



EXO
TRAVEL

WILDLIFE

CODES OF CONDUCT

OUR COMMITMENTS

Whether implicitly or explicitly, EXO Travel 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 with the input and support of environmental NGOs such as TRAFFIC, WCS, WWF, Elephant Asia and other specialists.

The Global Standards for Animals in Tourism involve 'Five Freedoms' to ensure that animals in tourism are treated with respect.

EXO Travel has committed to gradually assess all of its suppliers and only work with tour 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 behaviour**
- **Freedom from fear and distress**



CONSERVATION

Conservation issues concern endangered and threatened species. Animal attractions & wildlife excursions we work with 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.

EXO Travel commits to inform its teams, guests, suppliers and partners that trade of any endangered animals whether live or dead (eg: tigers, primates, marine animals, pangolins, etc.) or their parts is illegal.

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 visits to National Parks (terrestrial & Marine) 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**



EXO Travel 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 of wildlife conservation efforts, all while avoiding unnecessary damage to precious regional biodiversity.

ANIMAL WELFARE

Safeguarding the welfare of animals in captivity is a foremost priority for EXO Travel. In captivity, animals rely on humans to provide conditions suitable physically, socially and biologically as well as any other need requisite to their well being.

This is not a simple task, as captive animals are often held in unfamiliar environments; different climates, surroundings, vegetation, etc. Their normal behaviour such as hunting, foraging, territorial defense and social dominance are difficult to replicate in captivity, leading to unusual behaviour.

Because of these challenges, EXO Travel 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 'humanised'**
- **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 specialised veterinarians**

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). It is important for our company to accompany our suppliers in developing more animal-friendly activities and practices.

ASIAN ELEPHANTS

Wild Asian elephants may still be found in isolated pockets across the grasslands and tropical forests of thirteen Asian countries, but they are under serious threat from illegal hunting, loss of habitat and conflicts between elephants and farming communities.

Asian elephants are herbivores subsisting on a diet of leaves, stems, fruits, grasses and the bark of many trees and other plants. To satiate their tremendous appetites, elephants spend most of their time grazing and foraging for food. A female elephant may weigh two tonnes, but a big male can weigh up to five tonnes!

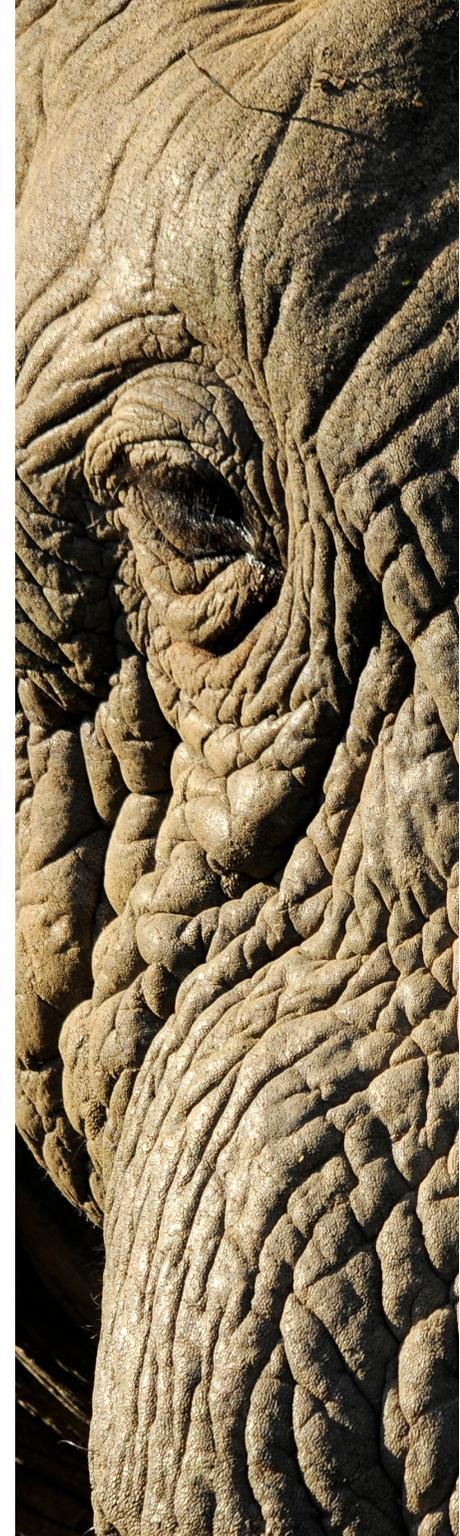
Elephant encounters are a very exciting activity, the Asian elephant is a magical and charming creature that touches the heart, but elephants are wild animals, and thus can be unpredictable and dangerous.

