

# Defenders of the environment

The Fragile Earth policy is enabling Land Rovers to tread lightly around the world



There's much more to Land Rover than producing some of the world's most capable off-road vehicles. It's a company that takes its responsibilities very seriously, which is why environmental issues are very much at the top of its agenda. As a company spokesman explains: 'We want Land Rover owners to be able to 'go anywhere' in their vehicles, but we want them to do it responsibly and in a sustainable manner.'

Just over two years ago, the Gaydon-based company launched the Fragile Earth policy, aimed at all drivers who venture off road. The policy 'affirms Land Rover's continuing commitment to the environment', and 'gives important guidelines that should help all owners treat the environment more kindly.'

It is a global promise to minimise the damage to the environment done by those driving Land Rovers. In practical terms, it states that the company will do all it can to ensure its activities are environmentally sound, from the design and construction of vehicles to providing training in how to drive responsibly off-road.

The Off-Road Code is an integral part of the Fragile Earth policy that is adhered to by all Land Rover employees, including the instructors at the nine UK Land Rover Experience centres.

It includes the following guidelines:

- Always seek permission to cross private land
- Stick to existing routes
- Drive as slowly as possible, but as fast as necessary to minimise erosion and damage to the landscape
- Animals come first, either drive very slowly if near them or switch off your engine and wait for them to move on
- Take litter home
- Respect the peace and tranquillity of others
- When preparing to go back on road, carry out a vehicle safety check, then drive slowly to prevent mud and stones flying off tyres.

As well as trying to minimise damage in the UK, Fragile Earth also aims to protect the environment and help with conservation work around the world. Land Rover has chosen to sponsor a number of leading interna-

tional environmental organisations, including Biosphere Expeditions, the Born Free Foundation, China Exploration and Research Society and the Royal Geographic Society.

Biosphere is a non-profit conservation group that offers ordinary people of all ages and from all walks of life the chance to contribute to important wildlife research and conservation projects around the world. Team members travel by Land Rovers across remote and challenging terrain and work alongside scientists on a range of projects, from surveying rare Namibian cheetahs in the African Savannah, to monitoring snow leopards in the mountains of the Altai Republic, in Central Asia.

Land Rover has given vehicles to other environmental groups including Born Free and the BioRe sustainable development project in Tanzania. BioRe co-ordinators use a Defender 110 to reach organic cotton farmers in the most remote locations, and to help them manage their crops more efficiently. Oldham-based company MacDonald & Taylor, which supports the farmers with education and technical assistance, distributes the cotton in the UK. It is retailed by Waitrose under the name Simply Gentle.

In Kenya, Land Rover has mobilised the Youth for Conservation organisation, a group of unemployed local graduates who spot and snare poachers. A number of vehicles were handed over for use by the group and, within a few weeks, they captured two armed poachers.

It is the support given to such a diverse range of environmental and conservation groups that embodies the ethos of the Fragile Earth policy. Land Rover's commitment to the environment is based on the belief that future generations should be able to enjoy what we enjoy – the ability to explore and do good in the very far-flung regions and terrains of the world.

**TEAM PLAYERS:**  
Land Rovers are used for projects around the world

'Team members travel by Land Rovers across remote and challenging terrain'

#### FURTHER INFORMATION

- [www.landrover.com](http://www.landrover.com); [www.biosphere-expeditions.org](http://www.biosphere-expeditions.org);
- [www.bornfree.org.uk](http://www.bornfree.org.uk)