

SUSTAINABILITY REPORT - LAOS 2019 -



WE AIM TO BE RESPONSIBLE



Over the past year EXO Travel has made several exciting commitments toward sustainability. This year, we have worked towards continuous improvement in sustainability throughout all our operations.

In 2021 we will turn 20 years old, in 2020 we will aim for our 3rd Travelife certification, what about 2019? It was an exciting year. We are still the only DMC in Laos being Travelife certified and we are proud of leading the way and bringing people together towards sustainability. We have planned great changes this year and will continue to work. Thanks to the ever-growing support from our team, no doubt we will achieve them!

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT - We have taken a great step towards the development and promotion of responsible products, with excursions and hotels joining our responsible partners. Thanks to coordination between our offices, Sustainability goes across the country and we aim to gather even more suppliers next year!

PLASTIC FREE – We are very proud to be the first tour operator in Laos who has implemented refillable bottles for its clients. We decreased the use of single-use plastic bottles drastically. Moreover, we are now looking to switch entirely from plastic to glass bottles for agents who did not choose the refillable bottles yet.

CARBON OFFSET – Since 2018, we successfully offset all our internal flights (staff + clients) and give benefits to the Laos Improved Cookstove Program. The program supports local cook stove artisans who will receive training to make more efficient stoves. Their customers will then save fuel and money, prepare meals more efficiently and breathe cleaner air. On EXO Foundation day in September, representatives of the projects came to give EXO Vientiane team a presentation. Inspiring!

Promising and bold steps are coming in 2020, we will make sure to take them by bringing more and more people with us.

Francois Guillot - General Manager

HOW SUSTAINABILITY WORKS AT EXO



SUSTAINABILITY GUIDELINES

Following Travelife certification scheme, we have developed a set of guidelines, policies and tools. We are ensuring that they are being properly implemented in our destinations to further our positive impacts

- [EXO Responsible Travel Policy](#)
- [EXO Children Protection policy](#)
- [Wildlife Code of conducts](#)
- [Ethical code & addendum](#)
- [Tips for responsible travelers](#)

COORDINATORS

In seven of EXO destinations (Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia and Vietnam), we have dedicated sustainability coordinators. They are ensuring that our Responsible Travel Policy is understood & well implemented. They also act as focal points for EXO Foundation.



GIVING BACK

Support sustainable human, social and economic development of local communities in Asia through financial fundings and support.

PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

Fostering initiatives that are enabling to wide spread responsible tourism principles and advising travel companies on how to become agent of positive change.

IDENTIFYING LOCAL PROJECTS

One of the main purpose of EXO Foundation is to identify meaningful and relevant projects to support in Asia, addressing the causes of real development challenges.

WE CARE ABOUT OUR ENVIRONMENT

EXO Travel is committed to minimize the negative environmental impacts of the office operation and activities including: energy and paper consumption, waste generation and carbon emission.



PAPER

537 sheets/person/year

→ Laos is the country with the lowest consumption of paper from all EXO's destinations.

- **40% since 2018**



WATER

26 m3/person/year

1.066 m3 water used / year

+ **18% since 2018**



40 employees

- 26 in Vientiane
- 11 in Luang Prabang
- 3 in Pakse

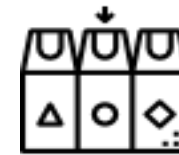


ENERGY

1.628 kWh/person/year

Pakse office closed on December 2019

+ **23% since 2018**



WASTE REDUCTION & RECYCLING

14,50 kg of waste/person/year

57,40 kg of recycled waste/year

+ **40% waste production since 2018**

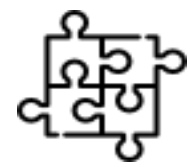


STAFF FLIGHTS

38,22 USD collected for
2,24 tons of carbon offset



WE COMMIT TO OUR PEOPLE



ENGAGEMENT

8 Sustainability Team members

Most Responsible Employee goes to...
Phonexay THAMMAVONGSA aka Mee,
LUXE/MICE departments : driving
sustainable initiatives both in her work
and personal life! You will never see her
without her reusable items.

EXO Flea Market - food, clothes, local
handicrafts were brought from our staff
home and were shared/exchanged on this
day. A fun moment!