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 travelers will see them in their natural environment, doing natural 'things', but they will also contribute to the continued existence of the threatened Asian elephants.

We understand it is important to manage traveler's expectations as some may be unlucky and return disappointed because they could not spot one, indeed this is not a staged show, but it is even more rewarding if they do spot one!

We must ensure that income produced by tourists visits to National Parks should be used for conservational purposes and, as such, benefit the survival of the Asian elephant and other wildlife.



The elephant camps that we include in our tours have been screened and approved, although it may occur that certain practices are not always followed. In a good camp, tourism activities with elephants should always support conservation and protection.

An elephant camp should never be created for the sole purpose of tourism, but always as a rescue or conservation camp, protecting elephants from the hard working conditions of logging, formerly tortured elephants, calves whose mothers were killed or taken away, etc.

Asian elephant-related activities have become an important source of income for local communities. In Thailand alone, there are hundreds of elephant camps offering elephant rides, but elephant rides are not a natural activity for elephants to do.

Elephants can pull heavy loads with their shoulders, though their backbone is quite fragile and they can actually suffer greatly from carrying too many people. At EXO Travel, we assess and retain only elephant camps which respect rigorous ethical guidelines for the well-being of these incredible creatures.

We work hand-in-hand with NGOs to encourage owners, mahouts and camp managers to develop best practices and other types of activities which will allow a close encounter without affecting the elephants welfare.

For example, EXO Travel advises elephant camp activity suppliers to carefully consider and comply with the activities as described in the Elephant Care Manual provided by the Lampang Thailand Elephant Conservation Centre.

EXO Travel believes that elephants are much better off in the wild than in a tourist camp but, with careful research on the elephant's health and overall management of the park. We believe we can offer ethical elephant encounter experiences.



PRIMATES

The opportunity to see wild primates on holiday in Asia is a highlight for many travellers to the region. With at least 97 formally-recognised species calling it home, the chances of seeing a primate are pretty good.

With the incredible number of similarities to us both genetically and behaviourally, it's easy to see why visitors are so enamoured with them.

Although viewing primates in National Parks can be good for conservational purposes, the interaction between tourists and primates can also be quite damaging and dangerous for both parties.

We have developed specific guidelines to assess suppliers/venues offering encounter 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 behaviour.

- **Behavioural 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.



MARINE LIFE

Particularly in Asia, snorkelling or diving is a wonderful opportunity to witness some of the world's most incredible marine biodiversity.

From whales and dolphins to sea turtles, an occasional shark or manta ray, and some of the world's most vibrant coral reefs, close up encounters with marine life is a highlight of many visits to the region.

But some rules to respect marine life should be followed. Despite the incredible size of the oceans, their ecosystems are remarkably delicate and have faced growing threats from human activity.

Coral reefs are more than just beautiful: they are keystone species critical to the health of marine ecosystems. Damage to them causes a cascade of impacts from the smallest organisms all the way to the biggest. Furthermore, taking great care when snorkelling, not just for their safety but for yours: contact with reefs can cause dangerous abrasions.

EXO Travel recommends certified or accredited diving centres, whenever they are available, especially by 'Green Fins'.



Marine turtles live in the water but breed near the shore and lay eggs on the beach. Marine turtles are extraordinarily vulnerable and require careful protection.

- Many turtle species are under threat of extinction due to the scarcity of beaches quiet enough to lay eggs that can develop and hatch properly
- Turtle species eggs have different incubation times (± 2 months), and it is estimated that, under natural circumstances, only 1 hatchling out of 1,000 will grow to become an adult

During hatching season, EXO Travel doesn't recommend activities involving turtles release during day time, it must be done at night by an approved conservation organization.

TIGERS

There are less than 4,000 tigers remaining in the wild; they are a critically endangered species. The rare chance to view tigers in the wild has unfortunately led to the creation of numerous attractions in Asia where tigers are held in captivity, filling the demand from tourism.

However, tiger attractions in Asia are often harmful for the tiger's health and for the survival of wild tiger populations (as demand encourages owners to acquire more from the wild, as they rarely reproduce in captivity).

Moreover these tiger 'farms' often drug tigers to remain docile so visitors can touch or be photographed with them. A few are sometimes also involved in illegal trafficking to sell their parts, skins, etc. for medicinal purposes.

