

*General Notice No. 1288 of 2022*

**General Standards for  
Adventure Related Ecotourism Activities**

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## 1. Introduction

It is estimated by the Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA), that four out of ten international travellers are including adventure activities into their travel plans. Mauritius has seen a substantial growth of this sector in the last 10 years, with a variety of new activities being proposed to tourists. More persons and businesses are getting involved into these activities and hence the industry needs clear guidance with respect to qualifications and performance levels for operators and staff carrying out the activities.

In these General Standards, the Tourism Authority has decided to focus on Adventure Related Ecotourism Activities (ARETA) since the latter is attracting more and more tourists as well as residents in Mauritius. The Standards are inspired from the Standards of ATTA and customised to reflect the local realities of ARETA in Mauritius.

In this purview, the Tourism Authority has set up a Panel, comprising of professionals and relevant stakeholders in the field with the following objectives:

- i. To elaborate and review guidelines for operators and staff involved in ARETA;
- ii. To examine the applications for ARETA Operators and staff including the evaluation of applications and applicants; and
- iii. To elaborate Guidelines for new ARETA (e.g ziplines, tulawaka, etc).

## 2. Terms and definition

For the purpose of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

- i. "Activity guide" means a guide who carries-out specific activities related to adventure-tourism.
- ii. "Tourist guide" means any person who, for reward, accompanies a tourist in or around Mauritius and who furnishes to him information or comments with regard to any matter of historical, archaeological, botanical, ethnological, cultural, social or other interest (source TA Act 2006).
- iii. "Activity Specific Standards" (ASS) means the standards applicable for specific activities under ARETA.
- iv. "Eco Tourism or Adventure Related Ecotourism Activities" (ARETA) means any sustainable tourism activities or experiences that relate to the natural environment whether for relaxation, discovery, education, sports or adventure.

- v. "Medical Practitioner" means as Registered Medical Practitioner approved by the Tourism Authority.
- vi. "Tour leader" means a person who in the carrying of an ARETA, takes responsibility for people, and is able to lead and supervise an assigned activity (source ISO/TR 21102:2013).
- vii. "Tourist Enterprise Licence" means a licence provided under the Tourism Authority Act (2006).

### **3. Purpose of the Standards**

The Tourism Authority has decided to introduce these General Standards to regulate ARETA, in order to ensure the safety and security of all persons participating in these activities, to ensure the overall quality of the guests' experience, and ultimately deliver and safeguard the sustainability of the adventure travel sector.

### **4. Scope**

4.1 These General Standards shall be:

- a) the industry requirements for the running of all ARETAs in Mauritius;
- b) used for the licensing of ARETA guides and operators; and
- c) be used to evaluate the quality and performance and training standards of the sector.

4.2 These General Standards are in two parts:

- a) The General Standard (GS), which is common to all Adventure Related Ecotourism Activities (ARETA); and
- b) The Activity Specific Standard (ASS) for each activity.

4.3 Every operator shall satisfy the two parts to be eligible for a Tourist Enterprise License.

### **5. Prerequisite requirements (Clearances/Permits/Licenses)**

Every ARETA operator shall:

- a) hold a valid Tourist Enterprise Licence;
- b) submit all applicable and necessary clearances; and
- c) submit all documents listed at Annex D.

### **6. Management and Staff**

6.1 The Director and/or Manager of any Company or Société shall ensure that they, or the persons responsible for the operation of the activities:

- a) have the requisite experience in running such a business or activity;
- b) have the technical competencies and professional know-how to operate such activities;  
and
- c) comply with the guidelines and standards prescribed.

6.2 Self-employed and employed Activity Guides shall demonstrate their professional, physical and technical competencies.

6.3 Every member of Staff shall receive the necessary training so as to be compliant with the relevant Activity Specific Standards as well as the Safety Management System.

6.4 Prospective Activity Guides shall:

- a) undergo and pass a Medical Fitness Evaluation;
- b) undertake and pass a Technical Competency Test as per Competency Sheet; and
- c) undertake and pass Basic Flora and Fauna of Mauritius test (see Annex C).

6.5 Each Operator shall:

- a) have a qualified and competent person who takes full responsibility for the professional operation;
- b) ensure that all operative staff have their certification for:
  - (i) First aid / Wilderness First Aid as per the ASS;
  - (ii) Medical and Physical Fitness as per the ASS;
  - (iii) Flora and Fauna Knowledge; and
  - (iv) Certificates as may be required as per the ASS.
- c) ensure and verify the competence of guides and staff;
- d) define and implement relevant training and re-training plans for staff;
- e) always operate and act in line with best practices relative to the activity;
- f) ensure that neither staff, nor sub-contractor nor clients are under the influence of alcohol, drugs or any other substances that will alter their judgements or ability to carry out their tasks.

#### **6.6 ARETA Guides and Tour Leaders competencies**

ARETA Guides and Tour Leaders either employed by an organisation or self-employed shall possess the following 5 competencies:

- A. Technical Competency in the field of their proposed activities;
- B. First Aid and Wilderness Medicine training as per the minimum requirement of the ASS;
- C. Customer Care, Group Management and Communication;
- D. Information and knowledge; and
- E. Sustainability

### A. Technical Competency

a) The Activity guides **or tour leaders** shall possess the required qualifications and have the technical ability as per the Activity Specific Standards to safely carry out the activities.

b) Where no specific certification exists for such activity, the applicant shall possess a combination of competencies/certifications that matches the nature of the proposed activity. The operation protocol and safety standards shall be proposed, combining existing activity specific standards.

*For example: An applicant wishing to undertake river hikes shall have the combined competencies of Hiking G3 and Swift Water Rescue. The safety protocol should also reflect the combined nature of G3 hiking and Swift Water.*

c) The protocol shall incorporate relevant existing standards.

*For example: Guides undertaking river hiking should possess swift water rescue qualifications as well as the relevant hiking grade qualifications.*

d) The guide or tour leader shall:

- i. possess general technical skills regardless of geography and activity;
- ii. possess orientation and navigation skills;
- iii. be able to manage emergency situations, risks, and hazards.

e) The guide or tour leader shall establish safety protocols and procedures, including, but not limited to:

- i. Emergency response;
- ii. Required certifications;
- iii. Duty to act (administering care to clients);
- iv. Guide-to-client ratio; and
- v. Appropriate operating procedures and risk assessments.

