, all while avoiding unnecessary damage to precious regional biodiversity.

Elephants in Ethiopia

Wild Ethiopian elephants may still be found in isolated pockets across the grasslands and tropical forests of Babile, Mago and Gambela National Park, but they are under serious threat from illegal hunting, loss of habitat.

Ethiopian elephants can live in almost any habitat with sufficient food and water, but in the reserve, they prefer to stay in the Erer valley, where there is a lot of encroachment of Prickled Pear Cactus, an invasive species whose succulent leaves contain lots of water and food for the Elephants. They often spend a lot of time in the gallery forest along the river, as food is more plentiful and the river provides them with water, which in the dry season, they dig up from the sandy riverbed. For some years, a few animals have been equipped with a teletracking device, but these have been active on and off, the latter for lack of funding. When functional, the park staff is always happy to help visitors find the elephants, but of course, a sighting can never be guaranteed. Although tourist visits to a National Park for wild elephant viewing can be good for conservation purposes, the pressure of tourism can also be damaging to the welfare of elephants living in these parks.

Elephant encounters are a very exciting activity, the Ethiopian elephant is a magical and charming creature that touches the heart, but do remember that elephants are wild animals, and thus can be unpredictable and dangerous. The best way to enjoy the beauty and appreciate the grandeur of this animal is to visit them in the wild, where elephants belong. Not only will you see them in their natural environment, doing natural 'things', but you will also contribute to the continued existence of the threatened Ethiopian elephants by visiting them in the wild. We understand you may be unlucky and return disappointed because you could not spot one, indeed this is not a staged show, but imagine how rewarding it will be if you do spot one! Income produced by tourists visits to National Parks should be used for conservation purposes and, as such, benefit the survival of the Ethiopian elephant and other wildlife.

Interactions with Primates

The opportunity to see wild primates on holiday in Asia is a highlight for many travelers to the region. With the incredible number of similarities to us both genetically and behaviourally, it's easy to see why visitors are so enamored with them. Although viewing primates in National Parks can be good for conservation purposes, the interaction between tourists and primates can also be quite damaging and dangerous for both parties. We have developed specific guidelines offering encounters with primates as well as touring advice for our guides. The growing amount of tourists viewing primates in or outside national parks is not without risks; there are three main negative impacts:

The risk of disease transmission

primates are extremely vulnerable due to their genetic similarity with us, and can be seriously affected by human diseases -and vice-versa. For this reason primates and humans should not touch each other and keep a well-defined distance.

Feeding of primates by tourists

This results in decreased foraging times and movement while increasing the overall food intake. By altering their natural diet, they are more susceptible to disease and illness. The feeding of primates can also increase the level of competition between primates and lead to aggressive behavior.

Behavioral changes

Primates that have increased levels of interaction with humans tend to show an increased opposition towards other primates as well as human beings. Personal safety is another good reason to limit the interaction between primates and humans.

Gelada Baboons

Gelada monkeys live only in the high mountain meadows of Ethiopia—an environment very unlike those of their forest- or savanna-dwelling primate relatives. This high-altitude homeland is replete with steep, rocky cliffs. With their short and stumpy fingers, geladas are adept rock climbers. At night, the animals drop over precipice edges to sleep huddled together on ledges.

Life on the Ground

These baboon-size animals are the world's most terrestrial primates—except for humans. As mostly grass-eaters, they are the last surviving species of ancient grazing primates that were once numerous. Geladas spend most of their day sitting down, plucking and munching on grasses and herbs. They have fatty sitting pads on their rear ends, which seem well adapted to this activity.

Gelada Society

Geladas live in multi-level societies. The smallest is that of the family, a stable unit of one male or a few males, two to ten females and their dependent offspring. Family units combine to form bands that travel together during the day. Sometimes geladas still form large herds of up to

1200 individuals. These are some of the largest groups observed among any primate. Geladas can form such large groups because they feed mostly on grass, which is widely available. Gelada males are larger and hairier than females. The leader male is dominant to all other members of his family unit, but is eventually replaced by a younger rival. The fights during these replacements can be vicious and noisy. A strict dominance hierarchy exists among the females in a family unit as well.

Population

Aerial surveys suggested that 500,000 geladas existed in Ethiopia in the 1970s. Since then geladas have been increasingly exposed to the effects of encroaching agriculture and development, threatening the grasslands they inhabit. Surveys are currently underway to determine how many geladas still survive today.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

