

A group of diverse children, mostly of Asian descent, are smiling and looking towards the camera. They are gathered closely together. In the foreground, there is a large, semi-transparent orange circle that overlaps the children's faces. The background is a plain, light-colored ground.

Panorama
Destination

Child Protection Policy



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Introduction

i. Company Statement

Panorama Destination strongly condemns sexual exploitation of children in any form. In each of the locations in which we operate, the company actively works to support both local and international law enforcement in their prevention and punishment of such crimes. We encourage all clients, partners and members of staff to remain vigilant and look for the warning signs or potential vulnerabilities, so they can report instances of abuse or suspicious behaviour through the appropriate channels. In line with the Tourism Child Protection Code, Panorama Destination provides dedicated training for company guides, drivers and staff, along with helpful information for clients and travellers. By working together, we can fight the exploitation and abuse of children in Southeast Asia.





Photo by Raj Rana

ii. Child exploitation in tourism: an overview of the problem

The sexual exploitation of children is a global problem. According to a study by the UN, more than 200 million children fall victim to sexual exploitation and violence every year. While tourism is not solely to blame for all of these cases, the industry facilitates a disparity in the wealth, strength and influence of adults and children that it brings together. Tourism's dark underworld casts a wide shadow; according to a 2010 UNICEF report, two million children are dragged into prostitution every year.

For many countries in Southeast Asia, tourism has become a primary source of income; where the visiting currency is King, many will create supply to meet the demand. In many such places, policing is often undermined by corruption and limited in its powers by a lack of legislation. These conditions, when combined together, can create a dangerous environment for children, who are already some of society's most vulnerable in such places.

Children in poverty, children without parents, children living on the street or those already working around tourists are especially vulnerable to sexual exploitation in tourism.

There is no escaping this problem, but it can be resolved if the tourism industry decides to meet it head on. Only by working together and being vigilant can we put a stop to this practice and ensure that tourism has a positive, helpful impact on the places it reaches out to. Panorama Destination has a duty to ensure that all its clients, employees, partners and affiliates contribute to eradicating this abuse and providing children with a more positive picture of tourism.

iii. Looking for the warning signs

According to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, every child below the age of eighteen is entitled to protection from sexual exploitation. In remote places, or destinations where local law enforcement cannot be fully relied upon, the responsibility for safeguarding children's right to protection is incumbent on those in a position to help. Invariably, this means tourists and those working in the tourism industry.

There are certain warning signs that should raise suspicion and initiate reporting protocols. Instances where an adult and a child appear intimate, but do not speak the same language or appear to be related, should be a potential red flag to an observer. Obviously, any indication of sexual behaviour displayed or described by an adult toward a child should be reported immediately. Other tell-tale warning signs that a child is in danger can include the following:

- Acting fearful, intimidated or disorientated
- Appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Dressed inappropriately for their age
- Displays signs of possible physical abuse
- Being offered money or gifts by adults
- Staying out late without parent supervision
- Staying in a hotel room frequently visited by adults

Anyone who sees examples of the above should note and report the WHO, WHAT, and WHERE details of the case immediately.

WHAT – what happened?

WHO – who was involved?

WHERE – where did it happen?

While vigilance and a willingness to act are commendable, it is also important to remember that not all adults in the company of children pose a threat to their wellbeing. In many cases, they could be relatives, family friends, volunteer workers, teachers or simply kind passers-by who want to brighten a child's day. The majority of travellers have children's best interests at heart, and it is on that foundation that caution helps to build a protective environment for children in tourism.





Safeguarding Children



Photo by Yanis H

i. Solution

Panorama Destination strongly condemns all forms of child abuse and exploitation. All those who represent or are affiliated with the company are expected to uphold these values, while also playing an active role in highlighting instances of abuse to help eradicate the problem.

Wherever tourism professionals provide services in areas exposed to sex tourism, the protection of children should be a primary concern, with appropriate actions built into operations. Our goal is to collaborate with clients, partners, suppliers and competitors across the industry, to create a unified front and help ensure the protection of children in Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia and Vietnam.

We adhere to international regulations and follow the guidance of governing bodies, in an effort to achieve these aims to the best of our abilities.



ECPAT

Comprising 118 members in 102 countries, ECPAT International is a global network of civil society organisations, working to end the sexual exploitation of children. It focuses on stopping the online sexual exploitation of children, the trafficking of children for sexual purposes and the sexual exploitation of children in the travel and tourism industry. Headquartered in Bangkok, ECPAT provides technical support to member groups, while also coordinating research and managing international advocacy campaigns.

