POLICY ON SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

1. PURPOSE

1.1. This policy articulates Saffron Aid's approach for contributing to social and economic development as part of our efforts toward achieve lasting and equitable conservation outcomes.

1.2. While applicable to all our work, this policy articulates Saffron Aid's commitment to ensure that our Aid and Development Activities, in particular, are based on sound, evidence-based development theory and practice and contribute to socially, environmentally, and economically sustainable and inclusive development through the empowerment of local actors and systems.

1.3. This policy also provides the basis upon which Saffron Aid distinguishes between Aid and Development Activities and 'non-development' activities.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. Saffron Aid recognises, in the words of former WWF International President, Chief Emeka Anyaoku, that "conserving and managing natural resources is essential in the fight against poverty and that conservation of the earth's natural systems will only be successful in the long term if it addresses the development needs and aspirations of local communities".

2.2. Saffron Aid has been active in the development and promotion of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, at the core of which are 17 Sustainable Development Goals ("the SDGs"). The SDGs also recognise that the environmental, economic and social elements of sustainable development are interconnected and mutually dependent. Ending poverty can only be achieved through strategies that build economic growth, address social needs, tackle climate change and protect the environment. The aims of the SDGs are succinctly expressed in **Saffron Aid's global mission to "build a future in which people live in harmony with nature"**.

2.3. Saffron Aid recognises that more than 70% of the world's 1.2 billion people living below the poverty line depend directly on natural resources for their livelihoods[1], and it is these people who are most affected by environmental degradation and climate change. At the same time, poverty, food insecurity and lack of economic resilience can all be drivers of unsustainable natural resource use and ecosystem management. From decades of work

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[1] UNDP-UNEP (2015) *Mainstreaming Environment and Climate for Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development: A Handbook to Strengthen Planning and Budgeting Processes*

around the world, Saffron Aid has learned that lasting success in conservation and natural resource management is only possible when it is sustained by, and benefits, local people.

2.4. Saffron Aid understands that tackling poverty in a meaningful way requires not only working with poor communities at the local level, but also redressing inequitable consumption patterns and influencing national and global policies and processes.

2.5. Saffron Aid recognises that development can reduce poverty only when it is sustainable. That is, development that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"[2]

2.6. Saffron Aid also recognises that development reduces poverty only when it is inclusive. That is, when all groups of people contribute to creating opportunities, share the benefits of development and meaningfully participate in decision-making. Inclusive development is closely related to the respect and promotion of universal human rights and the principles of equality and non-discrimination. Accordingly, this policy should be read in conjunction with Saffron Aid-Australia's *Policy on Human Rights and Working with Marginalised Groups & Vulnerable People.*

2.7. Saffron Aid recognises that there are, at times, trade-offs between conservation objectives and the immediate interests of local stakeholders. Where conservation goals are jeopardised by poverty or, conversely, threaten to further marginalise people suffering from the effects of poverty, Saffron Aid will adopt pro-poor approaches. Such approaches put people at the centre of the analysis and the forefront of any intervention, seeing them as key to the solution rather than as part of the problem.

2.8. Saffron Aid recognises that to effectively contribute to addressing poverty and promoting sustainable and inclusive development within the communities with whom we work, we must maintain a commitment to high standards of development practice and organisational management.

2.9. Saffron Aid is signatory to the Australian Council for International Development's (ACFID) Code of Conduct, which enables high standards of practice and assurance to our stakeholders. Accordingly, Saffron Aid-Australia's Aid and Development Activities will demonstrate our commitment to:

- Promoting the participation of primary stakeholders
- Seeking durable and lasting improvements in the circumstances and capacities of primary stakeholders
- Contributing to system change
- Promoting environmental stewardship and sustainability
- Analysing and understanding the contexts in which we work
- Investing in quality assessment of our work and reflecting on, sharing and applying results and lessons with stakeholders
- Being truthful and ethical in our communications, and
- Being accountable to our stakeholders.

2.10. Saffron Aid recognises the importance of distinguishing between development and "non-development" activities, and does not engage in, fund, or otherwise support any activity

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[2] United Nations, (1987) *Our Common Future - Brundtland Report.* Oxford University Press,

directed towards the promotion of religious or partisan political causes, or the provision of human welfare.

3. POLICY

Community Participation

3.1. To facilitate the participation and empowerment of primary stakeholders, particularly the communities with which we work, Saffron Aid and our partners will:

- Ensure accountability to local people and those directly involved in, and affected by, our Aid and Development Activities, prioritising their needs and rights with specific reference to the needs of vulnerable and marginalised people within communities

- Recognise that communities are not single, monolithic entities and seek to understand the needs and expectations of different stakeholders and groups within communities

- Seek the genuine, informed, consensual participation of local people and their representatives in our Aid and Development Activities, ensuring that we encourage a broad cross-section of affected community members to authentically contribute to the design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of these activities

- Provide program and organisational information in appropriate and accessible forms, and where relevant and appropriate, in local languages

- Ensure locally appropriate processes are in place for primary stakeholders to contribute their ideas, feedback and complaints during all phases of Aid and Development Activities (see 3.7).

