GSTC to develop new Criteria with support from the Singapore Tourism Board

*5 April 2023* - The Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), with support from the Singapore Tourism Board (STB), is developing a new Criteria for MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) and Attractions. The GSTC MICE Criteria and GSTC Attraction Criteria will serve as the global sustainability standards for both industries.

## Development of the GSTC MICE Criteria

The **GSTC MICE Criteria** will be developed with the input of relevant stakeholders in the field of MICE and will provide clear sustainability outcomes that the standard seeks to achieve.

The development of the GSTC MICE Criteria is vital to meet the increasing demand for sustainable practices in the tourism sector. The MICE industry must prioritize sustainability to meet the growing demand for sustainable travel options. With more business travelers seeking sustainable options, it makes business sense for tourism companies to prioritize sustainability to meet the evolving demands of their customers. The GSTC MICE Criteria can also guide the industry to make supply chains more sustainable and increase residents' involvement in local events and exhibitions.

Randy Durband, Chief Executive Office, GSTC said, “The development of GSTC MICE Criteria will provide a globally-created and globally-applicable set of sustainability standards that serves as a platform for universal approaches to measurement, monitoring, reporting, and various forms of external verification needed to drive positive impacts from good practices.”

The application of the **GSTC MICE Criteria** has long-term impact, as its continued use can significantly reduce negative environmental impacts, preserve local cultures and cuisines, and support sustainable consumption and production patterns.

**Criteria Development Process**

The Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) has formed a **MICE Criteria Development Advisory Group\***[[1]](#footnote-1), which comprises up to ten organizations from both the public and private sectors with established track record in hosting MICE events. The main objective of this group is to offer their expert opinion and comments to the GSTC Technical Team while GSTC will retain full oversight and control of the Criteria development process. The Advisory Group will also encourage the MICE industry to take part in the Public Consultation and Feasibility Assessment phases of the Criteria Development process.

The whole process of development and revision will be overseen by the International Standards Committee (ISC) of the GSTC. The development and content of the ‘Terms of Reference’ (TOR) endeavor to comply with the requirements of the ISEAL Standard-Setting Code of Good Practice.

More detailed information about the process is available in the GSTC MICE Criteria Development Terms of Reference (TOR) document.

## GSTC Attraction Criteria

Later this year, ​​GSTC will begin developing another set of criteria, the GSTC Attraction Criteria, to enhance the common language of sustainability in attractions. The development of the GSTC Attraction Criteria comes also with the support of the STB, and a specific plan such as TOR will be shared later this year.

## Key Contributor - Role of STB

Following Singapore’s recent certification as a sustainable destination based on the GSTC’s Destination Criteria, STB is demonstrating its commitment by bringing together Singapore’s tourism associations and stakeholders to contribute to GSTC’s global efforts in driving sustainable tourism. This is in line with Singapore’s vision to become a sustainable urban destination, where large experiences come with small footprints.

Mr Keith Tan, Chief Executive, Singapore Tourism Board said, “The Singapore Tourism Board (STB) is pleased to support GSTC in the development of their industry criteria for MICE and attractions. Such internationally-recognised standards are important, as they help destinations and tourism businesses understand if their sustainability efforts are on the right track. We look forward to working closely with GSTC and our industry associations to provide a Singapore perspective and help the tourism sector contribute to a greener world.”

STB, together with Singapore’s industry associations, the Singapore Association of Convention & Exhibition Organisers & Suppliers (SACEOS) and the Association of Singapore Attractions (ASA), will provide feedback, consultation, and industry expertise for the draft Criteria, as well as to encourage industry adoption of the developed Criteria when ready.

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**For media enquiries, please contact:**

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### About the Singapore Tourism Board (STB)

The Singapore Tourism Board (STB) is the lead development agency for tourism, one of Singapore’s key economic sectors. Together with industry partners and the community, we shape a dynamic Singapore tourism landscape. We bring the Passion Made Possible brand to life by differentiating Singapore as a vibrant destination that inspires people to share and deepen their passions.

Websites: [www.stb.gov.sg](http://www.stb.gov.sg) or [www.visitsingapore.com](http://www.visitsingapore.com)

Social media:

[facebook.com/STBsingapore](http://facebook.com/STBsingapore)

[linkedin.com/company/singapore-tourism-board](https://www.linkedin.com/company/singapore-tourism-board)

## More information about the Global Sustainable Tourism Council and the GSTC Criteria:

### About the GSTC

The Global Sustainable Tourism Council® (GSTC®) establishes and manages global sustainable standards, known as the GSTC Criteria. There are two sets: [Destination Criteria](https://www.gstcouncil.org/gstc-criteria/gstc-destination-criteria/)for public policy-makers and destination managers, and [Industry Criteria](https://www.gstcouncil.org/gstc-criteria/gstc-industry-criteria/)for hotels and tour operators. These are the guiding principles and minimum requirements that any tourism business or destination should aspire to reach in order to protect and sustain the world’s natural and cultural resources, while ensuring tourism meets its potential as a tool for conservation and poverty alleviation.

