



*simply sustainable!*

# Our Shared Journey

## mascontour's Policy for Sustainable, Inclusive and Digital Responsibility



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# Purpose

This Code of Conduct defines the principles and behaviours that guide mascontour's operations, projects and partnerships. It builds on our long-standing commitment to sustainable tourism, human rights and social justice, and sets out how we act both internally as a company and externally in our work with clients and partners.

It reflects our commitment to the following core principles:

1. Human rights, gender equality, diversity and inclusion
2. Child and vulnerable persons protection
3. Climate action and biodiversity conservation
4. Responsible, Inclusive and Fair Practices
5. Transparency, Accountability & Integrity
6. Responsible Use of Digital Technologies and Artificial Intelligence (AI)
7. Professional Integrity in Consulting Engagements
8. Public Communications, Social Media & Loyalty

Our principles are aligned with, among others:

- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs)
- The Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism
- Atmosfair climate responsibility
- Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism
- Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) criteria



This Code applies to all employees, management, associates, long-term and short-term consultants, freelancers and key suppliers. Acceptance of this Code is a basic requirement for working with mascontour.



# CORE PRINCIPLE 1:

## Human Rights, Gender Equality, Diversity & Inclusion



### Internally we:

- Promote equal opportunities and eliminate discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, socio-economic background or any other status.
- Strive for gender balance and diverse representation in leadership, project teams and decision-making processes.
- Foster an inclusive, respectful working culture, free from harassment, bullying and violence, with clear procedures for reporting and addressing incidents.
- Use inclusive language and accessible formats in our internal communication and events.

### With our clients and in projects we:

- Integrate human rights, gender equality, diversity and inclusion systematically into project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- Apply an intersectional lens in our analyses and recommendations, addressing overlapping forms of discrimination (e.g. gender, ethnicity, disability, age, rural/urban, poverty).
- Promote participation and voice of underrepresented groups (e.g. women, youth, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, LGBTQI+ persons, informal workers) in tourism governance and decision-making.
- Encourage clients to adopt or strengthen their own non-discrimination, diversity and inclusion policies and to improve accessibility of tourism services and destinations.



## CORE PRINCIPLE 2:

### Child and Vulnerable Persons Protection



mascontour pursues a clear zero-tolerance policy towards any form of violation of children's rights, including sexual exploitation and abuse.

#### Internally we:

- Apply a zero-tolerance policy towards any form of violence, abuse or exploitation of children and vulnerable persons, including in our conduct during missions and events.
- Ensure all staff and long-term consultants are familiar with child protection standards, codes of conduct and reporting channels.
- Do not cooperate with partners who tolerate the sexual exploitation of children or who offer or promote tourist services in orphanages.

#### With our clients, freelancers and in projects we:

- Require partners, suppliers, subcontractors and freelancers to comply with recognised child protection standards, including The Code for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism.
- Expect all freelancers and consultants working with mascontour to do their utmost to ensure that human rights are respected and to actively contribute to the protection of children from sexual exploitation and abuse.
- Require that suspicious cases of child exploitation or abuse encountered in the context of assignments are immediately reported to mascontour's designated child protection officer.
- Promote safeguarding policies and procedures in tourism destinations, companies and institutions (including risk assessment, complaint mechanisms, awareness-raising).
- Integrate child protection and broader safeguarding aspects into trainings, guidelines and destination development processes.



# CORE PRINCIPLE 3:



## Climate Action & Biodiversity Conservation

### Internally we:

- Measure and monitor carbon emissions from business travel, office energy use and procurement, and continuously work to reduce them.
- Offset remaining emissions through certified programmes and prioritise reduction over compensation.
- Use eco-energy and eco-gas where available, minimise resource use and waste, and prioritise low-carbon mobility options (train over plane whenever feasible, public transport, cycling).

### With our clients and in projects we:

- Integrate climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies into relevant consulting assignments, destination plans and tourism product concepts.
- Support biodiversity conservation, ecosystem-based approaches and ecotourism in protected and sensitive areas, avoiding overuse and degradation.
- Promote nature-based solutions and low-carbon tourism products, and support partners in defining realistic, science-informed climate and biodiversity targets where relevant.



# CORE PRINCIPLE 4:

## Responsible, Inclusive and Fair Practices



### Internally we:

- Apply the principles of decent work (fair remuneration in line with legal requirements and sector standards, respect for work–life balance, safe working conditions).
- Choose service providers and suppliers (e.g. travel, accommodation, event venues) that align with our sustainability and inclusion values wherever possible.