Sustainability

3.2. Saffron Aid is committed to the social, economic and environmental sustainability of our Aid and Development Activities and designs and implement programs and projects that will continue to provide benefits to people and the planet well beyond Saffron Aid-Australia's direct involvement.

3.3. Saffron Aid approach to Aid and Development is grounded in a commitment to long-term, sustainable change at community and broader systems levels. Accordingly, we endeavour to work with local systems and structures, to support and strengthen local people, communities and government systems to facilitate local ownership and lasting change. In particular, we:

- Identify opportunities to build on the existing capacity of our local civil society partners (including local Saffron Aid country offices) and the communities with which we work

- Avoid duplicating or supplanting the role of government services or authorities, but rather seek appropriate opportunities to help build state capacity and facilitate positive state-society relations

- Ensure that any advocacy activities in which we engage or support are evidence-based and accurately represent the perspectives and interests of the communities with which we

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work.

3.4. Improved environmental outcomes are central to all of Saffron Aid and Development Activities and we are committed to promoting a culture of mutually beneficial environmental stewardship among our implementing partners and other stakeholders. In particular, Saffron Aid will:

- Assess the environmental impact of all project/program designs and implementation processes, including whether further work is required, and

- Promote Aid and Development Activities and investments that use sound environmental and ecological practices and do not produce adverse environmental impacts.

Context-driven Development Practice and a Culture of Learning

3.5. Saffron Aid recognises that sustainable development, like conservation, is a highly contextual and iterative process. Planning and monitoring and evaluation must be based on thorough analysis of environmental and social contexts, high-quality scientific evidence and community participation. Accordingly, Saffron Aid will:

- Draw on Saffron Aid's global network and relevant partners to ensure that Aid and Development Activities are based on the best available scientific evidence
- Commit resources to monitor, evaluate and draw relevant lessons from all Aid and Development Activities
- Work with local stakeholders to facilitate their active involvement in monitoring, evaluation and learning activities
- Share lessons learned with all relevant stakeholders, as part our commitment to building local capacity and accountability.

Ethical Data Collection and Communications

3.6. Saffron Aid recognises that the ways in which we collect information and communicate about our development work can have implications as serious as its design and implementation. Consistent with our Code of Ethical Conduct, Privacy Policy and the ACFID Code of Conduct and ACFID Fundraising Charter, we will ensure that our data collection and communication processes prioritise accuracy, respect for the communities and people with whom we work, and the protection of their privacy, dignity and other rights. In particular, Saffron Aid will ensure that,

- People involved in, or affected by, our development work are provided the opportunity to actively participate in the identification, collection and articulation of data, case studies, images and other relevant information

- No images or stories will be collected or used without the documented free consent of the people involved

- All images and messages used in our communications demonstrate respect for the people and communities depicted and are authentic to context

- All images will be collected, used and stored in a way that protects the safety, privacy and other rights of the people involved, especially children and those particularly vulnerable to infringements of their rights.

Accountability to our Stakeholders

3.7. Saffron Aid recognises the importance and value of listening and responding to concerns and complaints and providing an accessible and appropriate mechanism for stakeholders to lodge feedback, complaints and concerns. In designing and implementing Aid and Development Activities, Saffron Aid and our partners will,

- Establish **accessible, safe, discreet and confidential** mechanisms for stakeholders to provide feedback and raise concerns or complaints about the organisation, its staff and/or activities. Particular attention will be given to ensure that this mechanism will be conveyed in appropriate forms and through appropriate media which are child-friendly, culturally appropriate and accessible to people with disabilities .

- Promote the existence of this mechanism so that all communities and people involved in, or affected by, our Aid and Development Activities understand that they are entitled to a fair, timely and confidential complaint resolution process that considers the views, and ensures the protection, of all parties

- Ensure that all stakeholders involved in or affected by Saffron Aid Aid and Development Activities are aware that they are also able to directly lodge allegations of breaches of the ACFID Code of Conduct with the ACFID Code of Conduct Committee

- Treat all complaints and concerns with respect, understanding and confidentiality

- Take all complaints and concerns seriously and respond within appropriate timeframes.

