



Press Release

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Fair Trade Tourism to Launch Captive Wildlife Guidelines in June

Fair Trade Tourism (FTT) is to release Captive Wildlife Guidelines in June to assist tour operators in their decision-making about which captive wildlife facilities to support and which to avoid. The guidelines will differentiate between different captive wildlife facilities, discuss issues around specific animals in captivity and make recommendations about activities to avoid.

Based on the four pillars of animal welfare, conservation, visitor safety and transparency, the guidelines include a suggested questionnaire that tour operators can use to assess captive facilities. They have been developed as an extension of FTT's certification criteria, which were adapted in 2016 to address issues around the voluntourism and captive wildlife sectors.

Fair Trade Tourism MD Jane Edge said risks to human safety, animal welfare concerns and confusion over conservation benefits had created a critical need for well-considered guidelines. "Issues around captive wildlife are in the global spotlight and many tour operators are confused about what constitutes good, acceptable and bad practice," said Ms Edge. "The private ownership of wildlife in South Africa in particular has led to different permutations of wildlife management which are complex and sometimes opaque."

With hundreds of captive or semi-captive wildlife experiences now offered in southern Africa, the incidence of death and injury was alarming, said Ms Edge. "In 2017, a guide was killed by a captive crocodile in the Western Cape, a 3-year old boy was killed by a captive cheetah in the Free State, an 11-year-old boy was mauled by a captive lion in Limpopo, a woman was mauled by a lion through a fence in Zimbabwe and several people were attacked by captive cheetah in KwaZulu-Natal. The start of the 2018 year has been no better - in February a woman was killed by a captive lion in Dinokeng Game Reserve, while in May a lion-park owner was badly mauled by his own lion and a photographer was killed by a habituated giraffe."

Ms Edge said Fair Trade Tourism had consulted more than 50 South African, regional and international organisations to inform itself about the complex interplay between conservation, education, research, entertainment and animal welfare in the captive wildlife sector. "In order to ensure that our guidelines align with global good practice, we have taken much of our steer from ABTA's globally respected Animal Welfare Guidelines while

adapting these to the specifics of the southern African environment. We believe we are well placed to offer considered guidance to the market-place on some very thorny issues.”

FTT’s Captive Wildlife Guidelines will be made available from 27 June. Organisations who are interested in obtaining a copy or requesting a presentation from Fair Trade Tourism can contact shona@fairtrade.travel.