In 1996, following the first World Congress Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, ECPAT Sweden developed "the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism" (The Code) in partnership with several tour operators.



Tourism Child Protection Code

The Code, also known as the 'Tourism Child Protection Code', is an industry-driven initiative that promotes responsible tourism. Its mission is to provide awareness, tools and support to the tourism industry in order to prevent the sexual exploitation of children. The mission of The Code is to raise awareness among travellers and tourism professionals about the issue of sexual exploitation of children within the industry. It seeks to create a movement in which the tourism sector jointly commits itself to freeing the entire tourism business value chain of the sexual exploitation of children.

The Code: Six Criteria

When a tourism company joins The Code, it commits to taking six essential steps to help protect children, which are called the six criteria of The Code. These are:

1. **Establish a policy** and procedures against sexual exploitation of children
2. **Train employees** in children's rights, the prevention of sexual exploitation and how to report suspected cases
3. **Include a clause in contracts** throughout the value chain, stating a common repudiation and zero tolerance policy against sexual exploitation of children
4. **Provide information to travellers** on children's rights, the prevention of sexual exploitation of children and how to report suspected cases
5. **Support, collaborate and engage** stakeholders in the prevention of sexual exploitation of children
6. **Report** annually on its implementation of The Code

Panorama Destination is committed to making a difference to the lives of children in the destinations where we are based. By following the guidelines of The Code, adhering to the advice of ECPAT and informing clients about how they can help, we believe our operations can play a positive role in this issue. By choosing to work with partners who implement similar policies and reflect our own commitment to the problem, we aim to be a catalyst for widespread change.

YOUR BUSINESS DESERVES ANOTHER STAR



HELP PREVENT
CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION
IN TRAVEL AND TOURISM
JOIN THE CODE



We protect
children from
sex tourism.

ii. Panorama Destination actions (internal)

Product design

Country managers and product design teams will be responsible for ensuring that child protection is an issue that's addressed at the initial inception of products and services. This early stage is an essential moment at which to draw a line in the sand and commit to certain standards for subsequent discussion. When selecting business partners, suppliers and attractions, product managers should raise the issue of child protection with potential collaborators, and prioritise those who have existing protocols in place or at least express an interest in raising their standards and adhering to Panorama Destination policy.

Staff & Guides Training

To ensure synergy across all facets of operations and a standardised approach throughout all destinations, the company will ensure that staff training addresses the issue of child protection in all offices and for all employees.

Examples of topics addressed in the training of Panorama Destination staff include the following:

- Familiarisation with company policy regarding child protection
- Warning signs of sexual exploitation in tourism
- Destinations and activities that pose a potential threat to children
- How and where to report suspected instances of child abuse or exploitation
- How child sex tourists infiltrate and exploit tourism infrastructure
- Role-specific ways in which employees can protect children on a daily basis





Photo by Sebastian Herrmann

Panorama Destination also welcomes collaboration with local law enforcement, children's charities, community groups and NGOs to ensure a concerted and multi-disciplined approach to protecting children in Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia and Vietnam.

Reporting Protocol

Panorama Destination encourages all clients, colleagues, staff and partners to remain vigilant and report any suspected instances of child abuse or exploitation. We ensure that the proper authorities are informed or that hotel management will be held to account in the event of a contracted hotel facilitating or permitting the sexual exploitation of children by tourists.

The internal reporting protocol (for Panorama Destination employees) is as follows:

1. If any member of staff sees or hears something suspicious, they should try to find out the WHO, WHAT & WHERE of the situation, then report this information directly to their manager.
2. Any crimes against children must be reported directly to the authorities, via Panorama Destination management.
3. Based on all available information, the manager will decide on the appropriate course of action.

iii. Panorama Destination actions (with partners)

Contract clauses with suppliers

Panorama Destination abhors any behaviour that causes physical or emotional harm to children, especially sexual abuse or exploitation of minors by tourists. The company refuses to do business with any person, supplier or company that is complicit in such acts or, whether by active participation or wilful ignorance, facilitates these crimes. We include clauses in contracts with suppliers, to ensure that these expectations are made clear, and to underline that continued collaboration is dependent on full adherence to our child protection policy.

