Global Criteria for Sustainable Tourism

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Tourism in the world: Impacts

- 10% of GDP (Direct, indirect and induced)
- 1/11 of jobs (Direct, indirect and induced)
- US$1.5 trillion in exports
- 6% of world's exports
- 30% of services exports

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SUSTAINABLE TOURISM
its main drivers
We emphasize that well designed and managed tourism can make a significant contribution to the three dimensions of sustainable development, has close linkages to other sectors, and can create decent jobs and generate trade opportunities.

We recognize the need to support sustainable tourism activities.....

We call for enhanced support for sustainable tourism activities and relevant capacity building in developing countries.....

We encourage the promotion of investment in sustainable tourism...

We underline the importance of establishing appropriate guidelines and regulations in accordance with national priorities and legislation for promoting and supporting sustainable tourism.
70th Session of UN General Assembly, 2015 invites UNWTO to:

“…facilitate the organization and implementation of the International Year in collaboration with Governments, relevant organizations of the United Nations system, other international and regional organizations and other relevant stakeholders…”
Green Scenario vs. BAU Scenario 2010-2050

**Green Scenario**
- Resource efficiency and low carbon development
- Higher level of investments
- Change in energy and environmental policies
- Allocates 0.2% of global GDP per year

**Business-as-usual (BAU) Scenario**
- Favours a more conventional use of resources and fossil fuels
- Increased levels of investment
- Not change in energy and environmental policies
- Investment 2% GDP according to existing patterns without targeting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Green Scenario</th>
<th>BAU Scenario</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Energy consumption growth</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>154%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Green House Emissions</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>131%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Water Consumption</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>152%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Solid Waste Disposal</td>
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<td>251%</td>
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**Direct Employment**
- 580 million vs. 544 million
Business Case for Sustainable Tourism

Sustainable tourism helps safeguard resources that attract visitors (natural and cultural attractions, community experiences).

“In the end it’s all about protecting our product. If the product - our destinations - aren’t protected in environmental and social terms, then people won’t want to visit them, it is as simple as that.”
- John De Vial, Head of Financial Protection, ABTA (The Travel Association)
Business Case for Sustainable Tourism

Market research shows increasing demand for experiential travel; more visitors seeking authentic connection with local culture, food, customs, heritage, and people in destinations.

"Today’s travelers want to experience the local culture, cuisine, activities, and so on . . . Seamless connectivity to the local experiences is [what] really drives value."

(Forbes Travel Guide)
Relevant Consumer & Industry Trends

• Nearly a third of travelers (30%) would choose a destination because it is considered eco-friendly. (TripAdvisor)

• 65% of corporate travel executives responsible for more than $10M in annual travel budgets are implementing “green” business-travel guidelines. (Association of Corporate Travel Planners)
ABOUT THE GSTC & GSTC CRITERIA
Our approach to sustainable tourism

“Sustainable tourism development guidelines and management practices are applicable to all forms of tourism in all types of destinations, including mass tourism and niche tourism segments.” - UNWTO
The GSTC

The Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) establishes and manages global sustainable standards with the aim of increasing sustainable tourism knowledge and practices among public and private stakeholders.

- Founded by: UNEP, UNWTO, the UN Foundation and the Rainforest Alliance, with the support of various tourism and conservation organizations.
- GSTC is an independent non-profit organization.
The GSTC

“Promoting the widespread adoption of global sustainable tourism standards to ensure the tourism industry continues to drive conservation and poverty alleviation.”
The GSTC

“Promoting the adoption of universal sustainable tourism principles and building demand for sustainable travel.”
How Can the Criteria Be Used?

- Basic sustainability guidelines for businesses and destinations.
- Guidance for travel agencies and consumers.
- Guidance for policy makers (e.g. designing destination-wide programs, incentive programs).
- Guidance for researchers and universities.
- Tool for measuring and monitoring progress.
- Encourage media to recognize sustainable tourism.
- Help certification programs achieve credibility through global standards.
GSTC Criteria

To date, three sets of GSTC Criteria have been developed:
Criteria for **Destinations** (Nov 2013)
Criteria for **Industry** (Jan 2017)

Each set has 41 criteria (and 105 indicators) in 4 pillars:

- Sustainability Management
- Social & Economic
- Cultural
- Environmental
GSTC Criteria
Development Process

• Analysis of 4,500 criteria and 60 certifications systems worldwide.
• Robust stakeholder engagement.
• Notice and comment process (over 2,000 stakeholder comments).
Of public domain... in 16 different languages
Many labels...much confusion
GSTC Integrity Program