### B. Wilderness Medicine and First Aid

The often-remote nature of adventure travel trips, combined with the presence of various degrees of physical activity, implies that an adventure travel guide will need to respond to some form of first aid or medical emergency at various times throughout his/her career.

a) Adventure guides shall possess a first aid certificate, relevant to the type of activities that he would propose and based on the recognized protocol for the amount of time required to reach definitive care as per the minimum requirements of the ASS.

b) Examples of relevant certifications inter-alia include:

Standard First Aid,	e.g.: applicable for Grade 1
Wilderness First Aid	e.g.: applicable for Grade 2-4
Wilderness First Responder	e.g.: applicable for Grade 2-4
Optional: Wilderness Emergency Medical Technician	

- c) The exact training requirement will vary by activity as specified by the Activity Specific Standards.
- d) First aid, Wilderness medical and rescue trainings should include hands-on CPR and scenario-based training in the outdoors environment in which the adventure guide will operate.
- e) Training should include all steps from the onset of the accident to the delivery to competent medical services.
- f) Trainings take into account the use of Government and private ambulances/services.

**C. Customer Care, Group Management and Communication**

- a) Regardless of the adventure tourism activity being undertaken, the role of the guides or tour leaders includes:
  - i. assisting and taking best possible care of all participants;
  - ii. ensuring the operator’s safety management system is being applied and followed;
  - iii. providing comprehensive professional information, instructions and supervision; ensuring all participants are made aware of the relevant emergency procedures; and training and mentoring colleagues so they may learn to work according to highest standards.
  
- b) More specifically, the Activity guide or Tour Leader shall:
  - i. show interest in the ideas, views and principles of participants and others concerned, in a respectful and tolerant manner;
  - ii. be able to handle complaints and conflicts;
  - iii. establish contacts and maintain relationships with local parties such as drivers, and suppliers and helpers to resolve any problems which may occur;

- 
- iv. be able to deal with a situation in case of illness, accidents, or other emergencies;
  - v. demonstrate his ability to act according to accepted protocols, safety regulations and company regulations;
  - vi. monitor the well-being of the guest and ensure:
    - 1) sufficient hydration and food intake to meet the energy requirement of the activity;
    - 2) body temperature and overall comfort; and
    - 3) mood and spirit.
  - vii. be able to manage the different ability levels of the client;
  - viii. understand the expectations of the participants in respect of the proposed adventure/activity.
  - ix. communicate with clients concerning:
    - i. their expectations of the activity
    - ii. health and safety hazards and the avoidance thereof
    - iii. health and safety measure and procedures
    - iv. general information such as weather forecasts
  - x. question clients to ensure himself of their comfort and satisfaction; and
  - xi. be able to distinguish and understand body language and be perceptive to guests' needs without being told verbally.

#### **D. Information and Knowledge**

- a) Activity guides or Tour Leaders shall have knowledge on Flora, Fauna, Natural History of the proposed areas where the adventure related activities would take place as well as a General Knowledge of the destination.
- b) Information can be delivered in a formal educational setting or in a more informal one, such as during meals and a casual conversation.
- c) Guides or Tour Leaders shall share information in a manner that is easily understandable for guests.
- d) Guides or Tour Leaders shall be familiar with the local culture/s of the regions in which they operate.
- e) When incorporating local people, guides or Tour Leaders shall do so in authentic and respectful ways.
- f) Guides or Tour Leaders shall ensure that guests are informed of, and follow, respectful practices when interacting with local communities.
- g) Information shall be told in an engaging, and inspiring manner and shall be understood by the clients.

- h) The guide or Tour Leader should enquire about the interests of the guests and try to match those interests.

### **E. Sustainability**

A core value of the adventure travel sector is a focus on sustainability, including environmental and social sustainability. Guides or Tour Leaders shall:

- a) operate sustainably by minimising environmental impacts and modelling sustainable practices to clients/guests.
- b) be knowledgeable in the principles and application of **Leave No Trace**, appropriate to the location, including:
  - i. Plan Ahead and Prepare;
  - ii. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces or ground;
  - iii. Dispose of Waste Properly;
  - iv. Leave What You Find;
  - v. Minimize Campfire Impacts;
  - vi. Respect Wildlife and/or Respect farm animals & wildlife; and
  - vii. Be Considerate of Others (Visitors / Hosts)
- c) Respect additional principles as designated by **"Beyond Leave No Trace"** such as:
  - i. Educate yourself and others about the places you visit;
  - ii. Purchase and bring along only the equipment and clothing you need;
  - iii. Take care of the equipment and clothing you have;
  - iv. Make conscientious food, equipment, and clothing consumption choices;
  - v. Minimize waste production; and
  - vi. Reduce energy consumption.
- d) Get involved by conserving and restoring the places you visit.

### **7. Publication, Advertising and Marketing of ARETA**

7.1 The operator shall ensure that all communications give an accurate and precise description of the activities proposed and are in no way misleading or open to misinterpretation.

7.2 The following details, inter-alia, should be specified:

- a) Duration of the activity;
- b) Grade or difficulty as per ASS;
- c) Activity specific details such as:
  - i. Minimum Physical fitness requirements of participants
  - ii. Clothing and equipment requirements of clients.
  - iii. Any other relevant requirements from clients.

- d) Price for each activity, including the services, as well as any other fees or cost, for optional services. (All prices to include VAT);
- e) General conditions:
  - (i) Disclaimer Form
  - (ii) Children and Minors: it is up to the operator to determine the minimum age and to be equipped with the appropriate equipment.
  - (iii) Cancellation Policy

## 8. Safety Management System

8.1 The Operator shall establish and maintain an updated Safety Management System (SMS) including the processes needed and their necessary interactions.

8.2 It is important to check and monitor all measures in the SMS to ensure they are being followed and effective.

8.3 The SMS shall include:

- A. a Risk Assessment and Mitigation Plan;
- B. an Equipment and Maintenance Plan; and
- C. an Emergency Action Plan and Participant Safety.

