

# How to Reference GSTC Accreditation

This document provides guidance on how to correctly reference GSTC accreditation. The Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), as a scheme owner, sets the rules for both certification of tourism businesses and destinations. GSTC as an accreditation body accredits certification bodies. GSTC accreditation is for certification bodies, not for tourism enterprises or destinations. GSTC accreditation service is provided by GSTC or GSTC-endorsed national accreditation bodies that are contracted with GSTC.

It is important to note that accreditation is **NOT** the same as Recognition of standards, and that neither accreditation nor Recognition is the same as certification of an entity.

## Who Should Use This Document

- **Certification Bodies:** To guide how they should reference their accreditation status in certificates, promotional materials, websites, and other communications, and to ensure their clients understand the difference between certification and accreditation.
- **Certified Entities:** To correctly communicate their certification status without implying that they are accredited by GSTC.
- **Other Stakeholders (e.g., tourism authorities, media, partners):** To accurately reference GSTC accreditation in external communications, avoiding misinterpretation of GSTC's roles.
- **National Accreditation Bodies in collaboration with GSTC:** To ensure consistent communication of GSTC accreditation and to verify that certification bodies under their oversight accurately describe their accreditation status.

## How to Reference GSTC Accreditation

Use wording that clearly indicates that GSTC accreditation applies to the certification body, not to the tourism business or destination.

## How NOT to Reference GSTC Accreditation

Do not say or imply that GSTC accredits hotels, tour operators, or destinations. Do not say "our hotel is accredited by GSTC" (the hotel is certified, not accredited).

## Examples of Usage

NOT Acceptable	Why	Acceptable References
<i>"The GSTC accreditation of [name] Hotel..."</i>	Accreditation applies to certification bodies, not tourism entities.	<i>"[Name] Hotel is certified by [name of ACB], which is GSTC-accredited."</i>
<i>[ACB name] Certification is recognized by GSTC as an accredited body.</i>	GSTC accredits certification bodies, does not recognize.	<i>"[ACB name] Certification Body is accredited by GSTC."</i>
<i>"Our destination is accredited by GSTC" or "GSTC has accredited our destination."</i>	Accreditation applies to certification bodies, not tourism entities.	<i>"Our destination is certified by [ACB name] Certification Body, which is accredited by GSTC."</i>
<i>"Our label is GSTC-accredited."</i>	GSTC does not accredit certification schemes, tourism entities, or certification programs. GSTC accredits certification bodies.	<i>"[ACB name] Certification Body is GSTC-accredited."</i>
<i>"Our certification program is GSTC-accredited."</i>	GSTC does not accredit certification schemes, tourism entities, or certification programs. GSTC accredits certification bodies.	<i>"[ACB name] is accredited by the GSTC to certify [hotels / tour operators / MICE / attraction / destinations] to/against the GSTC [name of the scope] Standard."</i>

If you are uncertain about the terminology, please contact us at [accreditation@gstc.org](mailto:accreditation@gstc.org) or [recognition@gstc.org](mailto:recognition@gstc.org) for clarification.

For definitions of terms, please refer to the latest version of the GSTC Accreditation Glossary.

**Note:** 'ACB' refers to 'Accredited certification body.'