



Communicating Sustainability

Roi Ariel, GSTC General Manager



Global Sustainable Tourism Council

GSTC Criteria



What is the GSTC?



- The Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) establishes and manages global sustainable standards for the tourism industry, known as the GSTC Criteria
- Economic, environmental and societal dimensions are all addressed by the GSTC Criteria
- Applying the GSTC Criteria helps to meet the UN SDGs



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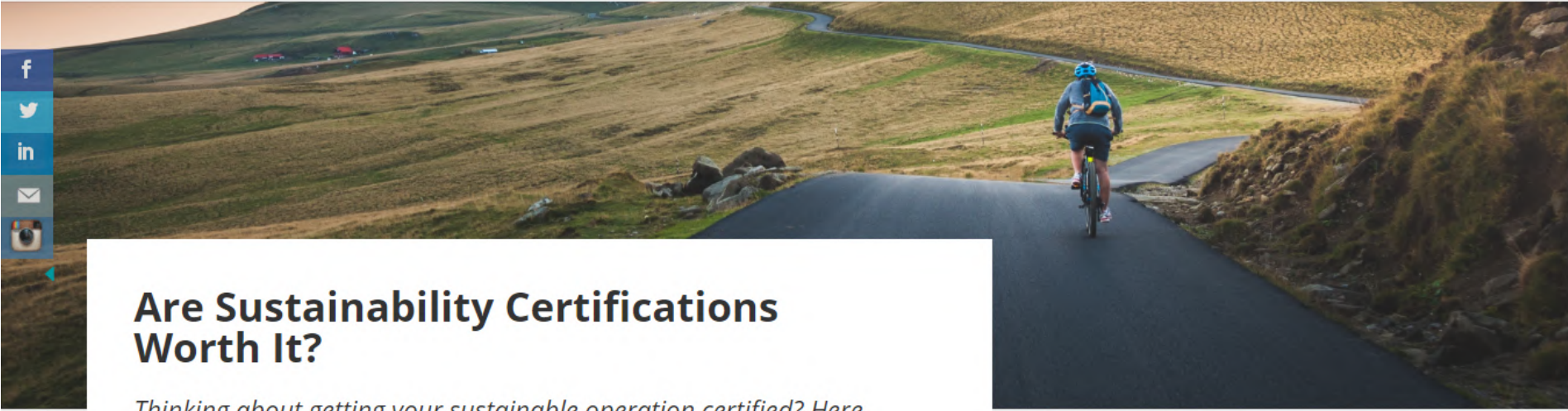
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Are Sustainability Certifications Worth It?

Thinking about getting your sustainable operation certified? Here are the key questions to ask yourself.

by Jenna Blumenfeld | May 30, 2019

You've likely heard that travelers, especially millennial-aged and younger Generation Z travelers,

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“70% of global travelers say they would be more likely to book an accommodation knowing it was eco-friendly, whether they were looking for a sustainable stay or not.”

[Booking.com Sustainable Travel Report 2019]



Sustainability in Tourism





Sustainable Tourism

“Tourism that takes full account of its current and future **economic, social and environmental impacts**, addressing the needs of **visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities**”



Sustainable Tourism

“Sustainable Tourism” *does not* refer to a specific type of tourism.

“Sustainable Tourism” is an aspiration for the impacts of all forms of tourism.



Sustainable Tourism

**How to recognize what IS
sustainable tourism?**





Global Sustainable Tourism Council

Founding Organizations:



+

UNWTO, UNEP, Rainforest Alliance



GSTC Criteria Sets

Two sets of GSTC Criteria have been developed:

1. **Criteria for Industry** (Hotels & Tour Operators)
(2008, 2012, 2016)
2. **Criteria for Destinations**
(2013, 2019)



GSTC Criteria Development

First GSTC Criteria development:

- More than 80,000 relevant people were invited to comment
- Analyzed more than 4,500 criteria from more than 60 existing certification standards and other voluntary sets of criteria, principles and guidelines.

GSTC Criteria revisions:

- Developed in accordance with the ISEAL Alliance Code of Best Practice and Standard-setting Code.
- The GSTC Criteria undergoes a revision process every few years that includes public consultation.



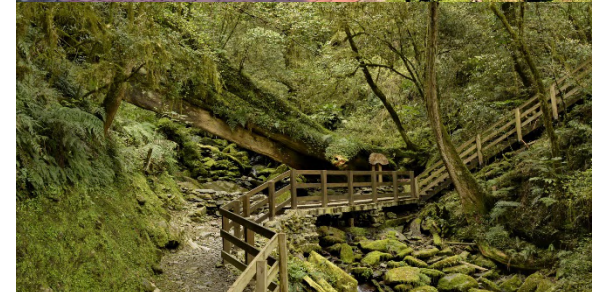
Four Pillars of GSTC Criteria

(A) Sustainability Management

(B) Social & Economic Benefits

(C) Cultural Heritage

(D) Environment





SDGs & GSTC Criteria

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

There is a strong relationship between the GSTC Destination Criteria and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Below you will find the corresponding SDGs to each criterion of the GSTC Destination Criteria.

