

Progress report 2021 relevant to the Leadership Commitment for the `Biodiversity in Good Company' Initiative

Without biological variety, also called biodiversity, human life would be inconceivable. It describes the diversity of species, genetic diversity as well as the diversity of ecosystems on which our society as we know it today is based. In a functioning ecosystem, all components are interdependent and reinforce each other; if one part is missing, this cycle gets confused and changes. Here we speak of the interaction between a habitat and its flora and fauna. From the species diversity we can read how intact a certain habitat or geographical area is, because it serves us as a unit of measurement for biological diversity. Unlike ecosystems and species diversity, genetic diversity is not apparent at first glance, yet it is intrinsic to biodiversity because it is the prerequisite for species to adapt to their habitat and to the changes to which they are constantly subjected. We must recognize that these three main components of biodiversity are essential for our human well-being and strive to protect and preserve them.

Every individual in our society has a certain responsibility in this regard, but not least, companies also have a duty to care for biodiversity and preserve its richness.

Especially in recent years, however, there has been a dramatic loss of our planet's biodiversity, the negative consequences of which are becoming increasingly apparent, such as climate change or the extinction of numerous species. travel-to-nature believes that tourism - if properly implemented - is an important factor in improving the global situation. Not least for this reason, we have decided to become a member of "Biodiversity in Good Company" and thereby commit ourselves to integrating the protection of biodiversity into our sustainability strategy and operational management.

Leadership Commitment

All signatory companies acknowledge and support the three objectives of the International “Convention on Biological Diversity “(CBD):

- conservation of biological diversity
- sustainable use of its components
- fair and equitable sharing of the benefits that arise out of the utilisation of genetic resources

and commit to:

1. Analyse impacts of corporate activities and current operational dependencies with regards to biological diversity.
2. Integrate the protection of biological diversity, the sustainable use of components and the equitable sharing of benefits derived from use (the three objectives of CBD) into sustainability management systems.
3. Appoint a responsible individual within the company to steer all activities in the biodiversity sector and report to the Managing Board.
4. Define realistic and measurable objectives to improve the protection of biological diversity and its sustainable utilization, to be monitored and adjusted every two to three years and identify challenges.
5. Publish activities and achievements related to biological diversity in the company’s annual, environmental or sustainability report.
6. Inform suppliers about the company’s biodiversity objectives and integrate suppliers accordingly and step by step.
7. Explore the potential for cooperation with scientific institutions, non-governmental organizations and/or governmental institutions with the aim of deepening dialogue and continuously improving the corporate biodiversity management system.

To demonstrate ongoing commitment, member companies shall provide the Initiative with a progress report every two years.

Analysis of the impact of the company's activities on biodiversity

As a tour operator, travel-to-nature has a large sphere of influence that includes the company headquarters in Germany as well as numerous countries, such as Costa Rica, Uganda and Ecuador. Not only do many people depend directly and indirectly on tourism, but also the respective natural habitats where our tours take place, where the hotels are located and which our guests consciously travel to in order to discover their biodiversity. Getting to many of our destinations requires air travel, which releases CO² and drives global warming. On a trip, resources are consumed, such as water and food, fuel, etc., which is why, from a strictly theoretical point of view, a trip cannot be completely sustainable (in the sense of the three pillars of sustainability). Nevertheless, we at travel-to-nature are of the opinion that without tourism many environmental protection projects, national parks and animal welfare initiatives would not even exist anymore and biodiversity would be much more endangered than it already is. To emphasize these aspects, we have been involved in the field of animal and environmental protection for many years, have initiated projects and carry out educational work. Because as a nature tour operator, we are significantly dependent on how intact and diverse the biodiversity of a destination is. As a family business, it is also particularly important to us to present this biodiversity to future generations and to bring them closer to it.

Inclusion of biodiversity protection and sustainable use in the environmental management system

travel-to-nature is a CSR-certified company since 2009, whose actions meet the requirements of socially responsible business. We regularly undergo a new audit by a TourCert employee and are recertified. The recertification is based on how travel-to-nature incorporates ecological and social aspects into its business activities, implements the imposed improvement measures and develops itself further. We were able to complete our last sustainability report in the fall of 2017, thus ensuring our recertification until 2020.

Since travel-to-nature is aware of the relevance of biodiversity on our planet and its preservation, we see ourselves in the responsibility to make a positive contribution to the protection of nature with our trips.

Our goal is to offer our guests trips in harmony with nature, with the aim of using as few resources as possible and leaving future generations plenty of room for maneuver. To this end, we support ecologically sustainable projects on every trip and promote awareness of sustainable actions among our employees and guests. When selecting our suppliers and service providers, we also consider their actions with regard to sustainability and biodiversity. Last but not least, we also support regional nature conservation projects around our headquarters.