### With our clients and in projects we:

- Apply sustainability criteria (social, environmental, economic, cultural) in all consulting projects, based on GSTC and other recognised frameworks.
- Promote community empowerment, fair distribution of tourism benefits and respect for local cultures and traditions.
- Support the development of inclusive, accessible tourism products and services that consider diverse needs (e.g. families, seniors, people with disabilities, low-income groups).
- Work to prevent negative impacts such as overtourism, displacement, cultural commodification and environmental damage, using “do no harm” and conflict-sensitive approaches.



# CORE PRINCIPLE 5:

## Transparency, Accountability & Integrity



### Internally we:

- Regularly report on our sustainability targets and progress to our team and governance bodies.
- Maintain open, honest communication, encourage feedback and protect whistle-blowers in line with applicable law.
- Uphold high standards of professional integrity, avoiding corruption, fraud, bribery and conflicts of interest.

### With our clients and in projects we:

- Ensure alignment with international standards and clients' safeguarding, anti-corruption and ESG requirements; review and update our policies regularly.
- Communicate transparently about project objectives, limitations, risks and trade-offs in sustainability decisions.
- Document and share lessons learned to improve future project quality and systemic impact.





## CORE PRINCIPLE 6:

### Responsible Use of Digital Technologies & Artificial Intelligence (AI)



Digital technologies and AI can support better decisions, improve sustainability performance and enhance visitor experiences – but they also entail risks related to privacy, bias, discrimination and exclusion. mascontour is committed to using AI in a way that is transparent, fair and aligned with our sustainability values.

#### Internally we:

- Treat AI as a tool that supports – but never replaces – professional judgement, critical reflection and human-centred decision-making.
- Ensure that AI-generated content and analyses are reviewed by qualified team members, especially when they can affect people, communities or reputations.
- Use only trusted and compliant AI tools and protect personal, confidential and commercially sensitive data; we do not feed such data into unsecured systems.
- Respect copyright and intellectual property when using or adapting AI-generated outputs.
- Build awareness among our team about opportunities and risks of AI (e.g. bias, discrimination, misinformation, privacy) and provide internal guidance on responsible use.
- Prioritize cloud-based tools and shared workspaces to reduce redundant file storage and improve team efficiency.
- Avoid sending email attachments whenever possible; instead, use shared drives or secure links for internal communication.
- Our website will be hosted by a verified green hosting provider to ensure environmentally responsible digital infrastructure.



## CORE PRINCIPLE 6:

### Responsible Use of Digital Technologies & Artificial Intelligence (AI)



With our clients and in projects we:

- Highlight both the potential and the limitations of AI in tourism (e.g. for market analysis, visitor flow management, communication) and discourage “techno-solutionism”.
- Support clients in designing AI-supported solutions that are transparent, explainable and consistent with human rights, sustainability and diversity & inclusion principles.
- Advise against AI uses that may lead to discrimination, manipulation of travellers, intrusive surveillance, unsafe working conditions or “greenwashing” of unsustainable practices.
- Promote digital inclusion by encouraging tools and approaches that are accessible to SMEs, rural communities and people with limited digital skills or connectivity.
- Encourage clients to combine AI-based insights with participatory processes and local knowledge, ensuring that technology strengthens – not weakens – community voice and ownership.



# CORE PRINCIPLE 7:



## Professional Integrity in Consulting Engagements

This principle brings together detailed standards that previously appeared as clauses in our consulting contracts. By signing a contract with mascontour – and thereby accepting this Code – all team members, associates, freelancers and key suppliers commit to these standards.

### Internally we:

- Ensure that all employees and long-term consultants understand that this Code is contractually binding and forms part of their professional obligations towards mascontour.
- Provide clear guidance on handling confidential information, project data and intellectual property, and support our teams in applying these rules in daily work.
- Maintain internal procedures to identify and manage conflicts of interest, including disclosure requirements and, where necessary, reallocation of responsibilities.

### With our clients and in projects we:

- Commit to strict confidentiality regarding all non-public information obtained in the course of assignments (e.g. business data, personal data, strategic documents), and use such information solely for agreed project purposes.
- Respect data protection regulations and clients' internal data security rules; we collect, store, process and share data only to the extent necessary and with appropriate safeguards.
- Recognise and respect intellectual property: we clearly agree with clients on the ownership and usage rights of analyses, tools and products developed in the project, and we do not reuse or share client content without consent or a clear contractual basis.



# CORE PRINCIPLE 7:

## Professional Integrity in Consulting Engagements



### With our clients and in projects we:

- Avoid conflicts of interest that could compromise our independence or the perception of our independence. We proactively disclose potential conflicts to clients and agree on appropriate mitigation measures.
- Refrain from any form of corruption, bribery or undue advantage. We do not offer, request or accept gifts, payments or benefits that could influence – or appear to influence – our professional judgement.
- Perform our services with due care, diligence and technical competence, in line with recognised professional standards and the scope agreed in the contract.
- Use subcontractors and associated experts only in line with contractual arrangements and ensure that they are made aware of, and agree to comply with, this Code of Conduct.