The GSTC Integrity Program offers the GSTC Recognition, Approval and Accreditation processes for certification bodies. Achieving these marks helps certification bodies build consumer and trade confidence and distinguish their services based on neutrality and quality.
GSTC Integrity Program

- **GSTC Recognized** means that standards comply with the GSTC Criteria.
- **GSTC Approved** and **GSTC Accredited** mean that certification programs meet requirements for independence, transparency, and competency. *(Not just the standard, but the process in which the standard is used).*
GSTC-Approved Certifying Bodies

For Hotels and Tour Operators

For Destinations
GSTC-D
GSTC Criteria for Destinations
Demonstrate sustainable destination management

- Sustainable destination strategy
- Destination management organization
- Monitoring
- Seasonal tourism management
- Adaptation to climate change
- Inventory of tourism assets and attractions
- Planning rules
- Accessibility
- Acquiring properties
- Visitor satisfaction
- Sustainability standards
- Safety and Security
- Risk and crisis management
- Promotion
Destination B
Maximize economic benefits for the host community and minimize negative impacts

- Economic monitoring
- Career opportunities in the local environment
- Public participation
- Review of local communities
- Local access
- Tourism awareness and education
- Avoiding exploitation
- Supporting the community
- Supporting local entrepreneurs and fair trade
Destination C
Maximize benefits to communities, visitors and culture and minimize the negative impact

- Protection sights
- Visitor management
- Visitor behavior
- Protection of cultural heritage
- Interpretation of tourist sites
- Intellectual property
Destination D
Maximize benefits to the environment and minimize negative impacts

- Environmental risks
- Protection of vulnerable environments
- Protection of wildlife
- Emissions of greenhouse gases
- Energy conservation
- Management, security and quality of water
- Sewage water
- Reduction of solid waste
- Light and noise pollution
- Low-impact transport
GSTC DESTINATION PROGRAM
The GSTC Destinations Program helps destinations across the globe understand how to systematic apply the GSTC Criteria to improve destination sustainability.

• Benefit from GSTC expert analysis of the destination, and customized recommendations.
• Build capacity among stakeholders in the GSTC Criteria and sustainable destination management.
• Learn the destination's current sustainability status according to the GSTC Criteria.
GSTC Destination Assessment Process

1. Desktop Scoping; Stakeholder and Document Mapping

2. Onsite: Opening Stakeholder Workshop

3. Stakeholder Consultation and Site Visits

4. Preliminary Results Validation Workshop

5. GSTC Assessment Report
## Analysis of Sustainability Practices

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Not applicable to the destination</td>
<td>No documented policy exists</td>
<td>Documented policy, however no evidence of enforcement</td>
<td>Documented policy, plus evidence of enforcement, plus rises to the level of good practice</td>
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Assessment: Analysis per Pillar
| 4. Fjords Norway         | 13. Samoa, South Pacific |
| 5. Lanzarote, Spain      | 14. Riviera Maya, Mexico |
| 6. Okavango Delta, Botswana | 15. Lombok, Indonesia* |
| 7. Cuzco & Sacred Valley, Peru | 16. Sieman, Indonesia* |
| 8. Lago Llanquihue, Chile | 17. Pangandaran, Indonesia* |
| 9. Southern Sardinia, Italy | 18. Wakatobi, Indonesia* |
|                       | 19. Cayman Islands, West Indies |
|                       | 20. Sinaloa Sur, Mexico |
|                       | 21. Sedona, Arizona, USA |
|                       | 22. Hwaseong Fortress, Suwon City, Republic of Korea* |
Capacity Building

Courses of 1-5 days on criteria content and application aimed at different groups: tourism and environmental officials, national and regional level; destination managers, private sector, certification auditors, NGOs
Some conclusions

- Advances in the recognition of tourism as a sector for economic growth and development
- Advances in knowledge and tools for sustainable tourism
- Several major projects and innovative initiatives
- Recognition by the private sector and some national and regional governments of the importance of sustainability in tourism

But: **a general and comprehensive approach is needed to implement the knowledge acquired**
And recommendations

✓ Focus on quality not quantity
✓ Responding to increased demand for authentic, sustainable and responsible products
✓ Involving the community and all stakeholders, including large companies: everyone stands to gain
✓ Brand sustainable destinations
✓ Communicate the benefits and advantages of a sustainable experiences to the customers
Thank you!

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