La Tigra Rainforest Lodge and Reserva Bosque La Tigra in Costa Rica

Massive clearing of (rain)forests, monocultures and land consolidation are just a few examples that fuel the ongoing destruction of our biodiversity. The livelihoods of many animal and plant species are becoming increasingly sparse, even in countries like Costa Rica. When Rainer Stoll, CEO and founder of travel-to-nature, started planting trees on an area of 5.5 hectares in La Tigra, Costa Rica, about 20 years ago, he initially did so with the aim of cutting them down again to finance his children's education. But years later he had to realize that on this former cow pasture, a small rain forest had developed, which offered a new home to many new species of plants as well as frogs and birds. Together with his Costa Rican business partners, he finally decided to preserve the trees and build a sustainable flagship lodge here that would teach guests and the local population about the importance of protecting nature. The lodge's vision: to prove that tourism and species conservation can go hand in hand. Since 2017, every booking with travel-to-nature now includes a tree in the travel price, which is planted on the now almost 40h large area, the "Reserva Bosque La Tigra" and maintained for three years. Our Costa Rica guests also have the opportunity to plant their own native tree, some of which are threatened with extinction. In this way, a biocorridor between two large rainforests could be created, allowing animals such as sloths, ocelots, jaguars or the red-eyed tree frog to colonize new habitats or increase their territories. Since the beginning of the project and as of today, March 22, 2021, 22 new animal species and over 50 new plant species have already been counted. The monitoring is carried out by the "Universidad de Costa Rica" in San José.

In addition to the ecological construction method with wood from our own cultivation and sustainable energy production, we try to let the added value take place in the region as much as possible. All employees working within the project are from the area around La Tigra. We want to create jobs for the locals and at the same time familiarize them with nature. Because a big part of protecting biodiversity is environmental education. The local population also needs to understand why their nature is so valuable and needs to be protected. So we are currently training tour guides to teach guests, as well as their families and neighbors back home, about the enormously important role biodiversity plays. We also support an adjacent school with income from tourism and link this to sustainability education. For all guests who do not travel to Costa Rica, the school children plant the tree. The food used in the small restaurant also comes either from the school's own permaculture garden or from organic farmers in the region. A start up produces honey and sells the honey to our guests. In addition, there are countless small ponds, streams, biotopes, sleeping caves and hiding places for animals on the La Tigra site, which are constantly being expanded so that all creatures feel completely comfortable and safe here.

Establishment of a responsible unit within the company that manages all activities in the area of biodiversity and reports to management

Since travel-to-nature is committed to the protection of nature and species, it is also the responsibility of Rainer Stoll, the owner and managing director, to oversee activities related

to biodiversity. As a passionate and long-standing conservationist and chairman of NABU Nördliches Markgräflerland, he is perfectly suited for this task.

Establish measurable and realistic targets for improved protection of biodiversity and its sustainable use, to be reviewed and adjusted every two to three years

Together with GIZ, the German International Cooperation, we are currently recording the developments on the La Tigra Rainforest site. For this purpose, an independent biologist is hired to determine the status quo of the different animal and plant species, so that a before and after comparison is possible.

To this end, we are working with GIZ to draw up a precise plan of targets and measures that will be reviewed and adjusted on an ongoing basis, at the latest every six months. We plan to double biodiversity in six years.

Publication of all biodiversity activities and achievements in the annual, environmental or sustainability report

All our biodiversity activities are published in this report and on the company website.

Inform and progressively engage suppliers about their biodiversity goals

In order to be able to act credibly as a sustainable tour operator, it is essential that all our suppliers, i.e. hotels, incoming agencies, bus drivers, tour guides, etc., are also committed to the protection of biodiversity and live and act according to these principles. For this reason, we only choose partners who are either also certified with a biodiversity seal, or whom we know personally and know the importance of nature conservation for them. We are in regular exchange with our local partners and give each other suggestions for improvements.

Exploring cooperation with potential partners such as nature conservation organizations, scientific or governmental institutions in order to deepen the expertise and further develop the management system through dialogue

In addition to the La Tigra Rainforest, we have founded another initiative together with GIZ, the Reserva Bosque La Tigra. Here, a rainforest school will soon be established, whose ambassador will be Ranga Yosgeshwar.

In addition, we maintain a meadow orchard and a natterjack toad pond in Heitersheim, in the immediate vicinity of our headquarters, together with the NABU (Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union).

Another project is the Ecocentro Danaus, which is also dedicated to sustainable environmental protection and has been supported by travel-to-nature for over 20 years. With the entrance

fee, which is already included in our trips, a large part of the tree planting project of the center is financed.

In cooperation with the Kibale National Park in Uganda, travel-to-nature is committed to saving the chimpanzees. Through donations and blog articles we try to draw attention to the problem of poaching and the relevance of travel to the protection of these species. Of course, our guests visit the project on many of our trips.