Consequently, EXO Travel is extremely cautious and does not promote any visits to tiger specific zoos or farms, unless they are directly managed by specialised conservationists.



OUR GUIDELINES

AT EXO Travel, 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 product 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 ANIMAL FREEDOMS

- FREEDOM FROM HUNGER AND THIRST
- FREEDOM FROM DISCOMFORT
- FREEDOM FROM PAIN INJURY OR DISEASE
- FREEDOM TO EXPRESS NORMAL BEHAVIOUR
- FREEDOM FROM FEAR AND DISTRESS

COMPLIANCE

- OPERATIONS ARE LED IN ACCORDANCE WITH NATIONAL LAWS
- VALID LICENSE TO OPERATE IS ISSUED BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

KNOW THAT WILDLIFE TRADE (ALIVE OR DEAD) IS ILLEGAL



FOLLOW GOOD PRACTICES

- MAKE SURE THAT GUIDES, MAHOUTS AND NATIONAL PARK RANGERS ARE TRAINED TO GUARANTEE THE SAFETY OF THEMSELVES AND THEIR CLIENTS
- MAKE SURE THAT TOURISTS 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 LOCAL STAFF ARE PAID APPROPRIATE LIVING WAGES, HOUSED IN DECENT CONDITIONS AND ARE NOT WORKING EXCESSIVELY LONG HOURS
- MAKE SURE THAT ALL WASTE IS KEPT UNTIL THROWN INTO APPROPRIATE BINS
- MAKE SURE TO AVOID OFFERING MOTORISED ACTIVITIES (I.E. QUAD-RIDING, 4WR TOURS, JET SKIS) IN MARINE & RIVERSIDE AREA
- MAKE SURE TO AVOID PROMOTING THE USE OF MOTORISED BOATS DISTURBING BEHAVIOUR OF BIRDS, DOLPHINS, WHALES AND TURTLES

CARE FOR ANIMALS IN CAPTIVITY

- ANIMALS ARE NOT HELD UNDER CRUEL CIRCUMSTANCES
- ANIMALS ARE NOT 'HUMANISED'
- 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 ON REGULAR BASIS
- ANIMALS HAVE A CONSTANT ACCESS TO SUFFICIENT AND CLEAN DRINKING WATER
- ANIMALS ARE REGULARLY CHECKED BY SPECIALISED VETERINARIANS

SAFEGUARD ANIMALS IN THE WILD

- ANIMALS IN THE WILD SHOULD REMAIN WILD
- ANIMAS ARE NOT LURED AND HABITUATED WITH FOOD,
- ANIMALS ARE NOT CHASED AFTER
- ANIMALS ARE NOT TOUCHED
- ANIMALS ARE NOT HUNTED AND ARE NOT SCARED WITH LOUD NOISES OR BRIGHT LIGHTS

ELEPHANTS

- MAKE SURE NOT TO OFFER ELEPHANT RELATED ACTIVITIES THAT ARE NOT APPROVED BY OUR SUSTAINABILITY TEAM
- MAKE SURE TO ASK YOUR SUSTAINABILITY COORDINATOR IF THE CAMP YOU WANT TO OFFER HAS BEEN INSPECTED
- MAKE SURE TO BRING OUR ELEPHANT ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES ON INSPECTIONS
- MAKE SURE TO RESPECT EXO TRAVEL POLICY & POSITION ON ELEPHANTS & TOURISM

PRIMATES

- MAKE SURE PRIMATES ARE NOT VIEWED BY TOURISTS FOR A PROLONGED PERIOD OF TIME. THERE IS A TIME OF COMING AND GOING
- MAKE IT LONG ENOUGH TO HAVE A MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE BUT SHORT ENOUGH NOT TO DISTURB ANIMALS
- MAKE SURE PRIMATES ARE VIEWED WITH GROUPS OF LESS THAN 10 PERSON
- MAKE SURE THAT FEEDING OF PRIMATES BY TOURIST IS NOT ALLOWED.
- PRIMATES AND HUMANS SHOULD NOT TOUCH EACH OTHER AND PREFERABLY KEEP A WELL-DEFINED DISTANCE