Also available is a [list of corresponding criterions \(GSTC Destination Criteria\) to each SDG](#).

SECTION A: Demonstrate effective sustainable management

SECTION B: Maximize economic benefits to the host community and minimize negative impacts

SECTION C: Maximize benefits to communities, visitors, and culture; minimize negative impacts

SECTION D: Maximize benefits to the environment and minimize negative impacts

A1 Sustainable destination strategy

The destination has established and is implementing a multi-year destination strategy that is publicly available, is suited to its scale; that considers environmental, economic, social, cultural, quality, health, and safety, and aesthetic issues; and was developed with public participation.





The Role of Sustainability Standards

- **Basis for certification**
- For training, education, awareness
- Guidelines for legal and regulatory codes
- Measurement & Evaluation
- Market Access clarity



The Role of Certification

- Verify the validity of claims and fighting false claims (“greenwashing”)
- Risk management mitigation
- Provides discipline for improvement
- Market access function



Certification by GSTC Accredited CBs

Certification is defined as a voluntary, third-party assessment, through an audit, of a tourism enterprise or destination for conformity to a standard.

GSTC does NOT conduct certification. That is the job of the many Certification Bodies throughout the world; our job is to accredit those that certify.



Certification by GSTC Accredited CBs

Accreditation is a mark of quality that GSTC places on Certification Bodies that choose our independent and neutral process to verify that they certify businesses, such as hotels or tour operators, or destinations, in a competent and neutral manner.

We at GSTC look very hard at their process of certification to ensure you that they issue certifications based on merit and neutrality.

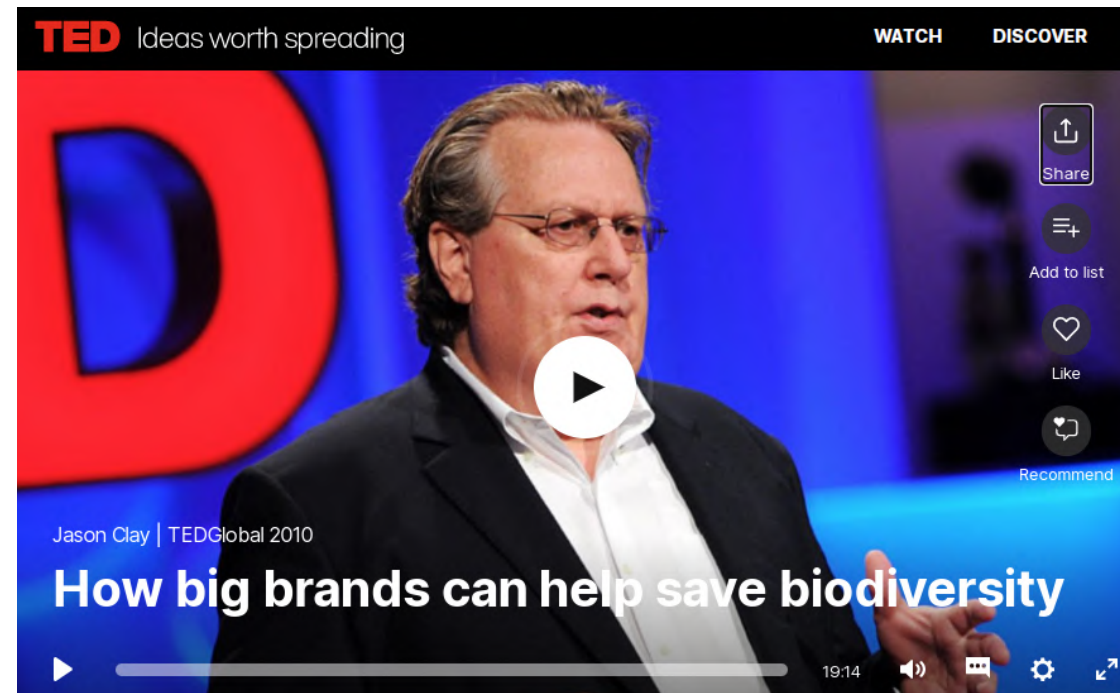


How GSTC communicates with its stakeholders



Market Access Influence

Effecting change by working with entities that have large share in the market and are influential





Market Access: Royal Caribbean



ROYAL CARIBBEAN CRUISES LTD.



WWF

Sustainable Seafood Target

Responsibly source 90 percent of its wild-caught seafood by volume from MSC certified sustainable fisheries by 2020



Global Tour Operations Target

Within a few years, more than 2000 “sustainable tours” offered by certified tour operators





Market Access: TUI Group



CREDIBILITY THROUGH CERTIFICATION

We expect our own hotels and hotel partners to implement credible, independent sustainability certifications to demonstrate social and environmental good practice. Our ambition is to increase the number of hotels with sustainability certifications to accommodate 10 million customers a year by 2020.

We encourage our hotels to aim for certification that meets the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) standard. A mandatory clause in contracts with our accommodation suppliers outlines minimum expectations and requires them to work towards credible GSTC-recognised sustainability certification.