HAPPINESS AT WORK

1 Survey on "Satisfaction at work"
undertaken to understand how we
can improve our working conditions
5 HR events throughout the year
Daily music break exercise routine
with all staff



AWARENESS

100% of staff trained
on Sustainability related topics,
such as wildlife protection, plastic
reduction, carbon offsetting etc.
30 guides trained on responsible
tourism in Luang Prabang &
Vientiane

EXO Foundation Day: guest
speakers invited from our partner
organizations ;Lone Buffalo & the
Improved Cookstove Programme.
4 Sustainability Newsletters



CARBON OFFSET

CARBON NEUTRAL HOLIDAYS

In 2019, we perfected our offset system of all domestic and regional flights, and thought about going further: we are proud to present our **carbon neutral holidays** that will allow clients to offset their whole inbound trip -accommodation, ground/boat transport, excursions... How exciting! Did you know? In 2019 in Laos, a traveler was producing an average of **16,79 kg** of CO2 per night.

FLIGHT OFFSETTING

In 2019, Laos has offset **143 tons** of carbon through our partnership with Nexus for Development with carbon credits worth of **2.438 US\$**



EXO TIPS

EDUCATING GUESTS IN A FUN WAY

→ **700** tips distributed to approximately **32% of our guests** arriving in Laos in 2019.

The new version of our EXO Tips arrived! Our tips inform the travelers on habits and customs in South-East Asia with drawings and even a list of responsible shops at the end. As it's small and convenient, we hope travellers can bring it home as a souvenir.

TIPS for responsible travels

Making destinations better places
for people to live in and for
travelers to visit.



WE CARE ABOUT OUR CUSTOMERS

THE REFILLABLE BOTTLE

is an initiative led to drastically reduce the consumption of plastic bottles in tourism industry by providing a refillable bottle to each traveler instead of several single-use plastic ones.



7 travel agents participating to this initiative
65 excursion providers and hotels involved
5 car companies involved
52 EXO Laos staff and 85 tour guides leading the way!



374 refillable bottles given to travelers in 2019
→ 19% more bottles than 2018
→ given to 8% of total pax traveling to Laos in 2019



1,820 single-use plastic bottles avoided - 1,743 in 2018
→ 15,760 still distributed

WE INVOLVE OUR SUPPLY CHAIN

EXO Travel is being very cautious when looking for suppliers and activities for our customers. We strictly follow our Ethical code & we have implemented a Sustainability Suppliers Assessment Process, based on the following criteria. We also require them to sign our sustainability addendum and we encourage them to share with us their best practices.



KNOWLEDGE

14 Tour guides trained on ChildSafe :
How to recognize child abuse, how to report it, the psychological impact on children, what to do when guests want to visit an orphanage/school or give money to a begging child...



COMMITMENT

100 Sustainability addendums signed by our suppliers

Our addendum includes:

- anti-bribery/corruption
- children protection,
- sex tourism
- environmental & cultural protection
- local communities involvement



HOTEL ASSESSMENT

47 hotels assessed on Sustainability criteria (**15** in 2019)

24 hotels identified as responsible according to EXO Standards: Eco-friendly and Socially Aware (**11** in 2019)

3.969 nights sold in responsible hotels
→ **41%** of all room nights
→ **2.862** pax in responsible hotels



RESPONSIBLE HOTELS IN LAOS

Maison Dalabua Luang Prabang



Luang Prabang View Luang Prabang



Maison Souvannaphoum Luang Prabang



Sofitel Luang Prabang



3 Nagas



IBIS Vientiane Nam Phu Vientiane



Parasol Blanc Luang Prabang



Victoria Xieng Thong



Villa Maly Luang Prabang



Salana Boutique



Settha Palace



Pakbeng Sanctuary



Sanctuary Luang Prabang





RESPONSIBLE HOTELS IN LAOS

Silver Naga



★

Amari



★

Inthira



★



★★

Boutique Riverside Resort



★

Crowne Plaza Vientiane



★★

Beau Rivage



★

The Luang Say Residence



★★



★★

Rosewood Luang Prabang



★



★★

Santi Resort & Spa



★★



★★

Belmond La Residence Phou Vao



★★



★★

Villa Maydou



★★



★★★





RESPONSIBLE PRODUCTS 2019



SAFFRON COFFEE EXPERIENCE



Saffron Coffee passionately supports Lao hill tribes, protects the environment, and produces specialty coffee which is directly traded and sustainably sourced from the micro coffee plots of Khmu, Hmong, Mien and Gasak hill tribe families. Learn all about the ways in which this 'profit-for-purpose' business reinvests its revenue to benefit Lao people. Support their work with a donation that will go into planting coffee trees and doing more good.