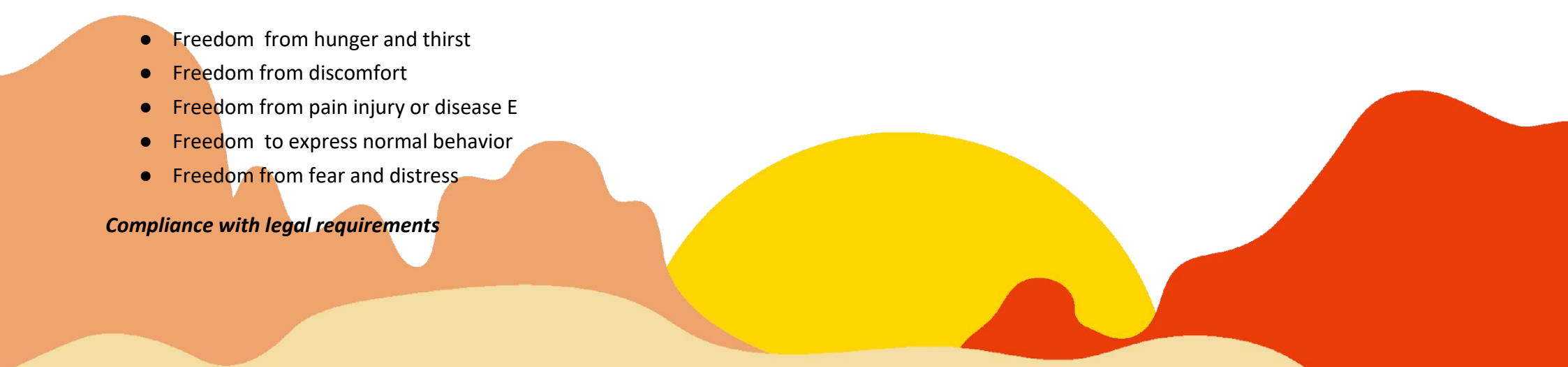
AT SimienEcoTours, we believe our Product development teams have a crucial role to play with regards to safeguarding wildlife and ensuring that animal welfare is among our top priorities. Thus, we have created a dedicated set of guidelines for our Product teams. It is their responsibility to ensure that we are translating our words into actions. Our guidelines, listed in the next pages, give general advice regarding the management of existing activities/suppliers and specific advice for certain. We strongly encourage our teams to develop products that will make a positive impact and financially support conservation centers actively engaged in our destinations.

When creating a new experience/product involving animal human interactions please follow these guidelines.

Respect animals freedoms

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

Compliance with legal requirements



- Operation are led in accordance with national laws
- Valid license to operate is issued by the local authority

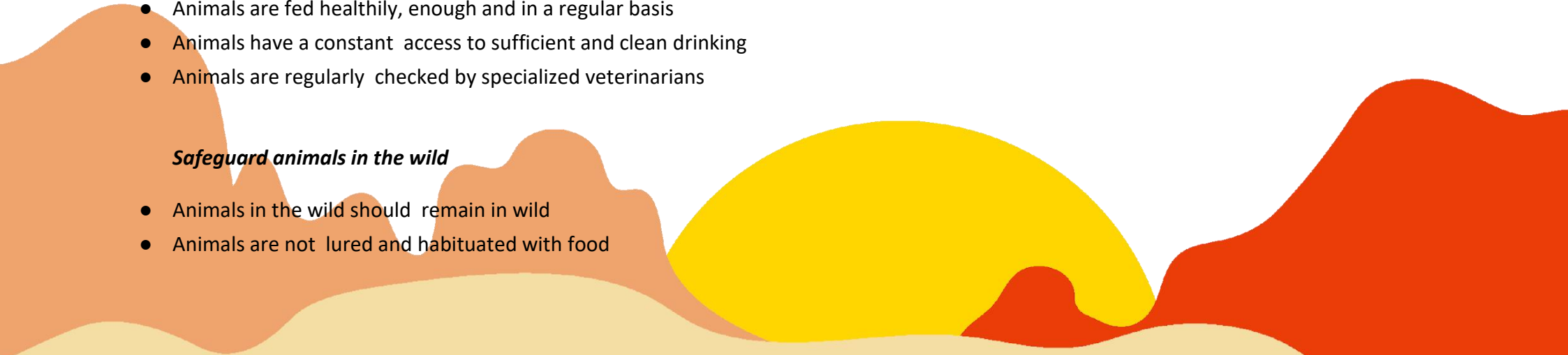
Following good practices

- Make sure that guides, national park rangers are trained to guarantee the safety of themselves and their clients.
- Make sure that tourist are informed about rules to follow , and to avoid putting themselves in dangerous situations
- Make sure that local staff are paid appropriate living wages, housed in decent conditions and are not working excessively long hours.
- Make sure that management teams can precisely report on conservations effort in the case of conservation center / activity
- Make sure that all waste is kept until thrown in to appropriate bin
- Make sure to avoid offering motorized activities
- Make sure to avoid promoting the use of motorized boats disturbing behavior of birds and other animals

Care for animals in captivity

- Animals are not held under cruel circumstances
- Animals are not humanized
- Animals are not trained to do unnatural tricks
- Animals are not forced to join activities
- Animals are held in enclosures big enough for their size.
- Animals are fed healthily, enough and in a regular basis
- Animals have a constant access to sufficient and clean drinking
- Animals are regularly checked by specialized veterinarians

Safeguard animals in the wild

- Animals in the wild should remain in wild
 - Animals are not lured and habituated with food
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- Animals are not chased after
- Animals are not touched
- Animals are not hunted and are not scared with loud noises or bright light

Policy Owner: SimienEcoTours

Signatory: Marco Degasper (General Manager)

Date of Last Review: 20/06/2022

Date of Next Review: 20/06/2023

