



# LEAVE NO TRACE – OUTDOOR ETHICS

for the

## Ukhahlamba Drakensberg Park

### PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE

- Know the regulations and special concerns for the area that you plan to hike in.
- Prepare for extreme weather, hazards and emergencies.
- Plan your trip to avoid times of high use, which will enhance your wilderness experience.
- Visit in small groups. Split larger parties into groups of 4 -6. A maximum of 12 hikers per group are allowed in the wilderness areas.
- Repackage your food to minimize waste.
- Use a map and compass or *GPS* to minimize the use of rock cairns.

### TRAVEL AND CAMP ON DURABLE SURFACES

- Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites, rock, gravel and dry grasses or snow.
- Protect riparian areas by camping at least 120m from rivers or streams.
- Good campsites are found and not made. Sites should not be altered under any circumstances.
- Concentrate your use on existing trails and campsites in popular areas to minimize the impact or the formation of new trails.
- Walk in single file in the middle of the trail, even in wet or muddy conditions where established trails exist.
- Keep your campsite small. Focus on durable surfaces where vegetation is absent if possible.
- In pristine areas where no trails or campsites exist, disperse use to prevent the creation of trails and campsites.
- Avoid places where impact is beginning to show.

### DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY

- Pack it in, pack it out! Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash and spilled foods.
- Bury solid human waste and toilet paper in catholes dug 15 cm deep and at least 100 meters away from water, campsites and trails. Cover and disguise the cathole when finished.
- To wash yourself or dishes, carry water at least 100 meters away from streams or rivers and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter the strained water.

### LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND

- Preserve our cultural heritage. Look at what you found, but do not touch cultural or historical artefact or structures.
- No camping allowed in caves containing bushman paintings or artefacts.
- Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you found them.
- Avoid introduction or transporting alien plants or animal species.
- Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.
- Respect your environment.

### **FIRES IN THE DRAKENSBERG**

- No campfires allowed in the Ukhahlamba Drakensberg Park. Fires can spread quickly and endanger the lives of visitors and can have a devastating impact on the environment.
- Use lightweight stoves for cooking.
- Use candle lanterns or torches for light as open candles pose a fire hazard and leaves wax behind.
- Fire form a part of the natural management strategy and hikers should familiarize themselves with burning programmes prior to planning a hike in the burning season (May to October).

### **RESPECT WILDLIFE**

- Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach them.
- Never feed any animals. Feeding of animals alters their natural behaviour causing these animals to become problematic around humans, leading to their destruction.
- Protect wildlife and your food by storing your rations and trash securely.
- Avoid disturbing wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting and when they have young as this exposes them to predators and other dangers.

### **BE CONSIDERATE TO OTHER VISITORS**

- Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.
- Be courteous. Yield to other hikers on the trail.
- Take breaks and camp away from the trails and other visitors.
- Let nature's sound prevail. Avoid loud voices and noises.

Take only pictures and leave only your footprints!