GSTC Members





Identifying key stakeholders

GSTC Criteria

The Global Baseline Standards for Sustainable Travel and Tourism



For Hotels &
Accommodations



For Tour Operators



For Destinations &
Governments



For Certification Bodies



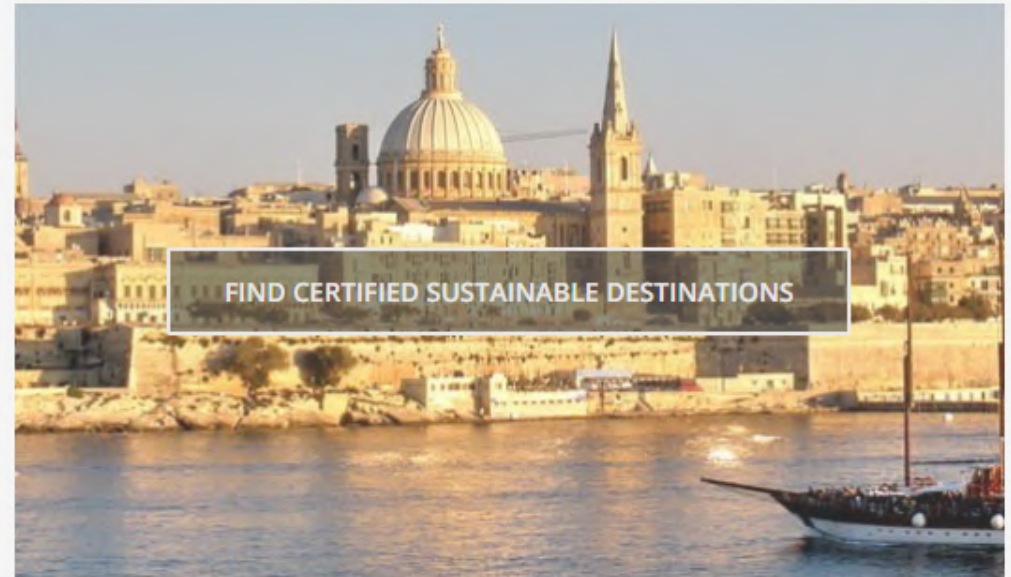
For Travelers



Travelers



What can you do to travel responsibly?





Certification Bodies





Public Sector: Governments and Destinations





Private Sector: Hotels and Tour Operators

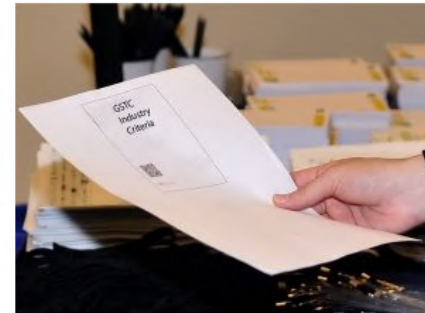


Adhere to the GSTC Industry Criteria

The GSTC Industry Criteria and Suggested Indicators for Tour Operators are available in the public domain free of charge for non-commercial use, and translated in many languages; distribute them to staff and encourage their application.

They were created in an effort to come to a common understanding of sustainable tourism, and are the minimum that a Tour Operator (a provider, operator, and/or seller of travel products) business should aspire to reach. The Tour Operator Criteria are organized around four main themes: (A) effective sustainability planning; (B) maximizing social and economic benefits for the local community; (C) enhancing cultural heritage; and (D) reducing negative impacts to the environment.

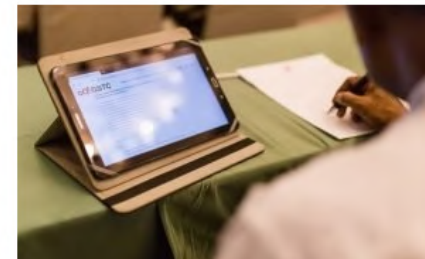
[GSTC INDUSTRY CRITERIA FOR TOUR OPERATORS](#)



Become Certified

Gaining Certified means that your travel or tourism product or service complies with the highest social and environmental standards on the market.

Increasingly, **luxury travelers** as well as **regular travelers**, and your fellow travel provider clients are seeking confirmation that sustainability practices are in place. Also increasingly, travel companies are looking for a product that is not only certified sustainable, but certified sustainable by a certification program that is GSTC Accredited. For example, **Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. announced that by being certified by a Certification Body that carries a GSTC mark**, operators of shore excursions will gain preferential buying treatment, when feasible).





Private Sector: OTAs

Booking.com

“We know that our customers want to make more sustainable decisions and that many of our partners are eager to meet that demand. Together [with GSTC] we can help bring more clarity and transparency to the wider travel industry when it comes to sustainability.”

Marianne Gybels, Global Manager of CSR and Sustainability at Booking.com

agoda



“Agoda’s moonshot goal is to mainstream sustainable travel. We have doubled our investments in sustainability and are testing tools to help travelers make more sustainable choices.”

Greg Wong, Managing Director, Agoda



Speaking with Partners

ETHOS

Vision:
Sustainability in the tourism industry

PATHOS

Personalization:
Relevant and specific actions

LOGOS

Details:
GSTC Criteria and Framework

Conclusion





Global Sustainable Tourism Council

Website: www.gstcouncil.org

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