Royal Mountain Travel – Sustainable Activities and Excursions Policy

Oct 17, 2026 · @Bikal

1. Policy statement

Royal Mountain Travel plans and runs every activity and excursion in Nepal so that it protects nature, respects culture, keeps people safe and benefits local communities. This policy applies across all of Nepal's landscapes, from the high Himalaya and middle hills to the Terai lowlands, rivers, lakes, cities and heritage sites.

It covers all excursions and activities we design, sell or operate, including those delivered by partners. Examples include treks and day hikes, mountaineering, village and homestay visits, heritage and city walks, jungle safaris and wildlife activities, rafting and kayaking, cycling and mountain biking, paragliding, and cultural and spiritual experiences.

It sets out our guiding principles, the best practices we strive for and the non-negotiables that apply to every activity. Where this policy and Nepali law differ, the stricter standard applies.

2. Guiding principles

No excessive negative impact. We offer only activities whose value to guests clearly outweighs their cost to nature, wildlife and people, and we choose the lowest-impact way to deliver each experience.

Wildlife interaction. Wildlife is enjoyed only in its natural habitat, from a respectful distance and on the animal's terms. We never use animals for entertainment.

Skills of guides. Our guides are licensed, trained and confident to keep guests safe, share accurate knowledge of nature and culture, and lead responsible behaviour by example.

Supporting local communities. Every activity should leave real, fair benefits with the communities that host it, through local jobs, local purchasing and respect for local decisions.

Environment and biodiversity. We follow Leave No Trace principles and aim to leave every site cleaner and healthier than we found it.

High mountains and fragile landscapes. The Himalaya, hills, forests, rivers and wetlands of Nepal are fragile and slow to recover. We put safety before summits, protect water sources and leave these landscapes undisturbed.

Culture and heritage. Nepal's temples, monasteries, stupas, UNESCO World Heritage Sites and living traditions are sacred to the people who keep them. We respect the beliefs, customs and heritage of every community we visit, and present them accurately and with dignity.

Health, safety and wellbeing. Every activity is planned so guests, guides, porters and partners return home safely, with clear risk assessment and emergency plans for each activity type.

Child protection and human rights. We protect children from exploitation, treat every worker fairly and with dignity, and promote gender equality and inclusion of marginalised groups.

Climate change and disaster resilience. Nepal is highly exposed to climate change, monsoon floods, landslides, earthquakes and glacial lake hazards. We reduce our carbon footprint, plan for natural hazards and help communities build resilience.

Legal and ethical compliance. We follow Nepali laws, permit systems and the rules of national parks, conservation areas, municipalities and local communities.

Responsible guests. Guests are partners in sustainability. We inform, prepare and encourage them to travel respectfully and to support local people.

3. Best practices

We actively strive to apply these practices in every activity and excursion:

Area	Best practice	Example
Activity design	Screen every new activity for its environmental, social and safety impact, and choose low-impact formats	Replace a jeep transfer with a guided village walk or cycle ride
Spreading benefits	Spread visits across routes, seasons and lesser-known destinations	Offer community-based homestays in places such as Panauti or Tansen alongside Pokhara and Kathmandu

Area	Best practice	Example
Wildlife	Observe wildlife quietly, at a distance, with registered naturalists	Use buffer zone community guides for jungle walks in Chitwan or Bardiya
Waste and plastic	Avoid single-use plastic and carry out all waste	Give guests refillable bottles and use safe-water refill stations on trails
Energy and climate	Choose low-carbon transport and clean-energy partners	Prefer lodges with solar or hydro power, and shared vehicles over private cars
Rivers and lakes	Protect water bodies during water activities	Rafting partners pack out all waste and use toilets well away from riverbanks
Guides	Hire local guides and invest in their skills	Fund wilderness first aid and nature-interpretation training for local guides, including women
Local economy	Buy local and use locally owned services	Serve local seasonal meals and buy crafts directly from cooperatives at fair prices
Community engagement	Consult communities and support projects they choose	Share part of each excursion fee with a community school, health post or forest group
Culture and heritage	Brief guests on customs and respect site rules	Explain modest dress, removing shoes and walking clockwise around stupas before a monastery visit
Mountain safety	Plan gradual ascent and monitor health daily	Include acclimatisation days and daily altitude checks on treks above 3,000 m
Hazards and resilience	Check conditions daily and keep emergency plans ready	Review weather, river levels and road conditions every day during the monsoon

4. Non-negotiables

These minimum standards apply to every activity and excursion. They cannot be waived by staff, partners or guests.

1. All required permits, park and conservation area fees and local taxes are paid, and we work only with registered and licensed operators.
2. Every activity is led by a guide licensed for that activity, with valid first aid training and activity-specific safety training where required.
3. Safety comes before schedules or summits. Required safety equipment is always used, and anyone with serious illness or injury is escorted to care.
4. Every guest holds valid travel insurance, including rescue and evacuation cover for mountain and adventure activities.
5. Guides, porters and field staff are paid fairly and on time, insured and properly equipped, in line with Nepali labour law.
6. No child labour, no exploitation of children, and no orphanage visits or giving money or sweets directly to children.
7. No discrimination, harassment or abuse of guests, staff or community members.
8. No feeding, touching, chasing or baiting of wild animals, and no rides, shows or photo opportunities with captive wildlife.
9. No buying, selling or promoting wildlife products, illegally harvested plants, antiques or religious artefacts.
10. All non-biodegradable waste is carried out; nothing is burned, buried or dumped in rivers or forests.
11. No off-trail driving in protected areas, no collecting plants, rocks or fossils, and no drone flights without required permission.
12. Respect religious and cultural sites: follow entry and photography rules, and never climb on or damage sacred structures.

Breach and termination clause

Breaches are handled fairly and in proportion to their seriousness:

- **Minor or first-time breaches** (for example, a waste or briefing lapse) receive a verbal or written warning, with corrective action and retraining.
- **Repeated breaches** after a written warning lead to suspension from activities, or suspension of the partner contract, until the issue is fixed.

- **Serious breaches** lead to immediate termination of employment or the partner contract, following Nepali labour law and contract terms. These include child exploitation, abuse or harassment, wildlife crime, deliberately endangering safety, unpaid or unfair wages, or operating without permits.
- **Guests** who seriously breach this policy, or endanger people, wildlife or heritage, may be removed from the activity without refund once the guide has warned them.
- **Illegal acts** are reported to the relevant authorities, such as the police, park offices or the Department of Tourism.

All partner and staff contracts include this clause.

5. Acknowledgement and signatures

By signing below, the activity partner confirms that it has read, understood and agrees to follow this policy, including its non-negotiables and the breach and termination clause.

	Activity partner
Company name	
Representative name	
Designation	
Signature	