DIVING & SNORKELLING

- MAKE SURE SUPPLIER OPERATES WITH A VALID LICENSE
- MAKE SURE TO AVOID OVERCROWDED SITES AND GO ELSEWHERE IF THERE ARE TOO MANY TOURISTS IN ONE SITE
- MAKE SURE TO LOWER EXPECTATIONS: MARINE ANIMALS MAY SWIM AWAY AT WILL
- MAKE SURE SUPPLIER PROVIDES SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS FIRST. ALL TOURISTS MUST BE INFORMED
- MAKE SURE SUPPLIER TELLS TRAVELLERS NOT TO TOUCH ANYTHING WITH HANDS, FEET OR FINS,
- MAKE SURE SUPPLIER DOES NOT SPEED UP WHEN APPROACHING MARINE ANIMALS
- MAKE SURE THAT SUPPLIER KEEPS ENGINES IN NEUTRAL POSITION OR ABOVE SEA LEVEL, WHEN MARINE ANIMALS APPROACH THE BOAT CLOSELY.
- MAKE SURE THAT SUPPLIER APPROACHES MARINE ANIMALS FROM THE SIDE, NEVER FROM THE FRONT OR THE BACK
- IT IS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO FORCE BOW-RIDING - DOLPHINS SHOULD CHOOSE TO SURF THE BOW
- THERE IS A TIME OF COMING AND GOING, LEAVE AFTER 30 MINUTES ON THE SI

FISHING

- FISHING FOR A PURPOSE - IT IS ONLY JUSTIFIED FOR FEEDING OR SUPPORTING THE LIVELIHOOD OF FISHERMEN
- MAKE SURE SUPPLIERS DON'T OFFER TO INJURE AND RELEASE FISHES FOR THE SOLE PURPOSE OF ENTERTAINMENT
- MAKE SURE TO PROMOTE EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES WITH INFORMATION ON SUSTAINABLE FISHING AND/OR LESSONS ON HOW TO COOK A WHOLE FISH LIMITING FOOD WASTE ETC
- MAKE SURE TO AVOID FISHING ACTIVITIES IN THE WILD WHERE IT IS POSSIBLE TO CATCH ENDANGERED SPECIES
- PREFER FISHING FARMS/CLOSED AREAS ACCOMPANIED BY LOCAL FARMERS OR CONSERVATION ORGANISATIONS
- MAKE SURE THAT FISHING DOES NOT INVOLVE VULNERABLE OR ENDANGERED SPECIES (IUCN RED LIST), ON THE LIST OF PROTECTED SPECIES UNDER COUNTRY LEGISLATION OR SUBJECT TO CATCHING QUOTAS



TURTLES

MAKE SURE TO WORK ONLY WITH RESPONSIBLE ORGANISATIONS FOR VIEWING TURTLES HATCHLINGS

MAKE SURE TURTLES ARE VIEWED ONLY AT NIGHT BY TOURISTS IN SMALL GROUPS

MAKE SURE THAT SUPPLIERS DO NOT 'OPEN UP' NESTS OR SHINE A RED LIGHT WHEN VIEWING TURTLES HATCHLING ON THE BEACH

MAKE SURE THAT SUPPLIERS DO NOT DISTURB TURTLES ON THEIR WAY TO THE SEA OR RELEASE THEM DURING THE DAY

ANIMAL CAFES

THE MAIN PURPOSE OF ANIMAL CAFES IS ENTERTAINMENT OR PET SELLING, THUS IT GOES AGAINST OUR POLICY

IN THE CASE OF NOCTURNAL ANIMALS LIKE OWLS OR HEDGEHOGS, THEY HAVE BEEN BRED TO HAVE A BEHAVIOUR AGAINST THEIR NATURE BY KEEPING THEM AWAKE DURING THE DAY

BY TOUCHING THEM THERE IS A RISK OF TRANSMITTING DISEASE





INSTRUCTIONS FOR OUR GUIDES

Our tour guides are always accompanied by specialist guides/rangers when leading groups in national park boundaries or conservation areas. They must help to convey guidelines that tourists should follow, enabling them to respect the natural wonders of our destinations.

We also organise regular training for our tour guides, reminding them about our clearly defined guidelines and policies. Our main recommendations are as follows.