These standards apply in addition to any specific legal and contractual provisions agreed with clients. Where client provisions are stricter, we follow the stricter rule.



## CORE PRINCIPLE 8:



### Public Communications, Social Media & Loyalty

Public communications and social media activities of employees, consultants and freelancers can have a direct impact on mascontour and on our clients. We therefore expect a high standard of loyalty, professionalism and discretion in all public and semi-public spheres.

#### Internally we:

- Provide guidance on how to clearly separate professional roles and private opinions in public communication.
- Clarify who is authorised to speak on behalf of mascontour and through which channels.

For all who work with us (employees, consultants, freelancers) the following applies:

#### 1. Duty of loyalty and protection of reputation

- At all times – including in private public spheres (e.g. personal social media accounts) – the interests and reputation of mascontour and its clients must be safeguarded.
- Any damage to the reputation and standing of mascontour or its clients must be avoided.
- Direct or indirect references that establish or suggest a recognisable connection to mascontour or a client should be made with particular care and respect; disparaging or defamatory statements are not acceptable.
- A clear separation between professional activity and private life or private opinion must be ensured at all times.



# CORE PRINCIPLE 8:



## Public Communications, Social Media & Loyalty

### 2. Statements on behalf of mascontour or the client

- Public statements on behalf of mascontour or a client may only be made if the person has been expressly authorised in advance in writing.
- Private opinions must always be clearly identified as private statements if there is a risk that third parties might interpret them as an official statement by mascontour or a client.
- Statements on accounts or channels attributable to mascontour or a client are not permitted unless explicitly authorised; where permissible, they must always correspond to the truth.

### 3. Confidentiality in public communication

- Even outside of operational activities, business and trade secrets and other non-public information about mascontour and its clients must be kept strictly confidential, including towards friends and family members.
- The only information that does not need to be kept confidential is information that is already publicly and obviously available (e.g. because it has been widely reported in the media).

### 4 Corrective action in case of violations

In the event of violations of the aforementioned obligations, in particular if there is a suspicion of a risk of reputational or other damage to mascontour or a client due to publications or public statements, the person concerned is obligated to immediately refrain from such behaviour and, upon request by mascontour, promptly delete or correct the relevant content.

These rules are not intended to restrict legitimate freedom of expression; they ensure that personal communication does not inadvertently harm partners, clients or the integrity of our work.





# Behavioral Expectations

This Code applies to all employees, associates, consultants, freelancers, management, suppliers and partners working with or for mascontour.

All must:

- Act with integrity, respect and cultural sensitivity in all interactions.
- Avoid practices that harm people, communities or the environment.
- Respect the dignity, identity and rights of all persons, including through inclusive language and behaviour.
- Comply with child protection and safeguarding standards and immediately report suspicions of abuse or exploitation.
- Adhere to confidentiality obligations and the social media and public communication rules outlined above.
- Immediately report any suspected violations of this Code, including discrimination, harassment, safeguarding breaches, environmental misconduct, data protection breaches or corruption.





# Implementation

## Internally we:

- **Provide mandatory training** on gender equality, diversity and inclusion, child protection, climate action, responsible tourism, responsible public communication and responsible use of digital technologies/AI to all staff; refresh regularly.
- **Conduct periodic audits and reviews** of our sustainability, inclusion and digital responsibility performance and derive improvement measures.
- Integrate this Code into recruitment, induction, performance reviews and supplier/consultant selection.

## With our clients and in projects we:

- Introduce this Code in project kick-off meetings and contracts where appropriate, and encourage partners to adopt similar or more ambitious standards.
- Offer advisory and capacity-building services (trainings, guidelines, toolboxes) that support partners in implementing gender equality, diversity and inclusion, climate action, child protection, responsible tourism, digital responsibility and good communication practice.







## Our Shared Journey

Sustainability, diversity, inclusion and digital responsibility are not boxes to tick, but an ongoing journey we choose every day – as a company and together with our clients and partners. This Code of Conduct is our shared compass: it helps us to question routines, make conscious decisions and continuously raise the bar.

**Internally, we commit to** challenging ourselves, learning from mistakes and celebrating progress – however small – as a team.

### **With our clients and in our projects:**

We aim to be a critical friend and an inspiring partner: pragmatic, constructive and always driven by the conviction that better tourism is possible.

We invite everyone who works with mascontour to actively contribute to this journey: by asking questions, proposing new ideas, calling out inconsistencies and helping us turn principles into practice.

Together, we can ensure that tourism creates real added value – for people, places and the planet.