The GSTC Criteria form the foundation for Accreditation of Certification Bodies that certify hotels/accommodations, tour operators, and destinations as having sustainable policies and practices in place. GSTC does not directly certify any products or services; GSTC provides an accreditation program through its partner Assurance Services International to accredit Certification Bodies. The GSTC is an independent and neutral USA-registered 501(c)3 non-profit organization that represents a [diverse and global membership](https://www.gstcouncil.org/membership/member-search/), including national and provincial governments, leading travel companies, hotels, tour operators, NGO’s, individuals and communities – all striving to achieve best practices in sustainable tourism.

Information for media and the press: [www.gstcouncil.org/about/for-the-press](https://www.gstcouncil.org/about/for-the-press/)

### The GSTC Criteria

The Global Sustainable Tourism Council® (GSTC) establishes and manages global standards for sustainable travel and tourism, known as the GSTC Criteria. They are the result of a worldwide effort to develop a common language of globally-applicable guiding principles about sustainability in tourism.

They were developed, and continue to be periodically revised, through extensive public consultation throughout the globe, in both developed and developing countries, striving to adhere to the Standard-Setting Code of the ISEAL Alliance. They serve as vital tools for elevating good practice and policy, as well as driving market demand, by all players in travel and tourism.

**The GSTC Criteria** have been built on decades of prior work and experience around the world, taking into account the numerous guidelines and standards for sustainable tourism from every continent. They are arranged in four pillars:

1. **Sustainable Management**
2. **Socioeconomic Sustainability**
3. **Cultural Sustainability**
4. **Environmental Sustainability**

Criteria are the minimum, not the maximum, which businesses, governments, and destinations should achieve to approach social, environmental, cultural, and economic sustainability. Since tourism destinations each have their own culture, environment, customs, and laws, the Criteria are designed to be adapted to local conditions and supplemented by additional criteria for the specific location and activity.

**The two sets of GSTC Criteria are:**

There are currently two sets: the GSTC Destination Criteria for public policy-makers and destination managers, and the GSTC Industry Criteria for hotels and tour operators.

1. **GSTC Industry Criteria**, abbreviated as GSTC-I, relates to the sustainable management of the private sector travel industry, focusing currently on Hotels and Tour Operators. GSTC-I was last revised in 2016. **The GSTC Industry Criteria can be** [**downloaded here.**](https://www.gstcouncil.org/gstc-criteria/gstc-industry-criteria/)
2. **GSTC Destination Criteria** abbreviated as GSTC-D, relates to the sustainable management of tourism destinations and is intended for public policymakers and destination managers.GSTC-D was first released in 2013 and updated in Dec, 2019. **The GSTC Destination Criteria can be** [**downloaded here.**](https://www.gstcouncil.org/gstc-criteria/gstc-destination-criteria/)

With the **GSTC Criteria,** we intend to raise awareness and education levels of all travel and tourism players of sustainable tourism concepts to support sustainable consumption and production. Adding a third set to the GSTC Criteria - **GSTC MICE Criteria** is the natural progression for the Global Sustainable Tourism Council to ensure **sustainability in the MICE industry.**

With the development of the **MICE Criteria,** GSTC will add a specific training course for the MICE sector. This is an expansion of the existing **GTSC Sustainable Tourism Training Program**, [available here](https://www.gstcouncil.org/sustainable-tourism-training/).

### How to use the GSTC Criteria?

Some of the applications of the criteria include the following:

* Serve as the basis for certification for sustainability
* Serve as basic guidelines for businesses of all sizes to become more sustainable, and help businesses choose sustainable tourism programs that fulfill these global criteria
* Provide greater market access in the growing market for sustainable products, serving as guidance both for travelers and for travel agencies in choosing suppliers and sustainable tourism programs
* Help consumers identify sound sustainable tourism programs and businesses
* Serve as a common denominator for information media to recognize sustainable tourism providers
* Help certification and other voluntary programs ensure that their standards meet a broadly-accepted baseline
* Offer governmental, non-governmental, and private sector programs a starting point for developing sustainable tourism requirements
* Serve as basic guidelines for education and training bodies, such as hotel schools and universities
* Demonstrate leadership that inspires others to act

1. *\* The current MICE Criteria Development Advisory Group include the following organizations: Green Key Global, Osaka Convention Bureau, Singapore Association of Convention & Exhibition Organisers & Suppliers (SACEOS), Sustainable Hospitality Alliance (SHA), Suwon Convention Center, Visit Berlin, Visit Oslo.* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)