

Human Rights Day: Sustainable Tourism connects, enriches, and educates

Vienna, 10. December 2025

On the occasion of Human Rights Day on 10 December, Naturefriends International emphasizes that human rights are not merely abstract values, but the key basis for a self-determined and dignified life.

This year's motto, "*Human Rights, Our Everyday Essentials*", holds particular significance for the Naturefriends International. Our guiding principles are based on solidarity, justice, and respect for human dignity. Values that translate directly into tourism. Tourism is far more than leisure and recreation; it represents interaction, exchange, and responsibility.

Human rights require climate justice

This responsibility increasingly encompasses the dimension of climate justice. The climate crisis impacts those regions and populations most severely that have contributed least to it, and the tourism industry is called upon to act with sensitivity and foresight. In a globally interconnected world, where people, cultures, and the environment are closely interlinked, respecting the human rights of all stakeholders is more important than ever.

Three reasons why human rights and sustainable tourism are inextricably linked:

1. **Right to an intact ecosystem:** Every person is entitled to a healthy environment with clean air and water. Sustainable tourism makes a valuable contribution to protecting these resources, for example through nature-based activities, support for protected areas, or the use of environmentally friendly technologies. Climate-just tourism goes a step further: it reduces emissions, strengthens local communities, and ensures that the impacts of the climate crisis on the most affected populations in the Global South are mitigated.
2. **Respect and participation:** Travel means meeting on equal footing. This includes fair working conditions in the tourism sector, gender equality, the protection of children's rights, and recognition and participation of indigenous and local communities. Sustainable tourism creates spaces for respectful exchange and social participation.
3. **Economic justice:** Sustainable tourism supports local structures and prevents economic power from being concentrated in the hands of a few international corporations. It provides opportunities for small companies, safeguards local livelihoods, and enhances economic resilience.

Solidarity during the advent season

Through numerous campaigns, workshops, and educational initiatives, the Naturefriends International advocates for responsible and solidaric interaction.

With the annual campaign *“Your Christmas Tree Grows in Africa”*, we also send a message of global solidarity: instead of a traditional Christmas tree in our living room, a tree grows in Africa, symbolizing climate justice and global responsibility.

Human rights are fundamental

Ignoring human rights undermines tourism’s positive contributions and can perpetuate injustice. Therefore, it is essential to understand human rights as a unifying foundation for everyone, regardless of origin, gender, religion, or social status.

#humanrightsday

#InternationalHumanRightsDay

#YourChristmasTreeGrowsinAfrica

#NaturefriendsClimateFund

Further Information

NFI RESPECT Sustainable Tourism: www.nf-int.org/en/themen/sustainable-tourism

Human Rights Day: www.un.org/en/observances/human-rights-day

Naturefriends International Christmas Campaign: www.nf-int.org/en/themen/aktivitaeten/your-christmas-tree-grows-africa-together-climate-justice

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With funding from

 Austrian
Development
Cooperation