

RESPONSIBLE TOURISM IN THE MOUNTAIN AREAS OF PAKISTAN



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pakistan



Pakistan Tourism
Development Corporation (PTDC)



Introduction

Surrounded by some of the tallest mountains in the world, Pakistan's northern districts and perhaps one of the most attractive destinations for adventure, culture and ecotourism in the country.

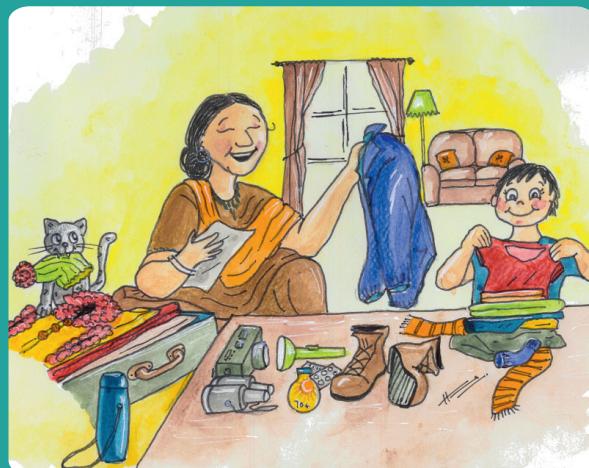
Every year a large number of domestic and foreign tourists visit this region. It cannot be denied that due to large influx of tourists in these areas, the economic conditions of the local residents have improved to an extent but at a same time this increased tourism activity in the mountain areas has also negatively impacted on the unique culture, tradition way of life and on the fragile natural environment of the region.

Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) and Sustainable Tourism Foundation Pakistan have jointly launched an awareness campaign with the core objective of creating awareness among the growing number of tourists about the spirit of Responsible Tourism. This will not only encourage the visitors to minimize their negative impacts on the sensitive culture and the natural environment of this region but at the same time it will ensure that most of the socio-economic benefits of tourism activity reach to the local community of these area.

You can become a Responsible Tourist by taking care of the following 15 points highlighted in this leaflet. It will certainly help us to control the negative impacts of tourism. We expect that you will perform your role by adopting the small measures described in this booklet to promote "Responsible Tourism"

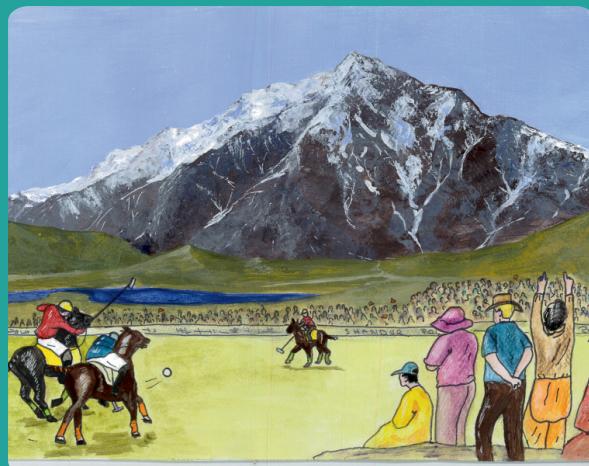
Be a Responsible Tourist

The process of becoming a Responsible Tourist begins before you leave your home. For this reason, we request you to read a good travel guidebook which provides you accurate information about the culture and traditions of the inhabitants of these areas. Through this act, you will attain the real knowledge about the mountain people, their lifestyle and their religious beliefs.



Prepare Yourself before Embarking on the Trip

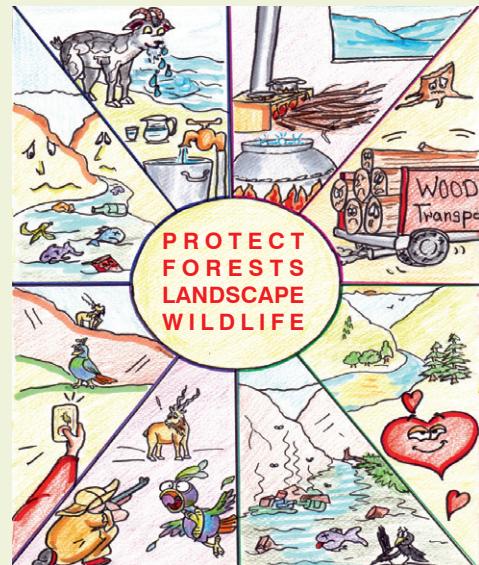
The decision should be made before setting off for the journey that by indulging in the activity of visiting this region, no harm should be induced to the natural environment and the culture of local people. While taking this decision, it should also be kept in mind that the local residents must gain maximum benefits from the expenditures of your touristic activity in these mountain areas.