### A. Risk Assessment and Mitigation Plan

The **Risk Assessment** and a **Mitigation Plan**, for all aspects of the operations that shall:

- a) be specific for each type of activity and site of operation;
- b) ensure the compliance to the ASS, as well as applicable Laws and Regulations.
- c) ensure that service providers and sub-contractors directly involved in the activity, such as caterers, transport services, comply with all the Laws and Regulations;
- d) include audit of all service providers and sub-contractors directly involved in the activity, at least twice per year, to ensure compliance with all relevant Standards, Laws and Regulations;
- e) include client briefing and debriefing;
- f) specify the guide to client ratio for each activity;
- g) define radio or telephone communication coverage and non-coverage zones;
- h) include a hazard minimisation and mitigation plan, that is an elimination and avoidance of safety hazards plan.
- i) take into account weather conditions and their impact on the safety of the activity and
- j) be vetted and signed by a registered Health and Safety Officer.

**B. Equipment Management and Maintenance Plan**

The Management and Maintenance plan:

- a) define and establish maintenance schedules for:
  - i. all equipment used for activities including vehicles; and
  - ii. for all Personal Protective Equipment.
- b) establish timetables (frequency and dates) for inspections and testing; and
- c) determine and indicate the person(s) responsible for the maintenance, their competencies and qualifications.
- d) The management shall keep records of the maintenance schedule.

**C. Emergency Action Plan**

- a) The operator shall define and establish an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) including:
  - i. the list of emergencies that may occur during the activities (from the risk Assessment).
  - ii. A Rescue plan which:
    - defines a protocol (procedure) of how to act and what to do in case of emergency for each activity and site of operation. The protocol shall clearly define the roles of the Tour Leader, activity guides and support staff and other stake holders (e.g. off road driver, ambulance, rescue personnel, etc.)
    - lists the equipment and resources required to deal with such emergencies.
  - iii. A Communications plan for emergency:
    - Communication plan with internal resources during an emergency (Office support staff / colleagues etc.)
    - Communication plan with external resources. (SMF, Police, Rescue Team, Ambulance, Doctor, client family)
- b) Ensure that all staff are trained, aware and able to apply the EAP.

**D. Participant Safety**

The operator shall:

- a) ensure participants are suited for the activity (age / Level of fitness);
- b) ensure participants fully understand the risks pertaining to the activity (see communication with Customers); and
- c) define participant personal equipment needed per activity.

## 9. Communication with Customers

9.1 It is the responsibility of the operator, salesperson and its employees to inform customers correctly and fully about the activity, its highlights, its potential risk(s) and the health and safety procedures involved.

9.2 Prior to the start of the activity, customers shall be fully briefed and instructed as follows:

- a) about the route;
- b) the equipment to be used;
- c) potential safety hazards and measures to reduce risks to a minimum;
- d) emergency procedures; and
- e) weather conditions.

## 10. Operations and Log Book

10.1 In addition to the SMS, each Operator shall:

- a) keep accurate records of all activities and maintain:
  - i. an **Activity Log Book** for each day/activity undertaken with clients including:
    - Full Names, Age and Gender;
    - Nationality;
    - Place of Residence in Mauritius (hotel/apartment/private);
    - Activity and place of the activity; and
    - Guide and staffing for the activity.
  - ii. an Incident / **Accidents' Log Book** to record:
    - any accidents, incidents before and during the operation; and
    - any hazards that could potentially be harmful or dangerous to clients on the day of the operation.
- b) report any accident requiring any kind of rescue effort, treatment or hospitalisation to the nearest police station and the Tourism Authority. The report can be submitted via the online platform [www.tourismauthority.mu](http://www.tourismauthority.mu);
- c) ask each client to complete a disclaimer form acknowledging that he/she has been informed about all details of the activity including potential risks and in which the clients confirm and declare themselves to be physically and mentally fit;
- d) accept minors under 18 years old subject to having an agreement signed by a parent or a legal guardian; and

- e) accept children if accompanied by a parent or an adult and decide upon which age any child is accepted.

#### 10.2 **Sustainability of Operations**

The Operator shall ensure and demonstrate that the '**Leave No Trace**' principles (as per paragraph 6.6 E) are being applied.

### **11. Insurance**

The activity shall be covered by:

- a) a Public Liability Insurance; and
- b) an insurance to cover for emergency rescue, ambulance and medical as may be requested by the Authority.

**ANNEX A****List of Activities**

The activities for Adventure Related Ecotourism Activities (ARETA) shall be defined as follows:

**a) Land-Based Activities**

- i. Ground Level Activities:
  - Hiking Grade 1
  - Hiking Grade 2
  - Hiking Grade 3
  
- ii. High Angle Based Activities
  - Mountaineering Hiking Grade 4
  - Abseiling
  - Canyoning
  - Rock Climbing
  - Bungee Jumping
  - Low / High Rope Challenge Courses including Ziplines, Cableways and Canyon-swings
  
- iii. Vehicle Based Activities
  - Mountain Biking
  - On Road Biking
  - Electric Bikes
  - Segway
  - ATV (All Terrain Vehicles) driving or tours
    1. Off Road tours
    2. Quad-Biking (including thermal, electric or any type of power propelled engines)
    3. Safari Trucks tours

**b) Water-Based Activities**

- i. Sea-Kayaking
- ii. River / Lake Kayaking
- iii. River Hikes (no ropes)

**The list of activities is subject to amendments.**

## **ANNEX B**

### **Medical Fitness Evaluation Questionnaire**

#### **Notes to the potential applicant:**

- (a) You have been selected to participate in the basic physical and technical assessment for your application as an Adventure guide for the specific permit you have applied for.
- (b) You shall pass the basic physical and technical assessment in order to be declared physically fit for the permit for which you have applied.
- (c) As part of the selection process, you shall undergo a medical examination to confirm that you are suitable to perform the inherent duties of the position for which you have applied and to help prevent work-related illness and injury occurring.
- (d) For the purpose of possible future consideration of your application, or in the case of a dispute, the TA and its accredited assessors will retain your medical examination results.
- (e) Your medical examination results may also be entered into the Tourism Authority's computerised medical records system. Use and disclosure of this information will be strictly and confidentially controlled in accordance with the *Applicant Declaration and Informed Consent*, which you will be required to sign before we can proceed with your application.
- (f) The extent of the pre-employment medical examination depends primarily on the nature of the position for which you have applied. Use and disclosure of the information provided on this Medical Fitness Evaluation Form will be strictly and confidentially controlled and the form will remain the property of the Tourism Authority.
- (g) You will be required to undergo a number of tests listed in this Medical Fitness Evaluation Form by a registered Occupational Medical practitioner approved by the Panel.
- (h) The Tourism Authority reserves the right to request applicants to undergo further tests to ascertain the medical fitness of the candidate.

