

Speleology (Caving)

As part of our commitment to advancing sustainable tourism, we encourage our tourism partners to improve their sustainability performance by providing them with the guidance below.

- ✓ Ensure applicable legal **permits & permission** to access the activity area are in place
- ✓ Ensure **insurance** is in place for participants and team
- ✓ Identify **health & safety** risks (including cave air quality), implement management systems, and provide appropriate safety equipment, including head torches / similar (not open flames)
- ✓ Ensure there are enough team members available in case of **emergency**
- ✓ Monitor activity area **conditions** (including weather) in advance & during the activity
- ✓ Be familiar with activity area, including sensitive cave features, and ensure that **navigation and communication** tools are in good working order
- ✓ Maximise local **economic benefits** through employment and purchasing
- ✓ Avoid single use & disposable items, pack out what you take in, pick up any **rubbish** found along the way
- ✓ Use **eco-friendly products**, e.g., cleaning products
- ✓ Be **waterwise** and take pro-active measures to use water sparingly
- ✓ Minimise **energy** used in the activity as part of a climate action strategy
- ✓ Consider **motion sensor** lighting to minimise light impacts when cave is not visited
- ✓ **Lights** should be lowest wattage, not shine on lampenflora, not be coloured, and not cause negative visual impacts
- ✓ Remove **algae / other biota** created by lighting
- ✓ Provide **information in advance** about your sustainability actions, activity accessibility, what to expect, and what to bring with
- ✓ **Screen participants** ahead of time to make sure that the activity is well suited to their fitness, level of ability, and experience
- ✓ Plan route for **least impact**, e.g., avoid steep ascents / descents, and waterways
- ✓ Select cave with least **sensitive environment** for visits (where multiple caves are available)
- ✓ Use **existing tracks** to access the cave entrance
- ✓ Ensure **access gates** do not impact negatively on wildlife
- ✓ Sensitive cave environments should have **temperature and airflow** controls in place at entrance
- ✓ Indicate pathways and restricted areas; ensure **markings and signage** do not disfigure the cave and may be removed with minimal impact
- ✓ **Anchoring bolts** deemed necessary should be installed in accordance with best practice to minimise impacts
- ✓ Manage **group size** to minimise impacts on people & the planet, and ensure safe guide : participant ratio
- ✓ Obtain written confirmation, e.g., via **indemnity**, that participants are aware of activity risks

Speleology (Caving) (continued...)

- ✓ **Brief participants** before the activity starts about do's and don'ts, safety, what to expect, applicable etiquette / conduct (especially related to protecting sensitive cave features), logistical considerations, hazards to be aware of, group pace and communication, not disturbing / removing flora and fauna, and rubbish collection and disposal
- ✓ Show **respect** for the land, waterways, wildlife, and other activity area users
- ✓ **Proceed slowly** through the cave
- ✓ **Share information** about local nature & culture, as well as social development / conservation projects that participants may want to support
- ✓ Repair and compensate for any **damage** caused to the activity area
- ✓ Participate in conserving activity area **integrity**; notify authorities of concerns and participate in rehabilitation projects

