Updates for Eco-rated Facilities and Tour Operators

Thank you for your efforts in promoting responsible tourism. We at Ecotourism Kenya are constantly striving to keep setting standards and promote best practices in the industry. This is in line with the global agenda to make tourism more sustainable by protecting the natural environment that we operate in. It is also in the same spirit with sustainable development goals and Kenya’s vision for a cleaner environment.

In this regard therefore, some resolutions were passed in our 2019 Annual General Meeting, for the eco-rated facilities and tour operators members. It was resolved that from January 2020, all eco-rated facilities should phase out single use plastics in their operations. Single use plastics form a large part of the accommodations’ waste streams have been found to be detrimental to the environment. In the passing of this resolution, all accommodations will therefore be required to show commitment through an action plan on steps towards phasing out of single use plastics, leading to a complete elimination of their use in your operations within a stipulated time period - ideally 6 months. The single use plastics identified in this resolution include; straws, water bottles, coffee mugs, picnic cutlery and bath amenities containers (e.g. single use shampoo, conditioner bottles etc.).
Going forward, public reporting of your best practices will be mandatory. You are required to continuously record your efforts in promoting sustainability and report to the general public and your staff members. This includes all activities and policies geared towards achieving protection of natural environment, promoting local culture, working with the local communities and benefits to employees. The reporting can be achieved through various avenues such as websites, newsletters, social media etc. All this will form a critical part in the eco-rating process and has henceforth been incorporated into the certification indicators.

The resolution for tour operators was that you should work towards integrating sustainability in their business operations. This includes; protection of the environment, legal compliance with all relevant regulations, codes of conduct and guidelines for both guests and employees, influencing suppliers and consumers towards sustainable options, promoting local culture and support of local communities among others. Tour operators can achieve this through engagement with Travelife and Ecotourism Kenya. Through this engagement, you are required to work your way up the sustainability levels including; engagement level, partner level and finally certification. To support this, Ecotourism Kenya will provide training, mentorship and coaching.