The form below shall be completed by a Registered Occupational Medical Practitioner.

**List of Registered Occupational Medical Practitioners:**

Name	Practice	Tel:

**Medical Fitness Evaluation Form**

**1. General Information**

Name of Candidate	
Address	
Telephone-Home	
Telephone-Mobile	
Email	
Date of Birth	
Gender	
Nationality	
Name and Contact Details of Doctor	

**2. Statement of Present Health**

Please complete the following questions by ticking the relevant box. Be sure to provide all additional details in the space that follows.

**2.1 How would you describe level of present health of the candidate?**

Excellent		Please explain
Good		
Fair		
Poor		

**Questions to be answered by the candidate:****2.2 Do you have any disability?**

Yes		If yes, please specify
No		

**2.3 Do you smoke?**

Yes		If yes, please specify quantity smoked per day:
No		

**2.4 Do you drink alcohol? If Yes, please tick as appropriate?**

<b>(i) How often do you drink alcohol</b>	
Less than once a week	
1 -2 days a week	
3 - 4 days a week	
5 – 6 Days a week	
Every Day	

<b>(ii) On the days you drink, on average how much do you drink?</b>	
1 -2 standard drinks	
3 - 4 standard drinks	
5 - 8 Standard drinks	
9 – 12 Standard Drinks	
More than 12 standard drinks	

**2.5 Do you take non-prescription drugs regularly?**

Yes		If yes, please specify:
No		

**2.6 Do you take prescription drugs regularly?**

Yes		If yes, please specify:
No		

**2.7 Do you use recreational drugs?**

Yes		If yes, please specify:
No		

**2.8 Are you currently under the medical care of a doctor or hospital?**

Yes		If yes, please specify:
No		

**2.9 Are you currently on a waiting list for hospital treatment?**

Yes		If yes, please indicate the nature of the problem:
No		

**2.10 How often have you visited a doctor in the last year?**

	Please explain
--	----------------

**2.11 Are you currently required to wear glasses or contact lenses?**

Yes		If yes, please specify:
No		

**2.12 Do you have problems or had any problems in the past with any of the following:**

	Yes	No
Standing		
Walking		
Lifting		
Bending		
Moving his/her neck or back		
Using his/her hands or elbows		
Working at heights		
Climbing stairs		

**3. Past Medical History**

Please complete the following questions by ticking the relevant box. Be sure to provide all additional details in the space that follows.

**3.1. Have you ever applied for or received compensation for a disease, accident or injury?**

Yes		If yes, please specify:
No		

**3.2. Have you received care on an ongoing basis from a doctor or hospital in the past five years?**

Yes		If yes, please specify:
No		

**3.3. Have you ever been treated or had counselling for alcohol or drug abuse?**

Yes		If yes, please specify:
No		

**3.4. Have you ever had or do you now suffer from any of the following:**

General Health	Yes	No	Please give details of auscultation
Lung/Chest Problems? E.g. asthma, TB, pneumonia, bronchitis			
Spirometry Test			
Heart problems or circulatory disorders?			
Heart Murmur			
History of Heart Attack			
High or Low Blood Pressure Please input BP during test			
Stomach/bowel/liver/gallbladder or pancreatic problems?			
Kidney disorder? E.g Kidney stones/infections or kidney failure?			
Glandular problems Diabetes			
Glandular Problems			
Disorders of the nervous system Fits			
Blackouts			
Recurrent Migraine			
Epilepsy			
Stroke			
Psychiatric or mental health problems? e.g. anxiety, depression, nervous breakdown, anorexia or attendance with a psychiatrist			
History of fatigue syndrome? E.g. post viral fatigue, M.E., burnout etc.			
Eyes problems?			
Ear Problem? – Audition test			

Sexually transmitted or tropical diseases?			
Skin problems? e.g moles, eczema, dermatitis, psoriasis			
Tumours – benign or malignant?			
Has the candidate ever had a surgery? If yes, please give details			
Allergies?			
Any other accidents, illness or injuries			
Neck or back trouble? E.g muscular problems, whiplash, disc prolapse			
Arthritis, joint problems, gout			
Work Related Upper Limb Disorder (WRULD) or Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI), tendonitis?			

#### 4. Noise Questionnaire:

Please answer the following questions, providing details in the event of a “yes” answer.

##### 4.1. Do you have any difficulty hearing?

Yes		If yes, please specify:
No		

##### 4.2. Do you experience buzzing noises (tinnitus) in ears?

Yes		If yes, please specify:
No		

##### 4.3. Do you experience the feeling that people are not speaking clearly?

Yes		If yes, please specify:
No		

##### 4.4. Do you have any difficulty hearing people in a crowded place?

Yes		If yes, please specify:
No		

##### 4.5. Is there any history of deafness in your family?

Yes		If yes, please specify:
No		

**4.6. Have you ever had a head injury or blows to the head/ears?**

Yes		If yes, please specify:
No		

**4.7. Have you ever had an audiogram (hearing test)?**

(Please run an audiogram if required.)

Yes		If yes, please specify:
No		

**Declarations:**

**To be signed by the applicant**

- i. I declare that the information I have given is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and that I have not withheld any material facts.
- ii. I understand that I am responsible for the accuracy of my statements and that if I wilfully suppress any information, I risk the immediate withdrawal of my application or the cancellation of my licence/permit if it has been awarded.
- iii. I consent to the Tourism Authority seeking further information from any examining doctor who has at any time attended me concerning anything which affects my physical or mental health if this is deemed necessary by the Tourism Authority .
- iv. I understand and consent that the relevant details of my personal/medical history may be disclosed to the Tourism Authority Panel members at the discretion of the Tourism Authority .

