**MAROPENG’S**

**RESPONSIBLE TOURISM POLICY**

Maropeng a’ Afrika acknowledges the potential benefits afforded not only to our business, but also to our employees and the surrounding community by adopting operational practices that are aligned to the principles of responsible tourism. In our strategy we have adopted the definition of responsible tourism as defined in South Africa’s Requirements for Responsible Tourism:

**Responsible Tourism**

tourism management strategy in which the tourism sector and tourists take responsibility

to protect and conserve the natural environment,

respect and conserve local cultures and ways of life,

and contribute to stronger local economies and a better quality of life for local people

*(SANS1162:2011)*

Owing to our designation as the official visitors center for the UNESCO World Heritage Site and our commitment to implementing responsible practices in our tourism business, we have systems in place to manage the long-term sustainability of our business operations in the following areas:

**Environmental Management**

* Energy conservation, including monitoring our consumption and finding ways to reduce our this through operational and technical improvements
* Water conservation, including monitoring our consumption, re-use our waste water, and reducing our consumption through operational and technical improvements
* Waste management practices, including recycling all materials possible, composting all organic waste which it then used in a local food garden, and reducing the amount of waste we generate
* Promoting our local natural assets by providing information about local flora and fauna throughout the property including on the walking trail, and by removing all alien invasive plants on an ongoing basis
* Engaging our guests in our efforts to reduce environmental impacts by informing them of our activities, and encouraging them to reduce their own footprint during their stay

**Social and Cultural Impacts**

* Creating an excellent visitor experience Maropeng where we are so proud to work at; we offer opportunities for as many people as possible to learn from Maropeng and the Sterkfontein Caves
* Incorporating the natural elements required for life, as told in the story of evolution, into our structures and décor
* Focusing on educational institutions in our local community to pursue development projects that meet their needs and priorities

**Economic Impact**

* Promoting opportunities for other businesses to benefit from tourism by sharing information with our guests about local attractions and activities
* Providing employment opportunities (including managerial) that give preference to people from the local area, and providing them with a working environment that is not only fair and non-discriminatory, but that also adheres to legislated requirements for the sector
* Pursuing a purchasing strategy that favours local and small businesses, as well as products that are Fair Trade and less harmful to the environment

**Quality Tourism Experience**

* Offering an unparalleled learning experience through our exhibition centre, a luxurious stay at our hotel, excellent food at our outlets, and excellent service and facilities in our conferencing and events offerings
* Inviting guest feedback so that we can improve the quality of these experiences
* Providing regular training to staff so that they are empowered to do their jobs well, have a positive work experience, and be supporting in realizing career aspirations

**Healthy and Safe Business**

* Ensuring that our workplace is safe for staff and guests alike through the provision of regular and comprehensive safety training, and the provision of appropriate safety equipment

Additional information about our projects and activities related to the above commitments are provided in our newsletters. Anyone wanting to receive these updates can do so by subscribing through our website ([www.maropeng.co.za](http://www.maropeng.co.za)).

Maropeng acknowledges that the responsible tourism journey is one of constant improvement and we commit to reviewing the systems referred to above from time to time to ensure that they are meeting our goals effectively. Suggestions for how we can improve on this are welcome and can be forwarded to us on website@maropeng.co.za.

**Date of last policy revision: 01 January 2015**