



RIVER • FOREST • GAME • LUXURY

RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

At Sibuya, we aim to provide a personalized African bush experience that is ecologically, socially and financially sustainable.

We also aim to show that “Going Green” doesn’t mean giving up luxurious accommodation and top-quality service. At Sibuya, you can luxuriate, lounge or explore while having an impactful conservation experience and doing your bit for the planet and society.

One of our core beliefs is that there is an enormous difference between tourism operations which are merely situated in wild or natural places, and those which consciously set out to minimize their environmental impact while also helping the local economy and community. We aspire to the latter category and are proud to have taken things one step further by purchasing and restoring vast tracts of valuable commercial farmland back to its natural state. Since 2002, we’ve removed hundreds of kilometres of fences and numerous man-made structures. We’ve also reintroduced hundreds of indigenous animals, which have bred to become thousands. We recently received the first of many confirmations that our efforts are taking root: red-billed ox-peckers returned to the area after a five-decade absence owing to the poisons found in commercial cattle dips.

The past century has seen a dramatic population emigration out of the world’s rural areas and into its cities. According to the UN, the proportion of city-dwellers in the global population rose from 13% in 1900, to 29% in 1950 and to over 50% in 2007. For the first time in history, more humans live in cities than in the countryside.

At Sibuya, we believe we have a responsibility to educate – especially the city-dwelling majority – about the fauna, flora and habitat, and to make a positive contribution to the conservation of biodiversity, wilderness and natural human heritage.

The sustainable nature of our development was something that evolved naturally out of a desire to maintain the peace and beauty of the pristine environment we chose for our tented Camps. Our early decision to be a low- impact tourism business with a small number of beds, relative to the Reserve’s size seemed a logical progression. It will take several more years before former cattle-ranching land has satisfyingly morphed into a Reserve which protects and restores the environment, and which is home to a number of endangered species. These include Bontebok, Oribi and Rhinoceros. A Lion re-introduction project is underway, lending hope to the idea that Lions will roam the area for the first time in more than a century.

By continuing to operate a *small, low-impact and niche operation* that caters to those who want to get back to nature, we hope that those who stay with us will seek out similar accommodation when next choosing a holiday and will perhaps think more seriously about their own day-to-day impact on the environment and society

For those interested in specifics, the following is a non-exhaustive list of the myriad ways we've tried to be a low-impact, sustainable and responsible purveyors of the best Game Reserve Experience in the Eastern Cape:

- 🌿 Livestock, which requires an ample supply of water and produces large quantities of harmful methane, has been removed and indigenous game, which is much better suited to local conditions, has been reintroduced.
- 🌿 Former herdsmen and domestic workers have been retrained as cooks, Camp staff, housekeepers, drivers and porters, thus tripling or quadrupling their earnings, which are often distributed among extended families, usually in the local community.
- 🌿 Whenever practical and possible, employees are recruited from the local community and training is provided at the company's expense. This has led to previously unskilled employees obtaining skipper's licences, passing driving tests, registering for conservation exams and even entering national cooking competitions.
- 🌿 Where possible, goods and services are purchased or sourced locally. This has reduced transport needs and boosted the local business community. Besides food and beverages, this policy extends to such things as furniture, basins, blinds, stationery, uniforms, arts, crafts, web design, carpentry and more.
- 🌿 Local fishermen are paid to provide freshly-caught fish.
- 🌿 Where possible, fruit, vegetables and herbs are grown on site or purchased locally. On-site recycling and composting has been attempted. Future plans include community projects such as organic gardens and worm farms to help the locals produce the vegetables required by Sibuya's chefs.
- 🌿 Lighting needs are restricted to LEDs and low-energy light bulbs connected to 220 and 12-volt solar power system, as well as slow-burning lanterns
- 🌿 Refrigerators and freezers are either gas driven or operated using efficient photovoltaic systems which have minimal power consumption needs. More recently acquired refrigerators feature custom-made insulation. All refrigeration is CFC free in order to ensure we protect the ozone layer.
- 🌿 Most cooking takes place on gas grillers and hobs which help reduce our firewood consumption and benefit air quality. Where possible, invasive species are used for firewood.
- 🌿 Drinking water is bottled onsite from a newly installed hospital-standard Reverse Osmosis plant.
- 🌿 Guests are encouraged, but not obliged, to use our still-water decanters and re-usable water bottles. Millions of litres of oil are used to both make and transport plastic water bottles but, despite our best efforts, only about 10% of plastic water bottles are recycled. The remainder ends up in massive as massive rafts in our oceans or in landfills where it takes literally thousands of years for them to decompose.
- 🌿 All bathroom and kitchen water is sourced from wells and boreholes on the property
- 🌿 Rainwater is used when possible.

- ☀ Shower heads are low flow.
- ☀ Most toilets have been converted to dual flush.
- ☀ The water is Solar heated in our summer months and hot winter days but gas geysers are used during our winter or rainy months as back-up.
- ☀ Changing bath towels on request instead of on a daily basis, keeps the water usage and wastage to a minimum.
- ☀ Biodegradable cleaning agents are used where possible.
- ☀ Recycled paper products are used where possible. The Sibuya stickers affixed to in-house toiletries are biodegradable.
- ☀ All new structures have been erected with the environment in mind and sit on driven timber piles or shallow foundations.
- ☀ The footprint of the buildings, mostly built above the ground, have had almost no effect on plant and animal life.
- ☀ Raised walkways (in Forest Camp) permit the free movement of animals and have resulted in Duiker, Nyala and other animals being frequent Camp visitors.
- ☀ Construction of the Camps in cool forest glades allows for natural ventilation and their situation, close to the river, frequently adds a welcome cooling breeze.
- ☀ Winter warmth is provided by hot water bottles and slow-burning paraffin heaters, and in the lounge areas, by high efficiency slow-burning, CO2-neutral Morso fireplaces.
- ☀ No large trees were removed during construction of the Camps, other than ones which were already dead.
- ☀ As far as possible, timber used in the construction of the tented Camps was sourced on the property either by felling dead trees or by re-using former fence posts and poles.
- ☀ Limited, labour-intensive road maintenance methods are preferred to invasive, mechanical road-grading.
- ☀ Overgrazed and eroded parts of the farm are gradually being rehabilitated and/or re-vegetated.
- ☀ Hundreds of kilometres of wire fences, numerous gates, and thousands of fence poles were removed, along with various water-troughs, dips and other man-made structures, to convert farmland into an eco-friendly Game Reserve.
- ☀ The dipping of animals to control ticks, ceased with the removal of livestock and, gradually, tick-eating birds such as ox-peckers are returning to the area.
- ☀ Sibuya has a program for the continuous removal of exotic species such as prickly pears, lantana and black wattle.
- ☀ We subscribe to strict ethical conservation practices which put the safety of guests and wildlife as a top priority.
- ☀ Sewage is by means of digestive tanks and a herringbone percolation system as per details and plans supplied to us by camps in the World Heritage Site – the Okavango Delta. Regularly tested, this system has been proven to release zero ecoli into the nearby estuary.

Sibuya Game Reserve and Tented Camps

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