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**To be signed by the examining Occupational Medical Officer**

I hereby declare that I have dully run all the tests as required above.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Registration Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**ANNEX C**

**Training Course – Flora and Fauna of Mauritius**  
**Components for the training and evaluation on flora and fauna. (Forestry Department)**

- (a) Native Biodiversity during pre-colonisation period and colonisation and its impact of native flora and Fauna.
- Pristine Mauritius.
  - Origin of Mauritian Flora and fauna
  - Isolation, speciation and endemism.
  - Characteristics of Mauritius Ecosystem. Absence of mammals except for bats. Roles of birds and mammals.
  - Gigantism and Dwarfism on islets
- (b) Key terminologies in conservation biology.
- Ecosystem, ecological niche, food chain, food web
  - Prey, predators, parasites, etc.
  - Endemic
  - Native, indigenous
  - Naturalised
  - Extinct
  - Exotic and invasive alien species (IAS)
- (c) Basic Knowledge of common or important plants and animals (both native and exotic) and terminologies in botany.
- Angiosperms (Flowering plants), Gymnosperms (Conifers).
  - Evergreen, Deciduous
  - Monoecious, dioecious
  - Heterophylly
  - Ferns, Orchids, epiphytes, Hydrophyte, Xerophyte, Halophyte
  - Identification of a range of important/charismatic plants and animals
- (d) Impact of invasive alien species (both plants and animals) on native flora and fauna.
- Main IAS in Mauritius and their impact on native biodiversity
- (e) Landmark advances in Conservation in Mauritius
- Nature Reserves, Mountain Reserves,
  - National Parks
  - Recovery of the Mauritius Kestrel, Pink Pigeon, Echo Parakeet
  - Reptile Translocation
  - Key people in Mauritius Conservation (Owadally, Carl Jones, etc)
- (f) Major institutions and NGOs involved conservation in Mauritius
- (g) Laws and Conventions related to biodiversity
- Native terrestrial Biodiversity and National Parks Act, Forest and Reserves Act, etc.
  - CBD, CITES, IUCN, etc

**Evaluation:**

Evaluation of theoretical and practical knowledge of the guides will be carried out by means of viva voce and/or written exam and/or field exercise/practical exam.

**ANNEX D****CHECKLIST**

**Application for a Tourist Enterprise Licence  
Adventure Related Ecotourism Activities (ARETA)**

**1. Tourist Enterprise License for ARETA**

- a) Any person or operator wishing to engage in ARETA shall apply for a Tourist Enterprise License with the Tourism Authority.
- b) Applicants can be Companies, Sociétés, other legal bodies or Individuals.

**2. Documents to be submitted:**

<b>b) Applicant details:</b>		
<b>Company</b>	<b>Société</b>	<b>Individual</b>
Business Registration Card	Business Registration Card	Business Registration Card
Certificate of Incorporation	Acte de Société or Partnership Deed.	National Identity Card
Extract of file from the Registrar of Companies, specifying the shareholders and directors names and number of shares held by each shareholder.	Letter from 'Gerant' specifying the names and nationalities of the Partners/Directors	
National Identity Card of the Shareholders and Directors.	Extract of Board Resolution mentioning the names of the Directors of the Société	
In case investment from non-citizens is involved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director(s): Copy of valid Occupation Permit as Investor/Professional</li> <li>• Shareholder(s): Copy of valid Occupation Permit as Investor/Residence Permit.</li> </ul>	National Identity Cards of the partners/Director	

In case of any sub company (ies), the ultimate shareholders to be specified including their nationality.		
<b>c) Place of activity:</b>		
<b>For activities within a private property/estate:</b>	<b>Adventure Related Eco Tourism Activities, not within a private property:</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Title deed or Industrial Lease with Ministry of Housing and Lands specifying the proposed type of enterprise/activity</li> <li>2. Lease agreement or letter of authorisation between the owner(s) and the applicant (if applicable)</li> <li>3. Location / Site Plan</li> <li>4. Masterplan/layout plan of the Property/Estate indicating all areas for the proposed tourism activities including parking</li> <li>5. Building and Land Use permit (BLUP) or a Letter of No Objection from the respective Local Authority</li> <li>6. Relevant Clearances from respective Ministries/Department such as Ministry of Housing and Lands and Forestry services (if applicable)</li> <li>7. Project write-Up describing the activities, sales &amp; marketing plan, personnel to be employed and their respective roles and the list of person who will act as first aider / wilderness first aid / life saver / paramedics during the activity, etc.</li> <li>8. Safety Management System, including a risk assessment and mitigation plan, safety and security plan, emergency evacuation plan.</li> <li>9. A detailed list of equipment that will be used (if applicable) and the relevant equipment management plan and maintenance plan.</li> <li>10. Clearance from Le Morne Heritage Trust Fund, if the development is situated within Le Morne area.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Project write-Up describing the activities, sales &amp; marketing plan, personnel to be employed and their respective roles and the list of person who will act as first aider / wilderness first aid / life saver / paramedics during the activity, etc.</li> <li>2. Safety Management System, including a risk assessment and mitigation plan, safety and security plan, emergency evacuation plan.</li> <li>3. A detailed list of equipment that will be used (if applicable) and the relevant equipment management plan and maintenance plan.</li> <li>4. Relevant Clearances from respective Ministries/Department such as Ministry of Housing and Lands and Forestry services (if applicable)</li> <li>5. Clearance from Le Morne Heritage Trust Fund, if the development is situated within Le Morne area.</li> </ol>	

**Note: Building and layout**

1. BLUP is required for applicants with a fixed base of operation and with an office.
2. An office shall be provided, for administrative purposes as well as to store the equipment, where applicable with the layout as follows:
  - (a) A reception;
  - (b) A storage area for the equipment (in case same is not available separately)
  - (c) A changing room;
  - (d) Toilet facilities; and
  - (e) Parking facilities.

i. **Qualifications and experience:**

- ii. Qualifications, experience and competencies of applicant.
- iii. Qualifications, experience and competencies experience of Management (if not same as applicant) [Operation Management: Managers/Supervisors/Instructors involved and responsible for the operational activities shall provide supporting documents to demonstrate their professional know-how and capabilities.]
- iv. Qualifications and experience of Guides or Tour Leaders either employed by an organisation or self-employed.
- v. Copy of certificate of first aider/s.