3.8. While the specific mechanism for receiving feedback, concerns and complaints will be context-dependent, the process should include the steps outlined in the Saffron Aid *Complaint Handling Process* (Annex 1)

Distinguishing between development and "non-development" activity

3.9. Saffron Aid engages in Aid and Development activity as part of our global mission to "build a world in which humans live in harmony with nature". Aid and Development Activities are those activities explicitly designed to reduce poverty and address issues of global justice through projects, advocacy and other approaches which improve the conditions of communities in sustainable ways, consistent with the principles outlined in this policy and Saffron Aid's *Policy on Human Rights and Working with Marginalised Groups & Vulnerable People.*

3.10. In our reporting and communications with stakeholders, Saffron Aid distinguishes between aid and development activities and other forms of conservation work which do not necessarily meet this definition.

3.11. Funds and other resources raised by or provided to Saffron Aid, or our Partner Organisations, for the purpose of aid and development must only be used for the purposes of aid and development.

3.12. Saffron Aid's *Constitution* commits the organisation to not "engage in, fund or otherwise support any activity that is directed towards evangelism, the promotion of religious or political causes or political parties, or the provision of welfare." This policy should be read in conjunction with Saffron Aid's *Welfare, Evangelism and Partisan Politics Policy (2018*

update).

4. SOURCES OF AUTHORITY

4.1. International

- *Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*

- *United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development*

- *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development*

4.2. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade policy
- *Australian NGO Accreditation Guidance Manual (October 2016)*

4.3. Australian Council for International Development
- *ACFID Code of Conduct (June 2017)*

4.4. Saffron Aid

- *Constitution of Saffron Aid* (November 2007)

- *Conservation and Human Rights Framework* (Conservation Initiative on Human Rights)

- Saffron Aid *Code of Ethical Conduct*

- Saffron Aid *Welfare, Evangelism and Partisan Politics Policy*

- Saffron Aid *Policy on Human Rights & Working with Marginalised Groups & Vulnerable People*

5. SCOPE

5.1. This policy applies to all Saffron Aid board members, staff, volunteers and contractors. 5.2.

This policy applies to all Partner Organisations (including country offices in the Saffron Aid network) and their board members, staff, volunteers and contractors implementing Aid and Development Activities funded by, or through, Saffron Aid.

6. DEFINITIONS

Accessible	Easy to approach, reach, speak with or use. Presented in a form, format, language or media that is readily useable (ACFID Code of Conduct)
Accountability	The processes through which an organisation makes a commitment to respond to and balance the needs of stakeholders in its decision-making processes and activities, and delivers against the commitment (Pathways to Accountability, the GAP

	Framework One World Trust, 2005)
Aid and Development Activities	Activities to reduce poverty and address issues of global justice through projects, advocacy and other approaches which improve the conditions of communities in sustainable ways.
Capacity	'The ability of individuals, organisations, and whole societies to define and solve problems, make informed choices, order their priorities and plan their futures, as well as implement programs and projects to sustain them' ('Nurturing Capacity in Developing Countries: From Consensus to Practice', *Capacity Enhancement Briefs*, No 1. World Bank Institute).
Communities	Locally organised or informal groups or networks (*Safety with Dignity*, Action Aid, 2009).
Dignity	The feeling of having decision-making power, freedom and autonomy over life choices, together with the feeling of self-worth and self-confidence, and feeling that one has the respect of others (*Safety with dignity*, ActionAid 2009, based on *Protection: an ALNAP Guide for Humanitarian Agencies*, Slim and Bonwick 2005).
Evangelism	Any activity or practice associated with promoting, or attempting to convert people to, a particular religion or faith.
Inclusive (also, "inclusive development")	A process through which all groups of people contribute to creating opportunities, share the benefits of development and meaningfully participate in decision-making. This will usually involve facilitating efforts to address the barriers to the full participation of vulnerable or marginalised people.
Other resources	Includes (but is not limited to) funds raised, gifts in kind, property, assets, staff and volunteers of signatory and partner organisations. (ACFID Code of Conduct)
Participation (also, "participatory development")	A process through which stakeholders can influence and share control over development initiatives, and over the decisions and resources that affect those stakeholders. (ACFID Code of Conduct)
Partisan political activities	Any political, lobbying or advocacy activity carried out for the sake, or in support of, a particular political party, faction, candidate for public office or organisation affiliated with a political party or candidate for public office.
Partner Organisations (also, "partners")	Organisations implementing programs or projects funded by, or through, Saffron Aid
Primary stakeholders	Those whom we seek to support, work with and directly benefit through development and humanitarian initiatives. The women and men, boys and girls who are participants in, and are directly affected by, development and humanitarian initiatives. They may

	also be known as beneficiaries or local people. (ACFID Code of Conduct)
Sustainable development	Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987).
Welfare (also, "human welfare")	Activities which provide direct assistance to individuals because of a material need. Welfare activities generally address immediate needs rather than root causes or drivers of those needs.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1. **Executive Management** are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all Saffron Aid staff members, volunteers and contractors comply with all Saffron Aid policies

- Ensuring that all Partner Organisations and their board members, staff members, volunteers and contractors implementing Aid and Development activities funded by, or through, Saffron Aid, comply with all relevant legislation and Saffron Aid policies (including this one)

- Ensuring that escalation procedures and complaint records management systems are in place

- Reviewing unresolved and/or escalated complaints as they are presented and implementing an appropriate course of action.