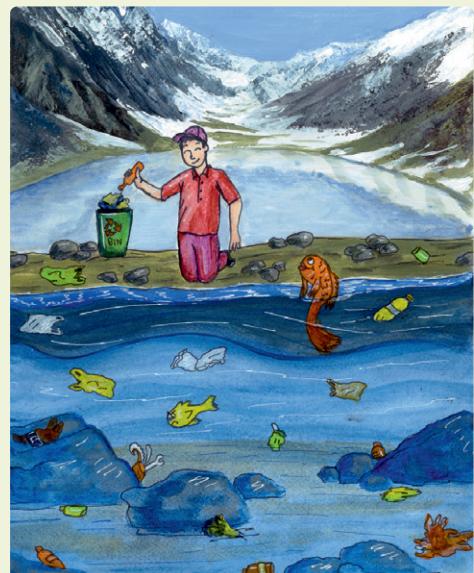
Adopt Eco-friendly Travelling

The natural environment of our mountains is important component of tourism product of this area and it should be our prime responsibility to protect this fragile natural environment from any kind of damage, degradation and pollution. In order to attain this objective, it is advisable to please refrain from leaving behind any kind of trash at tourist spots. To ensure this, we should follow the simple rule - Take nothing but photos and leave nothing but footprints.



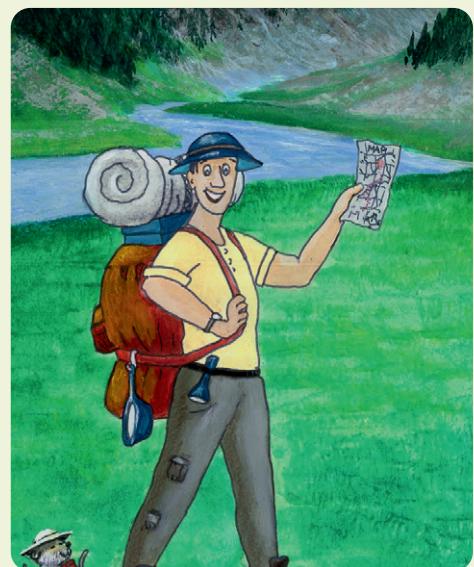
Don't Pollute Watercourses

Rivers and mountain streams are the source of fresh water and enhance the beauty of the valley. Please do not pollute these natural sources of water by throwing litter or by washing vehicles in them. Apart from damaging the natural environment, this practice of polluting the water courses will be hazardous for the health of local people because they utilize the same water for their routine necessities.



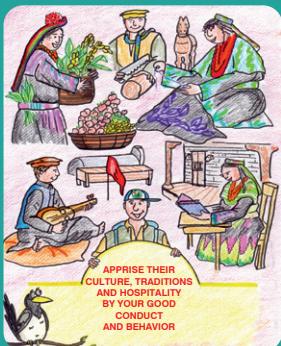
Protect Forests and other Natural Resources

Rapid growth of tourism in mountain areas is also having adverse effects on the precious forests of these areas. Fire wood is being used to cook food, provide the facility of hot water in hotels rooms and to keep the rooms warm in winters. Wood from forest is also utilized for the construction of houses and commercial buildings such as shops and hotels. This all jeopardizes the survival of wildlife and also adversely affects the climate of this area. To minimize the use of wood, we request you to utilize warm water in hotels with care and consideration. Do not demand bonfires in hotels and camping sites. Wear proper warm cloths to keep your body warm during cool nights. Encourage hotels to use LPG gas or solar for water heating and cooking.



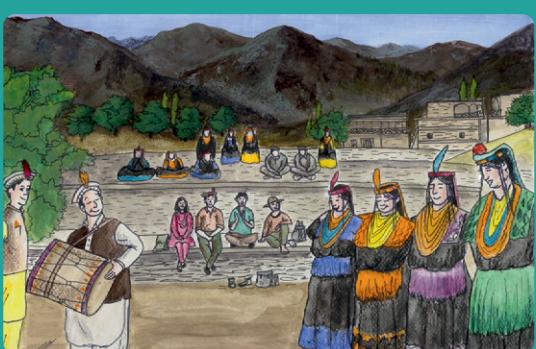
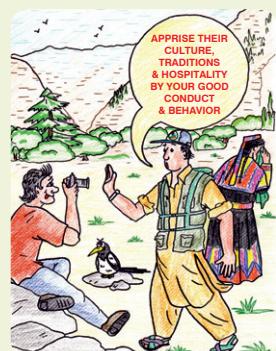
Respect Local Cultural Norms

Remember that your tourism activity provides an opportunity for the confluence of two different cultures. When you meet the local residents, take advantage to converse about the good attributes of their culture and traditions and to apprise the residents about their warm hospitality and the attractiveness of their culture, traditions and the beautiful environment of their region, so that they can also feel proud of their fascinating culture, tradition and the natural beauty of their homeland.