**c) Medical Examination Form**

Please complete 'Annex B' of General Standards for ARETA, for **each person** involved in the operations of the activity (such as guides/tour leaders/instructors/supervisors, etc and submit together with supporting documents or references.

**d) Certificate of Character**

Certificate of Character (less than 3 months) shall be submitted for each tourist guide or tour leader.

**e) Application form**

- i. An application for a Tourist Enterprise Licence shall be submitted at the Tourism Authority.
- ii. 'Form B' of Annex E (Application form for ARETA), shall be completed for each Director/Manager and attached to the application for Tourist Enterprise Licence.
- iii. 'Form C' of Annex E (Application form for ARETA), shall be completed for each Guide or Tour Leader and attached to the application for Tourist Enterprise Licence.

**The Tourism Authority reserves the right to request the applicant to submit any additional document/information.**

## ANNEX E

**Application for a Tourist Enterprise License for Adventure Related Eco-Tourism Activities  
(ARETA)**

**Instructions to applicants**

- i. This form is for organisations or individuals wishing to apply for a Tourist Enterprise Licence (TEL) for ARETA of a commercial nature within the lands or waters of Mauritius.
- ii. Such activities may include guided tours, leisure activities or any adventure tourism activities.
- iii. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** This form is an application form only and does not constitute a licence of any sort. If this application is accepted and all relevant information has been submitted to the satisfaction of the Tourism Authority (TA), a licence will be issued by the Tourism Authority according to the applicable guidelines. An application for a TEL to operate ARETA may be subject to specific conditions as approved by the Tourism Authority.
- iv. Please read the following information very carefully before filing the application:

**1. Licenses:**

Three types of TEL for ARETA may be issued by the Tourism Authority as follows:

**a) For Adventure Based Eco Tourism Organisation**

- i. This license is applicable to corporate bodies (companies or sociétés) which intend to operate any of the listed activities in this field.
- ii. Applications shall be made by a duly authorised person (Director/Manager).
- iii. Applicants shall provide supporting documents that:
  - the Directors/Managers have the proper competencies to manage a business; and
  - The Directors/Managers or an employee of the organisation have the technical competencies and professional know-how to operate the activities they wish to operate.

**b) For Guide/Tour leaders/ instructors employed by an Adventure Based Eco Tourism Organisation**

- i. The application shall be submitted by the employer on behalf of the guide.
- ii. The employer shall ensure that all required documents are duly completed and submitted.

**c) Self-employed or free-lance Guide/Tour leaders/ Instructors for Adventure based Eco Tourism Activities**

- i. This TEL is for an individual wishing to operate as guide for ARETA and who is not employed by an organisation.
- ii. The application and all required supporting materials shall be submitted by the person himself.

**2. Medical Fitness Evaluation Form:**

- a) Please download the Medical Fitness Evaluation form (ANNEX B) from the Tourism Authority website and complete it together with a **Registered Occupational Medical Practitioner** (Doctor). A list of such professionals may be viewed on the Authority's website.
- b) No application for Licenses as mentioned at 1 (b) and (c) above will be considered without the Medical Fitness Evaluation Form.

**3. Qualifications of Applicants:****a) Management:**

Please complete 'Form B' for each person involved in the Management of the company/partnership and submit together with supporting documents or references.

**b) Operation Management:** Managers/Supervisors/Instructors involved and responsible for the operational activities shall provide supporting documents to demonstrate their professional know-how and capabilities.**c) Guides** (Either employed by an organisation or self-employed): Please download and complete 'Form C' for each person.**4. Experience and Competencies of Applicants****a) Technical Competencies Test**

- i. Every applicant submitting an application for Guide will have to undergo a Technical Competencies (Skills) Test.
- ii. Please read the following documents carefully (available on the website of the Tourism Authority [www.tourismauthority.mu](http://www.tourismauthority.mu)):
  - General Requirements for Adventure Guides in Mauritius
  - Activity Specific Standards

**b) General Knowledge Training Course on Flora and Fauna of Mauritius**

- i. Applicants will be evaluated on their knowledge of the local Flora and Fauna and may be required to follow a training course which will be organised by the Forestry Department.
- ii. Please read the following document (available on the website of the Tourism Authority [tourismauthority.mu](http://tourismauthority.mu))
  - Training Course Flora and Fauna of Mauritius (Annex C of the General Standards for ARETA)

**5. Supporting Documents****a) Project write-up:**

- i. Please submit the maximum information outlining all relevant details pertaining to your proposed activities.
- ii. The project write-up shall include the description of the activity in the applicant's format (refer to the General Standards for ARETA and the Activity Specific Standards for requirements).

**b) Sales and Marketing**

A sales and marketing plan shall be submitted with proof of how you envisage to find clients for your activities (for e.g. brochures, website, etc.).

- c) All supporting documents (as applicable) mentioned in 'Annex D' of the Standards for ARETA shall be submitted for the application. The Tourism Authority may request any other supporting document deemed necessary for the processing of the application.

**Application for a Tourist Enterprise License for  
Adventure Related Eco-Tourism Activities (ARETA)**

**Form A**

*Note: One form is to be used per application*

**1. Name of applicant:** .....

**2. Details of activity:**

**a) License applied for:**

(Please tick (✓) as appropriate)

a)	Adventure Based Eco Tourism Organisation	
b)	Guide employed by an Adventure based Eco Tourism Operator	
c)	Self-employed Guide for Adventure based Eco Tourism Activities	

**b) Activities you would like to engage in:**

Please tick (✓) as appropriate

<u>Ground Level Activities</u>	✓	<u>High Angle Based Activity</u>	✓	<u>Vehicle Based Activities</u>	✓
Hiking G1		Abseiling		Mountain Biking	
Hiking G2		Canyoning		Bicycle tours (incl. Ebikes)	
Hiking G3		High Ropes challenge courses including Ziplines, Cableways, Canyon Swings		Off-road vehicle driving, 4x4, jeeps, quad-bikes, Segways.	
		Low Ropes challenge Courses			
River treks (no ropes)		Bungee Jumping		Sea kayaking	
		Rock Climbing		River Kayaking	
		Mountaineering (Hiking Grade 4)		River Tekking	
<b>Any Other Activity</b> (not mentioned above):					
i.					
ii.					
iii.					
iv.					

