



Volunteering Programmes update on COVID-19

22nd of December 2020
Sal Island, Cabo Verde

Given the current situation with the crisis of the epidemic of COVID-19, we have decided to adapt our policy regarding our international volunteering programmes. Our main concern and priority are, and will continue to be, the health and safety of our staff, the communities and all the volunteers that collaborate with us. For this reason, **we will base our decisions on official sources and recommendations**, adopting always a precautionary point of view.

We understand that the duration of this world crisis is unknown, and nobody is able to predict what the development may be. This is why we have made the following amendments to our current policies:

- **Zero-cost cancellation policy.** When the reasons for a cancellation is based on official recommendations and/or due to the impossibility of travelling as a result of bans or/and closure of borders.
- **No early booking fees.** Due to the uncertainty of flights and travel bans, we are not requesting any booking fees until the beginning of March. In March, volunteers will be requested to make a deposit of 100 Euros out of the total fees to secure their participation. The remaining of the fees will be paid upon arrival. We believe that at this point we will have better understanding about whether the volunteering programme will take place due to the pandemic.
- **100% reimbursement of the deposit** for those who have already paid it, in case that the programme is cancelled. This will be assessed and decided 3 weeks before the participation of the volunteer. The cancellation for reasons different from the ones mentioned in the first point will follow normal cancellation fees.
- **Mandatory travel insurance policy with COVID-19 coverage.** The travel insurance must cover: trip cancellation within 14-days of travelling, emergency medical expenses, COVID-19 tests, accommodation and transportation if quarantine is required, and repatriation.
- **Strong recommendation** of booking flight with **cancellation option** when possible. Once volunteers are informed by our team the route/flight connections that should be taken to get to Sal, we recommend they book the flights with the cancellation insurance in case the programme is cancelled and/or there are restrictions to fly to Sal. We also suggest volunteers to book the flight early, when possible, to avoid high fares.
- **Mandatory negative PCR test** before boarding to Cabo Verde. Following new government guidelines, all people flying to Cabo Verde from other countries must present a negative PCR test before boarding, which must be taken up to 72 hours before boarding.

These new policies are adopted in an extraordinary situation and will revert back to normal once the international situation has allowed. With this policy we want to ensure and transmit our confidence that, aside the global situation, our volunteer programmes are still open and planning to continue as normally as possible, welcoming volunteers as the situation allow.

We have created a webpage (www.projectbiodiversity.org/volunteering-covid19) where we will be updating with information regarding Project Biodiversity and the overall situation in Cabo Verde. With this initiative we aim to offer an easy and accessible source of information to our followers and future volunteers.