



# “Sustainable Tourism Policy Frameworks for Nations & Destinations: Opportunities and Challenges”

Randy Durband  
Chief Executive Officer, GSTC

2 November 2017

# National governments need to:

- Set policy
- Support destinations

# What is the GSTC?



The leading global authority in setting and managing *standards* for sustainable travel & tourism

Founding Organizations:



## Sustainable Tourism – UNWTO/UNEP Definition

---

*“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”*

*Making Tourism More Sustainable - A Guide for Policy Makers,*  
UNEP and UNWTO, 2005

Also in 2005, UNWTO and UNEP published “The 12 Aims of Sustainable Tourism”

Next came the GSTC in 2007...

# GSTC Criteria

To date, **two** sets of GSTC Criteria have been developed:  
1- Criteria for **Industry (Hotels & Tour Operators)** (2008, revised 2012, revised December 2016 with the new name of “Industry”)  
2 - Criteria for **Destinations** (Nov 2013)

*Each set of Criteria include these 4 pillars:*

## Sustainability Management



## Social & Economic



## Cultural



## Environmental



# Sustainable Tourism

---

“Sustainable Tourism is about a journey...a process of becoming more and more sustainable” – GSTC

“Sustainable tourism should not be taken to refer to a specific type of tourism. Instead, it is *an aspiration for the impacts of all forms of tourism.*”

- UNWTO Tourism for Development Discussion Paper on the occasion of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development 2017

# Opportunities & Challenges

---

## Opportunities for nations and destinations:

- ❑ Sustained growth is likely
- ❑ Marketers can be more selective
- ❑ Technologies enhance ability to promote

## Challenges:

- Along with strong demand comes overcrowding
- Degradation of residents' quality of life
- Strains on infrastructure
- Meeting expectations of travelers

# Maximize the Benefits – Minimize the Negatives

---

A: Demonstrate sustainable destination management

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

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

D. Maximize benefits to the environment and minimize negative impacts



# The Role of 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

# Sustainable Tourism as Policy – National or Local

---

What does it look like?

- ✓ It is written (but flexible)
- ✓ Includes universal principles plus local context
- ✓ Enforcement mechanisms are in place
- ✓ Progress is measured
- ✓ Stakeholders are engaged in it
- ✓ Tourism assets are protected
- ✓ It relates to both visitors and residents

# National Policy and Destination Management

---

Both need to move beyond merely counting the number of visitors as their measure of success

Tourism officials are now talking about **quality** over quantity

But what does quality mean?

# National Policy and Destination Management

---

Measuring quality of the tourism experience

Requires market segmentation

Identify source markets that:

- ❖ Stay longer – they spend more money with more members of the community
- ❖ Are most satisfied – this leads to repeat visits and referrals to friends and relatives

# Target Marketing

---

Which source market is more valuable?

Group A – 100,000 annual visitors from cruise ships that spend \$10 per visitor during 3-hour visits during a 4-month peak season, for a total of \$1 million annual revenue

Group B – 10,000 annual visitors that spend \$800 per visitor during a 3-day average visit spread over a 9-month season, for a total of \$8 million annual revenue

# Target Marketing

---

Obviously, Group B is the better choice

Why, then, do we only measure tourism in terms of numbers of arrivals?

# National Policy and Destination Management

---

Measuring quality of the tourism experience

Requires market segmentation

Identify source markets that:

- ❖ Stay longer – they spend more money with more members of the community
- ❖ Are most satisfied – this leads to repeat visits and referrals to friends and relatives

These metrics require sampling through surveys

Surveys cost money – but are necessary



	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Nationality as % of Total</b>	<b>Avg Length of stay</b>	<b>% Would Return</b>
1	United Kingdom	13.9%	1.8	76%
2	Australia	13.4%	3.1	89%
3	Japan	10.6%	1.9	80%
4	Netherlands	9.6%	1.9	73%
5	France	7.8%	1.7	73%
6	USA	6.7%	1.1	85%
7	Canada	4.7%	2.2	90%
8	Germany	4.7%	1.9	76%
9	South Korea	3.8%	3.1	83%

	Nationality	Nationality as % of Total	Avg Length of stay	% Would Return
1	United Kingdom	13.9%	1.8	76%
2	Australia	13.4%	3.1 ★	89%
3	Japan	10.6%	1.9	80%
4	Netherlands	9.6%	1.9	73%
5	France	7.8%	1.7	73%
6	USA	6.7%	1.1	85%
7	Canada	4.7%	2.2 ★	90%
8	Germany	4.7%	1.9	76%
9	South Korea	3.8%	3.1 ★	83%

## Organizations' Procurement Policies

1. Responsible Sourcing
2. Set Targets and Incentives for Suppliers
3. Destinations and Businesses

### EXAMPLES:





## SUSTAINABILITY CERTIFICATION

To demonstrate their commitment to social and environmental good practice, we expect our own hotels and our hotel partners to implement credible sustainability certifications. Our goal is to increase the number of hotels achieving credible certifications that by 2020 we can take more than 10 million hotels with credible certifications – up from 5 million today.

### GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE TOURISM COUNCIL

GSTC is a global initiative dedicated to promoting sustainable tourism practices around the world. At the heart of GSTC are the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria (GSTC Criteria), principles covering all aspects of sustainable tourism – social and economic – that provide a framework for assessing the sustainability of tourism businesses.

TUI focuses on certifications that are aligned with the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria. Currently 25 standards have achieved GSTC recognition or approval, including Travelife,



**77% of TUI group-owned hotels had sustainability certifications**

Travelife, which is a sustainability partner, with a focus on product offering and board and management. GSTC has stricter criteria for international hotels. The GSTC standards (including Core and Eco-Label) and cover areas such as reducing waste, use of water, energy and harmful chemicals, supporting local communities and protecting employees, wildlife and human rights.

[www.travelife.org](http://www.travelife.org)

[www.gstcouncil.org](http://www.gstcouncil.org)

# Royal Caribbean & WWF Set Sustainability Goals

## **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**

By the end of 2019, all “sustainable tours” offered by RCL will be provided by GSTC certified operators



# Sustainable Consumption and Production



25% of consumption demand  
controls 40-50% of production



Codes for sustainable standards, certification, and accreditation in all sectors



X X X X X X X X XX X X X X X X X X  
 X X X X X X X X X X X X XXX X X

Certification Bodies

## C2 Visitor management

The destination has a visitor management system for attraction sites that includes measures to preserve, protect, and enhance natural and cultural assets.





# Carrying Capacity

---

Learn about it even in the early stages of tourism development.

Later might be too late.

Factors to consider:

- Ecological
- Social and Cultural
- Physical
- Managerial

# Carrying Capacity

---

There is no single formula for determining carrying capacity

Need to measure limits of:

- ❖ visitor contact with physical features
- ❖ visitor satisfaction
- ❖ residents' attitudes

# Categories of Over-Crowding

---

- Cultural Heritage Site with defined spatial boundaries
- Natural areas that need to be conserved
- Cities in which residents feel that the quantity and/or behavior of visitors negatively impacts the quality of their lives...or cheapens their culture...or damages their assets
- Any place where crowding occurs at peak times of day or times of the year

# Primary Causes of Over-Crowding

---

- Rapid growth of travel and tourism, especially from China
- Lack of awareness or implementation by government of the existence of visitor management guidelines
- Certain urban centers impacted by increases in accommodations capacity due to the rise of home-sharing
- Unrestrained access by cruise-line passengers to destinations with scarcity of space

# Reducing or avoiding over-crowding requires good Visitor Management practices

- Transport management – interplay of:
  - vehicles, pedestrians, bicycles
  - visitors and residents
- “Slow Travel” concepts
  - pedestrian zones
  - multi-use limitations
- Time of day and seasonal pricing of public site admission fees

# Global Tourism Emissions in 2005: CO<sub>2</sub> Only

<u>Sub-Sectors</u>	CO <sub>2</sub> (Mt)	
Air transport *	515	40%
Car transport	420	32%
Other transport	45	3%
Accommodation	274	21%
Activities	48	4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,307</b>	
<b>Total World</b> (IPCC 2007)	<b>26,400</b>	
<b>Tourism Contribution</b>	<b>5%</b>	

Transportation  
of Tourists = 75%  
of Sector Emissions

\* - does not include  
non-CO<sub>2</sub> emissions  
and impact on climate

Source: UNWTO-UNEP-WMO 2008  
[www.gstcouncil.org](http://www.gstcouncil.org)

# Recommendations

---

Harmonize standards

- Reduce confusion
- Utilize national standards with equivalence to the GSTC Criteria
- Other international standards such as ASEAN standards should include GSTC Criteria equivalence

Train Destination Managers on sustainable practices

Encourage and support hotels and tour operators to become more sustainable

...ultimately to become certified sustainable by a GSTC-Accredited Certification Program

# Case Study – Indonesia Destinations

---

Harmonizing standards:

National destination standards that are “GSTC-Recognized”

National destination certification scheme

Indonesia Sustainable Tourism Awards





Thank you for your joining us!



[www.gstcouncil.org](http://www.gstcouncil.org)

[www.gstcouncil.org](http://www.gstcouncil.org)