**Application for a Tourist Enterprise License for  
Adventure Related Eco-Tourism Activities (ARETA)**

**FORM B**

**1. Competencies of Directors/Management Staff (if the applicant is a company or organization):**

<b>Name:</b>		
<b>Title:</b> <small>(Please tick as appropriate)</small>	Managing Director	
	Director	
	General Manager / Manager	
	Operations Manager	
	Other: please specify below:	
<b>Professional Qualifications:</b>		
<b>Operational Experiences:</b>		

**IMPORTANT Note:**

- i. Please complete this form **for each person** and submit supporting documents accordingly.
- ii. All references and certificates shall be traceable and verifiable.
- iii. The applicant shall demonstrate that the responsible persons have the professional know-how for managing a business as well as for carrying out the proposed activities.

**Application for a Tourist Enterprise License for  
Adventure Related Eco-Tourism Activities (ARETA)**

**FORM C**

**1. Competencies of Guides (Self-employed or employed by an organisation)  
involved with clients or managing/ running or supporting the activities**

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Job Title:</b>	
<b>Job description and responsibilities</b>	
<b>Relevant Professional Qualifications</b>	
Technical Competency	
First Aid / Wilderness First Aid	
Customer service / Group Management Skills	
Natural and Cultural history	
Sustainability	
- Leave no Trace	
- Fauna And Flora Course	
- Mauritius history course	
<b>Any other qualification/competency</b>	

**IMPORTANT Note:**

- i. Please complete this form **for each person (guide)** and submit supporting documents accordingly.
- ii. All references and certificates shall be traceable and verifiable.

**Declarations**

I (full name) ....., as the applicant or the duly authorised applicant's representative, certify that, to the best of my knowledge and after making all reasonable enquiries with relevant persons engaged or employed by the applicant, the information provided in this application is true and correct.

I declare that I will inform the Tourism Authority immediately and in writing should the information or declarations made in the application change or no longer be true and correct.

I acknowledge that if any information contained in this application is false or misleading, this application may not be processed by the Tourism Authority.

**FOR A COMPANY OR SOCIETE**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Director or representative**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Position or title

**FOR AN INDIVIDUAL**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of applicant**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **Adventure Related Ecotourism Activities**

### **Activity Specific Standards for Hiking**

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**1. Hiking Trail Classification for Mauritius:**

Mauritius offers a diverse range of hiking trails ranging from the easy to very difficult. One should assume that clients are not experts and rely mainly on the guides and booking agencies for advice. The proposed trail grading system is designed to standardize the classification of the different trip proposed as well as define the technical and physical competencies of the guides.

The trails are classified according to the Technical difficulties as follows:

- a) Incline / Steepness
- b) Exposure to vertical hazards (cliffs / rock falls / Ledges / boulder fields)
- c) Energy Exerted
- d) Exposure to Water ( River / Lake / Ponds)

The grading system proposed takes into account the evolutive physical and technical skills required on the part of the guide and clients.

The grading system takes into account that the client is not an expert in the outdoor pursuits and relies solely on the guide to advise and instruct him/her for smooth progression of the trip.

The grading system takes into account the most difficult section of the track for the grading.

E.g.: Tamarin Falls upper is only 3km long but is graded as a G3 because it has several sections that will require the client to use his/her hands for progression. The use of guide ropes is highly recommended specially if the track is muddy. As there are several ponds and rivers on this hike all guides shall have passed the swim rescue test.

## 2. Grading of Hikes

Grade Of Hike	1	2	3	4
SYMBOL	G1	G2	G3	G4
Distance	Trip shall not exceed 12Km	Trip of less than 15Km	Trip of 15km or more	Trip of 15km or more
Gradient	Less than 30 degrees. No roped guidelines necessary for progression.	Less than 30 degrees. No roped guidelines necessary for progression.	May have arduous climbs and steep sections exceeding 45 degrees but less than 60 degrees. Ropes are used as guidelines.	Has an arduous climb of gradient of more than 60 degrees. Involves rock climbing, and use of mountaineering skills and equipment for progression and safety.
Elevation Gain / Loss	Less than 300m	Less than 600m	More than 600m	-
Quality of path	Generally Flat, hard Surface. Track width of 1m or more for 90% of trip. Well maintained track. No boulder fields or other obstacles.	Generally flat Track width of 50cm or more. Well maintained track. No obstacles.	Distinct single track over several sections. May have fallen debris and boulder fields traverse. Can have exposed ledges or cliffs. Some sections will require use of hands for progression (scrambling).	Varied approach paths including single track and boulder traverses. Includes traversing ridges and long sections of exposed ledges.
Client Experience Required	No prior experience required	Fitness level depending on hike	Fitness level depending on hike No restricting medical conditions.	Fitness level depending on hike. No restricting medical conditions
Time of trip	Less than 3 hours	Between 3-5 hours	More than 5 hours	Variable depending on skills and terrain
Proximity of bodies of water	Less than 50cm.	Less than 50cm. More than 50cm if swim rescue test passed.	Less than 50cm More than 80cm if swim rescue test passed.	Less than 50cm More than 80cm if swim rescue test passed.
River crossing	Only on bridges with no more than 30cm of water	Only on bridges with no more than 30cm of water. No current.	Only on bridges with no more than 30cm of water. No current.	Can traverse rivers higher than 50cm with proven swift water / river traverse training.
Emergency access	Easy access to vehicle. No 4wd or special driving skills required. Time to Rescue of 30min or less	Time to rescue of less than 60min. Possibility of 4wd to ATV access for evacuation.	Time to rescue of more than 60 min due to the access time of rescue services and distance of vehicle access. Rescue might involve access through rough terrain. Might include High angle access and rescue	Time to rescue of more than 60 min due to the access time of rescue services and distance of vehicle access. Rescue might involve access through rough terrain. Requires High angle Access and rescue.

### **3. Activity Specific Standards**

#### **3.1. Activity Description**

- a) The activity of hiking involves walking in a natural environment for pleasure, challenge, experience and/or educational outcomes.
- b) The term hiking (to differentiate with trekking) is appropriately applied to long (more than 4 hours) or short (less than 4 hours) single day walks that can be experienced in different environment in Mauritius.