7.2. **People & Culture** are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all staff members, volunteers and contractors comply with Saffron Aid policies

- Assisting managers and supervisors with the construction of appropriate training and development programs designed to aid compliance with this policy

- Providing staff members, volunteers and contractors with support and assistance during any complaint handling process.

7.3. **Managers and supervisors** are responsible for:

- Ensuring that they and their staff members, volunteers and contractors comply with all Saffron Aid policies

- Communicating this Policy to all Partner Organisations, and ensuring that Partner Organisations communicate this Policy to their board members, staff, volunteers and contractors implementing Aid and Development activities funded by, or through, Saffron Aid.

- Approving activities and/or funding only when the requirements of this policy have been met

- Providing the CEO/ People & Culture Director with all information that relates to breaches or potential breaches of this policy

- Ensuring that staff members, volunteers and contractors are trained in providing accurate information and handling/resolving complaints.

7.4. **All employees, volunteers, and contractors** are responsible for**:**

- Reporting and resolving any complaint and recording the complaint and actions taken in accordance with this policy

- Complying with this Policy, as required by the following procedures.

8. PROCEDURES

8.1. This Policy will be included in all contracts and memorandums of understanding with Partner Organisations.

8.2. No later than November of each financial year, Saffron Aid will organise an induction/workshop – which may be held either face-to-face or by Skype or phone conference – at which this Policy, its importance and consequences of non-compliance, will be presented to the Partner Organisation's executive and relevant staff, volunteers and contractors.

8.3. All Aid and Development Activities funded by or through Saffron Aid and Partner Organisations and relevant staff, volunteers and contractors will be monitored to ensure they are not in breach of this Policy. Monitoring will be proportionate to the amount of funding, the risk of breach (as a result of the funded activities, organisation or skills and experience of board and staff), and will be recorded in the program/project file. Monitoring will include at least one country visit annually at which this Policy will be made the subject of special presentation.

8.4. Applying this Policy may be difficult in some situations and sound judgement will be necessary. The Policy cannot provide a specific response for every circumstance. Saffron Aid will apply the spirit and intent of this clause in the conduct of Aid and Development Activities.

8.5. If this Policy does not provide a clear answer on how to comply in a particular circumstance, Saffron Aid will document clearly the decisions made and the reasons behind them and make them available to both recipients and donors.

8.6. Feedback is important to Saffron Aid and our Partner Organisations as it encourages improvement. Therefore, all feedback is welcomed. Feedback will be directed to the relevant Department of Saffron Aid for action. A complainant regarding an alleged breach of ACFID Code of Conduct can be made directly to ACFID (https://acfid.asn.au/content/complaints)

9. CONFIDENTIALITY AND DOCUMENT CONTROL

9.1. This Policy is available on Wiki Habitat for all employees

9.2. A copy of the Policy will be provided to any person or organisation on request.

10. APPROVAL

Name: **Richard McMillan**

Title: **Chairperson**

Date of Issue: **17 August 2018**

Annex 1

WWF-Australia Complaint Handling Process

1) The WWF staff member, volunteer or contractor taking the complaint will:
- Listen carefully and advise that accurate records will be taken (focusing on facts, dates, times and people involved);
- treat the information given confidentially;
- thank the complainant for bringing the issue to WWF's attention;
- acknowledge the problem and empathise;
- apologise and avoid attributing blame;
- advise the complainant that issues will be taken seriously and handled quickly in the strictest confidence;
- at the conclusion of the discussion, capture all the relevant information in writing
- submit the record to the Director of the staff member's department;

2) Escalation Process:
- If the complaint is made against WWF-Australia, the issue will be escalated to the Executive Team and may trigger the use of the Internal Investigation Procedure;
- If the complaint is made against a WWF-Australia staff member or volunteer, the issue is to be investigated according to the Disciplinary Policy and/or Internal Investigation and Disciplinary Panels Procedure;
- If the complaint is made against a WWF Partner Organisation, the issue will be escalated to the Conservation Director or to the CEO;
- If the complaint is made against a third party (e.g. agencies, providers), the relevant information will be supplied to the agency manager, with all the details of the complaint and of the complainant, unless he/she choose to remain anonymous. If the issue continues to arise, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken by the agency involved;
- If the complaint is in regards to how we have collected or managed personal information, the complaint will be dealt with in accordance with WWF's Privacy Policy and Privacy Complaint procedure;

3) Once the situation is resolved, a WWF representative will make contact with the complainant (unless he/she choose to remain anonymous and did not provide contact details) and advise of the outcome.