

Core principles of field guiding

- **Professionalism:** FGASA guides adhere to a strict code of conduct that mandates high standards of integrity, ethical behavior, and reliability. This includes acting with honesty, being tactful and conscientious, and dressing appropriately.
- **Knowledge and interpretation:** Guides must possess a broad and accurate knowledge of the local natural environment, including geology, climate, ecology, and wildlife, to provide visitors with a meaningful and educational experience. The main goal is to expose visitors to the area's natural heritage by sharing factual knowledge and meaningful interpretations.
- **Safety awareness:** A paramount principle is the safety of tourists, wildlife, and the guide. Guides must be trained in first aid and implement all reasonable safety measures, including proper briefing procedures and safe animal approach methods.
- **Environmental respect:** Guides are expected to treat the natural environment with respect and conduct all activities in a way that minimizes damage. This includes managing waste and encouraging guests to care for the environment. This commitment extends to respecting the wildlife and their habitats, such as by not disturbing animals or getting too close.
- **Respect for people and culture:** Guides must demonstrate an attitude of respect for all people, cultures, languages, and religions. They are also expected to abide by the local laws, customs, and regulations of South Africa and the specific area of operation.
- **Passion and responsibility:** Guiding is viewed as a lifestyle and a profession rooted in a passion for nature. Guides are responsible for fostering appreciation for the natural world and inspiring conservation. They must also operate within their own qualifications and expertise.
- **Continuous development:** To maintain a standard of excellence, FGASA promotes ongoing career development for guides through higher qualifications, skills growth opportunities, and quality training programs.