GENERAL ADVICE

- DO NOT TOUCH OR FEED ANIMALS
- DO NOT TOUCH PLANTS, TREES OR CORALS
- DO NOT SCARE WILDLIFE
- DO NOT HUNT WILDLIFE OR SUPPORT HUNTING ACTIVITIES
- DO NOT LITTER, LEAVE ONLY FOOTPRINTS

IN MARINE & RIVER AREAS

- DO NOT ENCOURAGE TRAVELLERS TO VEER OFF FROM DESIGNATED DIVING AREAS
- DO ENCOURAGE TRAVELLERS TO RESPECT THE INSTRUCTOR'S RECOMMENDATIONS
- DO INFORM CLIENTS ABOUT SAFETY
- DO TELL TRAVELLERS NOT TO TOUCH OR COLLECT ANYTHING

RAINFORESTS & MOUNTAINS

- DO NOT WANDER OFF RECOMMENDED TREKKING ROUTES
- DO NOT OFFER FOR TRAVELLERS TO TAKE PART IN WILDLIFE-UNFRIENDLY ACTIVITIES (QUAD-BIKING, MOTOCROSS, SETTING FIRES, ETC.)

PRIMATES

- DO NOT APPROACH OR TOUCH PRIMATES, ESPECIALLY BABIES
- DO KEEP YOUR DISTANCE AT ALL TIMES. A COUGH OR A SNEEZE IS ENOUGH TO TRANSMIT DISEASES
- DO NOT FEED OR LEAVE BEHIND FOOD. ANYTHING YOU HOLD IN YOUR HANDS OR GRAB FROM YOUR BAG CAN BE INTERPRETED AS FOOD
- DO KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR PERSONAL BELONGINGS AND GUESTS ONES
- DO NOT CHASE AWAY PRIMATES
- DO NOT SCARE THEM BY UNEXPECTED MOVEMENTS, LOUD NOISES AND BRIGHT LIGHTS (OR FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY)
- DO NOT STARE OR SMILE AT PRIMATES.
- DO RESPECT ANIMAL'S NATURAL BEHAVIOURAL PATTERNS
- DO NOT SUPPORT ACTIVITIES THAT MAY HUMANISE PRIMATES



ELEPHANTS

IN THE WILD

- DO KEEP DISTANCE AT ALL TIMES!
- DO NOT SUPPORT WILD ELEPHANT ENCOUNTER ACTIVITIES SUCH AS FEEDING AND TOUCHING
- DON'T SCREAM IF THE ELEPHANT COMES CLOSE TO YOUR CAR OR ELSE, DON'T OVER-REACT, MOVE AWAY IF YOU CAN OR JUST KEEP QUIET AND WAIT
- DO NOT VEER OFF THE RECOMMENDED PATHS/ROADS
- DO NOT MAKE LOUD NOISES THAT CAN SCARE THEM
- DO NOT DISTURB THE WILD ELEPHANTS FROM THEIR DAILY ROUTINES
- DO NOT CHASE WILD ELEPHANTS, NOR SUPPORT THE CHASING OF THE MOTHER FOR BABY ELEPHANT ENCOUNTERS
- DO NOT EAT ELEPHANT MEAT AND DO NOT ENCOURAGE TRAVELLERS TO BUY IVORY
- OR ANY ITEMS MADE OF ELEPHANT PARTS

IN CAPTIVITY

DO REPORT TO EXO MANAGERS IF ONE OF THE FOLLOWING OCCURS:

- ELEPHANTS EARS ARE PULLED OFF
- ELEPHANTS ARE BEING FORCED TO CARRY OUT UNETHICAL ACTIVITIES AND SHOW SIGNS OF STRESS
- ELEPHANTS ARE ENCLOSED IN AREAS IN DIRECT SUNLIGHT OR DON'T HAVE ACCESS TO WATER
- ELEPHANTS ARE BEATEN OR ABUSED



DIVING & SNORKELLING

- DO TELL TRAVELLERS NOT TO FOLLOW MARINE ANIMALS WHEN THEY SWIM AWAY
- DO NOT DIVE ALONE OR LET SOMEONE DIVE ALONE
- DO NOT ENCOURAGE TRAVELLERS TO FEED MARINE ANIMALS OR LEAVE BEHIND ANY FOOD
- DO NOT LET TRAVELLERS TOUCH ANYTHING WITH THEIR HANDS, FEET OR FINS



MARINE TURTLES

- DO TELL TRAVELLERS NOT TO BUY SOUVENIRS MADE OF TURTLE SHELL OR TURTLE MEAT IN RESTAURANTS
- DO NOT LET TRAVELLERS TOUCH OR DISTURB TURTLES WHEN DIVING OR SNORKELLING WITH THEM
- DO NOT 'OPEN' TURTLES NESTS; NESTS ARE COVERED WITH SAND FOR A REASON
- DO NOT MAKE NOISE OR SHINE ANY KIND OF LIGHT WHEN VIEWING TURTLES AT NIGHT

