



## **JAN-POL Incoming and JAN-POL DMC with Travelife Partner certificates - welcome to 'Wide open for sustainable meetings' series**

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**JAN-POL Incoming Tour Operator is a company operating in the Krakow market since 1990, which has been involved in various fields of tourism since its inception. JAN-POL Incoming Tour Operator works with foreign and domestic leisure tourism partners, focusing on groups and individual travel, while JAN-POL DMC Poland, one of the Kraków Convention Bureau's recommended DMC companies, deals with event, incentive and conference tourism.**

JAN-POL Incoming Tour Operator is also one of the pioneers on the Krakow market in terms of a responsible approach to the services provided, in accordance with the ESG.

The certification process, the assumptions of the Travelife Partner certificate itself and the company's policy will be presented by Anna Kruszec, Sales Manager. We invite you to read more!

**You were one of the first companies in Poland to receive the Travelife certificate. We sincerely congratulate you - this is a major achievement that strongly defines the company's policy. What does the Travellife certificate give you? For what reason, as JAN-POL DMC Poland and JAN-POL Incoming Tour Operator, did you decide on this particular type of certificate?**

The Travelife Partner Certificate is not only a prestigious award for us, but above all a confirmation of our commitment to sustainable development. As JAN-POL DMC Poland and JAN-POL Incoming Tour Operator, we have been following the principles of responsible tourism for years, and Travelife is one of the most recognized international certification systems in the industry.

The decision to become a certified Travelife Partner stemmed from our desire to continuously improve in the area of sustainable management. In addition, more and more partners and customers in international markets are paying attention to ESG aspects.

We chose the Travelife certification because it is dedicated specifically to tour operators and DMCs, and its criteria were developed with the specifics of our industry in mind. This means that Travelife not only evaluates general aspects of sustainable management, but measures specific activities relevant to companies like JAN-POL Incoming Tour Operator and JAN-POL DMC Poland - from the selection of responsible suppliers, to minimizing environmental impact, to ethical business practices and impact on local communities.

**Companies, especially smaller ones, are concerned that the certification process is time-consuming, requiring the preparation of many documents, policies and strategies. How do you assess it? Is it a job for one dedicated employee or a whole team?**

The Travelife certification process does indeed require commitment and preparation of relevant documents, policies and strategies, but it is not an insurmountable barrier - especially if



approached as a team. We are a medium-sized company, and in our case, a single sustainability coordinator was appointed to support the team through the various stages of certification. This allowed us to effectively divide tasks and effectively implement the required changes.

The key point, however, is that certification does not end with the achievement of Travelife Partner level - it is only the beginning of further work on improving our sustainability performance. We have 20 specific tasks to complete over the next two years, including employee and supplier training, expanding our offerings, as well as internal changes within the company and those that affect our customers and travel groups. That's why we treat Travelife as an ongoing process that allows us not only to meet standards, but also to make a real impact on the development of responsible tourism in Poland.

### **What is the process itself like? What surprised you the most during its course?**

The Travelife Partner certification process is based on access to a dedicated portal where you can find training materials, sample policies and tools to support the implementation of sustainable practices. It's also the place where the company reports in detail its progress in the area of each of the more than 100 criteria, covering various aspects of the business - from environmental policy to resource management to supplier relations and responsible business practices. Some criteria required only a response, others had to be documented, and still others involved the development of new policies and procedures, often in several languages, so that they were consistent with our service standards for groups and individual brands.

What surprised us most? First and foremost, the detail of the process and the attention to detail. Obtaining Travelife certification is not a formality - there is no room for coincidence here. Every aspect of the company's operations is analyzed and evaluated for compliance with international standards of sustainable tourism. It's a kind of "sieve" that you have to pass through, carefully meeting all the requirements. This ensures that the certificate is not just an honor, but a real confirmation of our commitment to responsible management and development of tourism in Poland.

### **Was the certification process different for JAN-POL DMC Poland and JAN-POL Incoming Tour Operator?**

The certification process for JAN-POL DMC Poland and JAN-POL Incoming Tour Operator was largely similar in terms of the criteria for the internal functioning of the company and cooperation with suppliers. In both cases, the same aspects were evaluated, such as resource management, environmental policies or responsible business practices.

Differences emerged, however, in the approach to customers, as each brand serves a different market segment and offers different products. JAN-POL Incoming specializes in leisure tourism, focusing on groups and individual travel, while JAN-POL DMC Poland deals with event, incentive and conference tourism. This meant that while we met the same Travelife criteria, the documentation had to be prepared with respect to the specifics of each brand - based on their offers, products and customer service. This ensured that the certification reflected the real activities of both our brands in the area of sustainable tourism.



**Do customers expect sustainable solutions or certifications from your company?**

Currently, we note that a small percentage of customers actively expect sustainable solutions or certifications. Although there are more and more inquiries about such aspects, in the end the key factor remains price. In practice, it happens that customers choose cheaper options, even if it means giving up more sustainable solutions. However, we observe that interest in this topic is slowly growing, and we expect that it may become a more important decision factor in the future.

**Looking a little more broadly at policy, what measures in line with sustainability goals are implemented or in place at your company?**

Depending on the criterion, we have many activities in place to support sustainability. The most important areas for us are customer education, implementation of internal solutions under the Green Office Policy and the Sustainable Purchasing Policy, as well as protocols of conduct for suppliers and customers.

We are committed to ensuring that our customers travel consciously, which is why we created the “Responsible Travel in Poland” guide, which promotes environmentally friendly modes of transportation, avoiding illegal souvenirs and supporting local communities. In our day-to-day operations, we also take care to minimize energy, water and waste consumption, and we base our purchases on cooperation with suppliers offering eco-friendly and ethical products. In this way, we combine responsible corporate management with a real impact on sustainable tourism development.

Travelife Partner status has helped us systematize many of the actions we were already intuitively taking, and helped us introduce them on a large scale for all customers.