Asilia, first Fair Trade Tourism recognised company in Tanzania

Asilia has become the first Tanzanian company to be recognised by Responsible Tourism Tanzania (RTTZ) and Fair Trade Tourism's mutual recognition initiative which sees best practice in local responsible tourism being recognised globally. The eight camps added to the portfolio - Sayari, Oliver's, Little Oliver's, Namiri, Dunia, Kimondo, Olakira, and Ubuntu - are all part of Asilia's East African offering.

Oliver's Camp guest view - Eliza Deacon

"We are immensely proud of this achievement," says Asilia's positive impact coordinator, Clarissa Hughes. "It means that our efforts are not only recognised nationally but also internationally, on a level that is understood across the board."

Fair Trade Tourism is partnering with like-minded African responsible tourism organisations like RTTZ through its mutual recognition agreements in an effort to raise awareness of the critical role sustainable, responsible tourism plays in the continent's unfolding tourism landscape. Through these groundbreaking agreements, the organisation is helping to both benchmark standards in sustainable tourism and position Africa as a major role-player in making tourism a powerful tool for change.

"By working with partners like RTTZ across Africa, Fair Trade Tourism is providing valuable market access to mutually recognised businesses through its network of approved international inbound and outbound tour operators and its Fair Trade Holiday packages," says the organisation's managing director, Nivashnee Naidoo. "These are packages in which at least 50% of bed nights are spent in either Fair Trade Tourism mutually recognised or directly certified businesses," she explains. "We are delighted that Asilia's eight camps can now be added to these itineraries."

Having attained RTTZ's Tree Level, Asilia's eight camps have all been operating for some time and have proved that their working culture and daily operations are fully integrated into a sustainable and responsible management approach. Systems are in place to monitor and redirect the operations and all the employees understand the triple bottom line approach.

Membership of RTTZ is entirely voluntary. Organisations represented on the Board of Trustees includes the Tourism Confederation of Tanzania, Hotel Association of Tanzania, Zanzibar Association of Tourism Investors, Tanzania Association of Tour Operators, Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, Tanzania Tourist Board, Honeyguide Foundation and Round Table Africa.

Oliver's Camp Elephants

Promoting sustainable tourism in Tanzania

Its main mission is to encourage and promote a more sustainable tourism industry in Tanzania. "The partnership with FTT will enhance the work of RTTZ in supporting and encouraging the development of sustainable tourism, and help to strengthen the economic and business foundation of the Tanzanian tourism industry. We see this relationship as key in communicating the successful growth of a fair and equitable industry in Tanzania to a global audience. Asilia has always been a leader in the fields of sustainability and responsible operations, and it is my pleasure to congratulate them on this remarkable achievement," said Damian Bell, director of RTTZ

Fair Trade Tourism board member Judy Kepher-Gona is a stalwart of the East African tourism industry and champion of sustainable tourism in the region. "I believe that sustainability is the new luxury. Asilia is on the right track. All evidence points to a growing recognition of the significance of sustainability in tourism. East Africa cannot be left behind. Through the mutual agreement between RTTZ and FTT, East Africa becomes a global player in the sustainable tourism arena because FTT standards are recognised by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC). I hope many more properties in East Africa will follow Asilia's steps," she says.

Asilia is the first and only African safari company to achieve a five-star rating from the Global Impact Investing Rating System (GIIRS) and is graded at the Platinum level for its impact model.