FREE THE BEARS

LUXE Experience. Learn all about the efforts of Free The Bears sanctuary in Kuang Si Waterfall National Protected area in Luang Prabang and be part of this amazing responsible experience. Go behind the scenes and learn about how these bears are taken care of, get hands-on in making a snack for them and observe their social behaviour. A second sanctuary is to be opened up very soon to face the raising numbers of rescued bears.



TREK & HILL TRIBES DISCOVERY

This carbon friendly tour will take you through vibrant landscapes of jungle and rice paddies and will lead you to discover the Hmong and Kamu customs with two stops in traditional ethnic villages. Those two tribes have very different lives while living quite close to each other. You will finish the day with a visit to the unmissable Traditional Arts & Ethnology Centre (TAEC).



BUFFALO DAIRY FARM



LUXE Experience. Participate in a private and exclusive tour of social enterprise Laos Buffalo Dairy Farm that also gives back to the local community. Learn all about how to care for buffalos, tastes a variety of delicious cheeses and take part in a mozzarella-making session with an international renowned chef. Like local farmers, you will learn how animal welfare can improve human lives and income.



WE SUPPORT COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT & DEVELOPMENT



OTHER SUPPORTED PROJECTS

www.exofoundation.org
Facebook: EXOFoundation



MAINSTREAM RESPONSIBLE TOURISM IN OUR BUSINESS AND OPERATIONS

100% of our gifts are purchased from Saoban, a social organization that gives job opportunities to rural populations and especially women. Besides a microfinance project, it also promotes local handicraft of textiles, jewelry, bags, bamboo wares... Saoban is a member of the Fair Trade Laos alliance.

"Don't waste your waste" - comic book

A new comic book is underway! We are working with partners to revise its content. This booklet given free of charge to children during sensitization classes on waste management is a very powerful educational tool to helping fighting the plastic plague.



MAKE DESTINATIONS BETTER PLACES TO LIVE IN AND TO VISIT

12,000\$ donated

\$5,000 donated to Lone Buffalo providing English classes in rural areas.

\$5,000 donated to Red Cross Lao for clean water supply in Attapeu province affected by dam-break

\$2,000 donated to Suzette Schoebitz & Phetsamon Manola in order to remake the comic book "Don't Waste Your Waste".



EVENTS & PROJECTS

EXO Foundation Day

27th September : Guest speakers
Lone Buffalo & Laos Cookstove Programme came to the office in Vientiane to present their work in collaboration with EXO Foundation.



World Clean Up Day

15 September: Cleaning in and around Vientiane office
16 people involved in picking up trash. 5 bags of 70 liters each were filled!

Staff Outings

25 November : Visit the Frangipani Garden
15 member of the Vientiane staff went on a fun afternoon of lunch, karaoke and product knowledge. Did you know the Frangipani flower is the national flower of Laos ?



OUR TARGETS 2020



WE CARE ABOUT OUR ENVIRONMENT

- Monitor our use of natural resources & reduce country's carbon footprint by 20%
- **Waste** - Reach below 10kg/people/year
- **CO2** - "Carbon neutral holidays" at least 50% of agents involved
- **Plastic** - Zero Plastic Office launched in Vientiane & Luang Prabang

WE COMMIT TO OUR PEOPLE

- Satisfaction survey & actions related
- Sustainability included in JD/KPI for all employees
- English classes for all staff in low-season
- Work with Sust. Team on how to make our sustainable policy clearer

WE INVOLVE OUR SUPPLY CHAIN

- Reduction of plastic in our Operations (glass bottles especially)
- Refillable Bottle Project – make sure Operations run smoothly
- 50% of our contracted suppliers commit to our Sustainability Addendum
- 100% of Travel Consultants know how to identify & sale sustainable options
- Assess 100% of preferred excursions based on sustainability criteria and compliance with our policies
- Support preferred hotels to become responsible through sustainability inspections

WE CARE ABOUT OUR CUSTOMERS

- 100% of Responsible options are highlighted
- Increase distribution of Tips for Responsible travels by 50%
- Development sustainability guidelines for boats & cruises

WE SUPPORT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Projects supported by Foundation and EXO People
Theme of the year: get staff involved in 1 related project & EXO Foundation Day

POLICY INFLUENCING - SOCIAL COLLABORATION

- Develop networking on sustainability with like minded tourism operators
- Successfully pass the third Travelife audit