#### **3.2 Planning and preparation**

The information below is critical in maximising client safety and enjoyment. All planning shall be finalised and the relevant components documented before the activity is undertaken. A suggested planning and preparation framework includes:

##### **a) Preliminary information**

The following are the minimum information requirements for conducting a hiking trip:

- Hike objectives
- Duration, planned start and finish times
- Profile of the client group (Age / Fitness Level / Capability / Experience)
- Access rights and limitations.
- Equipment requirements.
- Legal Requirements.
- Guide to client ratio.

##### **b) Routes / Track plan**

The purpose of the route plan is to assess issues regarding access, environmental impact, risk and emergency procedures and should include as a minimum:

- Primary route on a map and/or GPS track log
- Mapped Emergency access route(s)
- Route characteristics (gradient / obstacles / features).
- Surface type and suitability.
- Track changes with weather (e.g. heavy rains / flooded rivers).

- Shade and exposed areas.
- Toilet Facilities.
- Sensitive areas (endangered plants / animals etc.)
- Vehicle access including 2wd / 4wd access for emergency (as per Safety Management

**c) Safety Management System**

- i. The purpose of the Safety Management System is to identify the route specific, equipment and environmental risks for the safe conduct of the activity. By identifying, analysing and evaluating these risks, appropriate strategies to reduce / manage the risks can be developed and implemented. Hiking guides shall assess the chosen route for potential hazards and adapt the planning of the activity as required. Information with regard to any new hazard shall be made available within the group / organisation and to the relevant land manager, where appropriate.
- ii. The Safety Management System shall include:
  - The risk assessment of the route signed by a registered Health and safety officer.
  - An Emergency Action Plan (EAP)
- iii. The organisation shall have a well-planned and tested Emergency Action Plan. All guides shall be aware of the EAP and be able to apply it. The EAP shall cater for the worst-case scenario and be fully redundant. The plan shall include:
  - Emergency communication plan.
  - Access and egress routes including access times.
  - Emergency contacts.
  - Evacuation plan
  - What safety equipment is carried.
  - Self-rescue plan.
- iv. Guide qualifications and continuous training strategy (as per guide competency sheet).
- v. Incident / accident reporting system.

**d) Sustainability ( Minimum impact plan)**

- i. Knowledge and application of the 7 Leave no Trace Principles
  - Plan Ahead and prepare.
  - Travel and Camp on durable surfaces
  - Dispose of waste properly
  - Leave what you find
  - Minimise campfire impacts
  - Respect Wildlife
  - Consider your hosts and other visitors
- ii. Have a plan to pick up garbage while hiking.

**3.3 Guide core competencies**

- a) Technical Competency & Wilderness Medicine and First Aid as per competency sheet at Section (4).
- b) Customer service and Group Management Skills
- c) Natural and Cultural History interpretation ( Content Delivery)
- d) Sustainability.

#### 4. Competency Evaluation Sheet for Activity Guides: Hiking

Candidate Name :					
Skill	G1	G2	G3	G4	Remarks
<b>TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES for Hiking</b>					
<b>Note: Medical Screening is prerequisite for hiking</b>					
<b>PHYSICAL Stamina TEST</b>					
Ruffier Dickson Index	<6	<4	<3	<3	
Press up test maximum in 2 min	10	20	35	35	
Sit ups test maximum in 2 min	10	20	35	35	
Backpack Aptitude Work (Own backpack with required equipment)	10Kg / 10KM / <3 hrs / D+ / 500	12 KG / 15 Km < 4 hrs D+ 800	14 kg / 20Km / D+ >800 / < 7 hrs	20Kg /	
<b>Competency Test</b>					
<b>Hike Preparation</b>					
Understand the Hike configuration					
Understand the Risk Assessment and mitigation					
Able to list progression equipment (adaptable to weather)					
Able to list emergency Equipment					
Understand how weather affect the hike					
Understand Escape Routes.					
Define client eligibility for the hike					
<b>Map reading / Navigation</b>					
Be able to accurately pinpoint his current position on a map					
Be able to determine ones co-ordinates using a GPS Device					
Be able to explain the route to the client, including escape routes					
<b>Emergency Action Plan Activation</b>					
Show understanding of proposed EAP					
Effectively activate and implement the EAP					
Can design a new EAP for a new route					
<b>Fresh Water swimming and Rescue Capacity (W)</b>	XXX				
Capacity to throw buoyant aid to 10m within 1m (or arms reach) of target.	XXX				
Demonstrate proper water defence and 3 releases in water	XXX				

Swim 25m to reach a buoy, duck dive and retrieve person (or manikin) at a depth of 3m and bring it to the surface. Tow the person/manikin over 25m back to shore. Finish the test by dragging the person/manikin ashore and start a CPR Time to complete <4 min	XXX				
<b>Inclined Plane Progression (grades 3)</b>	XXX				
Demonstrate Knots Knowledge ( Bowline, Fig eight, Clove hitch,Overhand Knot	XXX				
Demonstrate how to secure an inclined plane with a guide rope. Show good judgement on which tree / Anchor point they will use.	XXX				
Demonstrate to secure a tired / unfit client up or down an inclined slope - Belaying from the top.	XXX				
Demonstrate the lowering of an injured conscious person on an inclined surface.	XXX				
<b>Wilderness First Aid Competency</b>					
Basic First Aid Training valid 1 Year	YES	YES			
<b>Wilderness First Aid 40 hrs</b>		YES	YES		
<b>Wilderness First Responder 80 Hrs</b>			YES	YES	
<b>First aid Competency Test</b>					
Primary Survey and Care					
Capable of performing BLS: DRABCD / Primary Care	YES	YES	YES	YES	
Capable of taking and interpreting the vital signs	YES				
Capable of safely moving casualty from danger to safety.	Basic Moves				
Capable of managing Major Bleeding	YES				
Capable of Managing upper limb fractures	YES				
Capable of recognising heat exhaustion and heat stroke	YES				
Capable of recognising dehydration and treat	YES				
Capable of managing lower limb fractures / Femur	YES				
Capable of performing bandages to sprains / Soft Tissue	YES				
Capable of keeping patient record	NO	Y	Y		
Capacity to manage a group during an incident	YES	Y	Y		