Panorama Destination partners are expected to reject exploitation, report instances of abuse and safeguard against criminality through clearly outlined operations and protocols, particularly with regards to children and minors. All partners are made aware that complicity in child exploitation, ineffective safety measures and failure to report instances of abuse are all grounds for the immediate termination of contracts with Panorama Destination.



Photo by Proxyclick Visitor Management

Hotel policy

When drawing up partnership agreements with hotels, Panorama Destination representatives will enquire generally about the hotel’s existing health and safety policies and protocols, including the measures they have in place to protect children from sexual exploitation on their premises or by their guests.

Although it is the hotel’s responsibility to formulate and implement their own policy, Panorama Destination provides support and suggestions for ensuring the safety of children on or near their premises. Example hotel policy/protocols (below) can be provided:

- Any guest attempting to check in with a child should be able to produce documents that establish both the age of the child and their relationship with the adult in question. Acceptable documents include official identification card, passport or birth certificate
- The hotel will not grant access to any rooms or facilities on the premises until the above documents have been provided and checked

- If a guest has already checked in but is later discovered with an underage guest, staff will request documentation (as stated above) for the minor in question
- In the event of an altercation or confrontational behaviour, staff members can defer to their superiors, who will handle the situation appropriately, involving the hotel security and local authorities if necessary
- If a case of child abuse is reported, the General Manager must be informed immediately and the case passed on to the police.
- Any suspicious behaviour or evidence of potential abuse should also be reported to and logged by the general manager
- Hotel staff members should be trained in the correct procedures for spotting and reporting child abuse, and be supported by their management to do so in the event of crimes taking place



Travellers Tips

i. General tips re: children

Panorama Destination encourages clients to be on the lookout for potential threats to children's safety when travelling, and report any instances immediately through the correct channels. There are also a number of actions they can take to ensure their own actions do not have a negative effect on local children, or inadvertently support industries that might exploit them:



Do not give money to children begging -

Children begging or selling keepsakes are a conundrum for many tourists, who feel uncomfortable about the transaction, but are often more guilty about saying no. Although the gesture itself may seem compassionate, buying from children invariably does more harm than good; it perpetuates the cycle of begging and child labour that keeps kids out of school and ultimately condemns them to a life of greater vulnerability, with fewer opportunities to escape.

Photo by Raden Prasetya



Support local organizations – Panorama Destination do not include visits to either schools or orphanages in our itineraries as we believe that they are not tourist attraction

Travellers who truly want to help local children can easily do so with a little bit of research. Every destination is home to organizations that put efforts and funds into educating and caring for children. By making a donation, or even volunteering to visit these foundations, travellers can have a more beneficial interaction and a more meaningful experience.

Photo by Panorama Foundation



Document and report crimes – If travellers see suspicious behaviour or have witnessed a crime involving children during their travels, it is important that they document the details and report it to the authorities. Only by highlighting this issue and holding its perpetrators responsible can we eradicate child exploitation from tourism.

Photo by Roni Darmanto

ii. What to do if you see child abuse or exploitation?

When travellers are abroad, they are often uncertain about what is considered normal or inappropriate behaviour and, in cases of exploitation and criminality, are unsure about how and where to report what they have seen. Panorama Destination provides the following guidelines to help travellers identify possible instances of child abuse/exploitation, and report them effectively.

Which cases should be reported?

- A tourist withdraws with a local child, for instance into a hotel room
- An adult touches a minor intimately on hotel premises, for example near the swimming pool
- A hotel or company is suspected of allowing sexual exploitation of children on their property
- A person who offers a child or young person for sex
- A tourist who is looking for sexual services of children or young people

Where to report?

- To a Panorama Destination guide or representative
- At the local police or hotline
- At a local NGO (such as ECPAT)
- Via the internet:
www.reportchildsextourism.eu

What information needs to be reported?

- *What* (offense committed, act, reason)
- *Who* (identity of the perpetrator and victim, if known)
- *When* (date, time)
- *Where* (country, name of the city, hotel, venue)

When reporting sexual exploitation of children in the context of travel and tourism, it is important to provide as much information as possible about the offender, the victim and the place where the abuse took place. Police require details to make an arrest or warrant further investigation. Something witnesses can do to help is provide photos where possible – a good tip is to take a photo of a suspected perpetrator discreetly, by having a friend or family member pose in the foreground, then zoom beyond them to focus on the person(s) in the background of the photo.



The SPIRIT of **Panorama**

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