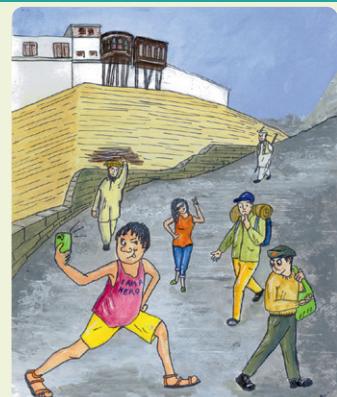
Respect the simple lifestyle, culture and tradition of the local people. Do not create unnecessary disturbance in their routine household life. Do not enter into any house without permission from the owner and do not peek through their doors and windows. If you wish to observe the inside view of a local house, ask your tour guide to take permission in advance.

The local women routinely work in fields, go to fetch water from the river or go to wash clothes along streams. It is degrading and immoral to chase them or try to take their pictures without permission. So please avoid taking such actions



Do not create disturbance in the religious rituals or festivals of local people. Observe the events and rituals from a distance. Take into account the sanctity of religious places, shrines and graveyards. Do not destroy the ancient sculptures, rock carvings, archaeological sites, grave stones etc.

All men and women are advised to wear suitable and appropriate clothes while going out for sightseeing and avoid making fun of the simple lifestyle of the local residents



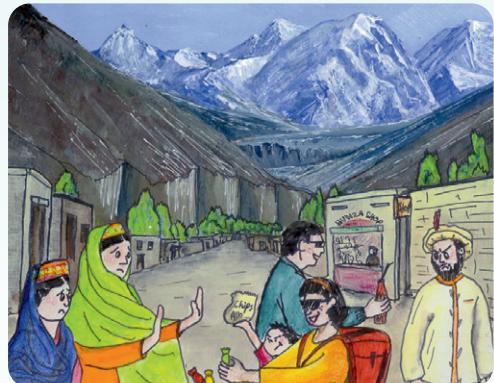
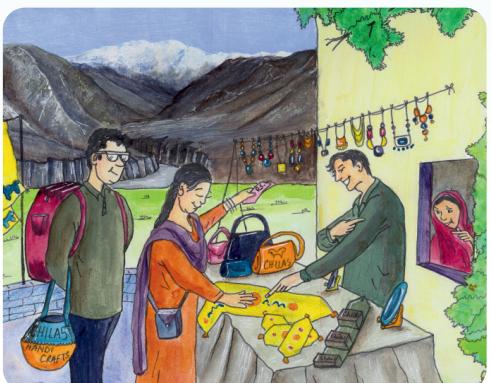
Save Wildlife

Threats are lingering on the beautiful and unique wild animals, birds and herbs of the mountain areas as a consequence of growing interests and various actions of the tourists. For this reason, it is advisable to pay attention for the protection and conservation of wildlife in these areas. Do not purchase the items or medicines made from the skins or other body parts of wild animals. Do not leave waste while venturing on the pastures and meadow. Do not come under the persuasion for local hunters for hunting wild animals



Welfare of Local Community

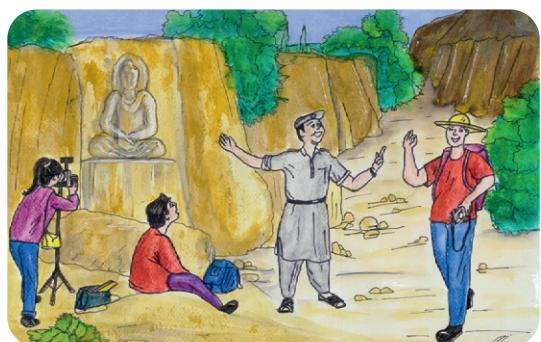
Do not distribute money, candies or other edible items among children. This act instills the habit of begging among them. If you want to assist the poor and unprivileged, then you can donate the money to a local welfare institution or a school.



In order to financially help the local people, you can purchase local hand-made products, jewelries and souvenirs which are sold by the local artisans. Apart from that, you can also assist them staying in the hotels and eating in the restaurants managed by the local residents.

Avail Services of Local Tour Guide

Avail the services of local trained tour guides to have an enjoyable and well informed trip of this area. To get the services of local tour guides you can contact the reception staff of the hotel.



Go back with Pleasant Memories

It is important to understand that the time you have spent in this area has deep-rooted influences on the natural environment as well as on the cultural, traditional and economic life of the local community. If you abide by the above mentioned points, then you can assist the inhabitants of our mountain areas to a great extent. Your support and cooperation ensure promotion of sustainable and responsible tourism in our mountain areas.



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