Tenikwa joins Fair Trade Tourism, Africa’s most responsible tourism portfolio

Tenikwa Wildlife Rehabilitation and Awareness Centre, a non-profit organisation located close to Plettenberg Bay, is the latest business to be certified by Fair Trade Tourism. Tenikwa uses tourism as a platform to raise awareness about threats facing South Africa’s indigenous wild cats, using the funds it generates from tourism for a wildlife rehabilitation programme that caters for marine and terrestrial species.

Tenikwa’s conservation objectives of rehabilitation, awareness and promoting biodiversity are spearheaded by Len and Mandy Freeman who started rehabilitating wild animals around Plettenberg Bay in 2002. Today Tenikwa’s rehabilitation facilities admit over 250 injured or abandoned wild animals annually and wherever possible these animals are released back into the wild. Tenikwa works closely with authorities such as CapeNature, SANParks, the Department of Environmental Affairs and the South African Veterinary Council, and is a member of the Population Reinforcement Working Group for the endangered African Penguin.

Tenikwa’s sustainability programme includes using collected rainwater for drinking and channelling run-off water into dams that support waterfowl and a wetland eco-system. Tenikwa supports local suppliers that are environmentally friendly and ethical, while its community initiatives include supporting a local recycle swop shop. Tenikwa is one of few tourism businesses to publish an annual sustainability report.
Visitors to Tenikwa are educated on non-lethal methods of predator management, environmentally-friendly and techno-savvy farming practices, how to co-exist with wildlife and the illegal wildlife trade. Interest-specific programmes are offered, such as the Private Photographic Tour and EcoKidz Family Challenge. Tenikwa also offers a learning experience for veterinary students wishing to gain expertise in the wildlife rehabilitation field. In the broader community, Tenikwa runs workshops on handling dangerous animals as well as how to deal with injured wildlife out in the field.

Mandy Freeman, director and co-founder of Tenikwa, said Fair Trade Tourism was known as the recognised industry leader in responsible tourism and was the first to develop certification criteria for captive wildlife in tourism. “The process was rigorous and exacting and we had to review some of our animal husbandry protocols to meet the high standards expected of a FTT certified organisation,” she said. “We are proud to receive certification as affirmation of our responsible practices, and are especially proud to be the first wildlife facility to be certified against the new captive wildlife criteria introduced by Fair Trade Tourism in 2016.”

Jane Edge, Managing Director of Fair Trade Tourism, said: “Tenikwa plays an important role in educating tourists about wildlife conservation in an era where many members of the public, for logistical or affordability reasons, are not able to see animals in the wild. Their rehabilitation facilities are world-class and they have done much to ensure the conservation of wildlife around Plettenberg Bay, from penguins, turtles and seals, to owls, raptors and other birds, and various species of antelope and wild cats.”

For more information, please contact:

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About Fair Trade Tourism

Fair Trade Tourism is a not-for-profit company operating Africa’s largest responsible tourism certification programme. Fair Trade Tourism offers certification in South Africa, Mozambique, Madagascar and Zimbabwe and has mutual recognition agreements with certification programmes in Botswana, Namibia, Seychelles, Kenya and Tanzania. There are currently 195 tourism businesses across eight countries in the Fair Trade Tourism portfolio.

Fair Trade Tourism represents global best-practice in responsible tourism and was the first African certification scheme to be recognised by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council. Applicants need to meet more than 230 criteria pertaining to fair wages and working conditions, equitable distribution of benefits, ethical business practice and respect for human rights, culture and environment.

Find out more about Fair Trade Tourism at www.fairtrade.travel

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