



# **GSTC Attraction Criteria**

**with  
Performance Indicators and SDGs**

**Version 1.0  
14 November 2024**

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## Preamble

Demand for more sustainable travel options has been rising in recent years and continues to increase, from the business travel community, leisure travel, regulators, and the public in general. The Attraction industry has a significant impact on the environment and communities, as companies organize events and exhibitions for the promotion of the local region as well as the marketing of their products.

The sustainability of Attraction activities relates directly to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the UN General Assembly. All versions of GSTC Criteria map well to the SDGs. In addition to serving as good guidance for the internal operations of a business, requiring GSTC Criteria compliance by suppliers serves as an efficient filter in contracting to make products and services more compliant with SDG Goal 12 on Responsible Consumption and Production.

The GSTC Attraction Criteria continue a proud heritage of the GSTC as the keeper of a highly inclusive, global process to develop and manage sustainable travel and tourism standards that are truly globally relevant. The Attraction Criteria were developed with the same rigorous, methodical, and inclusive process as the GSTC Industry Criteria and the GSTC Destination Criteria, which caused them to be widely recognized and adopted as global standards by countless government bodies and businesses, regardless of political systems and cultural orientation. They are universal concepts developed without bias.

Some of the uses of the Criteria include the following:

- Help define sustainability in a holistic manner
- Raise awareness of the breadth and nature of sustainability
- Serve as the basis for certification for sustainability
- Serve as basic guidelines for Attraction businesses to become more sustainable, which includes guidance for identifying more sustainable suppliers and service providers
- Provide greater market access in the growing market for sustainable businesses, serving as guidance for the Attraction businesses in choosing suppliers and partners
- Help consumers identify sustainable Attraction businesses
- Serve as a common denominator for information media to recognize sustainable Attraction businesses
- Offer both the public and private sectors a starting point for developing sustainable Attraction business requirements
- Serve as basic guidelines for education and training on sustainable Attraction by universities, hospitality schools, or associations
- Demonstrate leadership that inspires others to act

The Criteria have been developed and revised using the ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Sustainability Systems as a guide and by following the GSTC Standard-Setting Manual version 3.0. Learn more about the inclusive development process of the Criteria at [www.gstc.org](http://www.gstc.org).

## **Criteria Application**

The criteria set out in this document shall be applied to the greatest extent possible unless the criterion is not applicable to a specific situation and circumstances, and this is justified. Specific circumstances may include local (regional or national) regulations and environmental, social, economic, or cultural conditions of the region, among others. Limited resources may also prevent the comprehensive application of all criteria.

Further guidance on these criteria may be found in the supporting indicators and definitions set out in the publication.

## **Criteria Revision**

The Criteria will be revised approximately every 5 years. Plans for revisions will be available on the GSTC Website. At present, the GSTC Criteria Team is the focal point for receiving communications regarding the Criteria. The history of the Criteria development is also available on the website. Please see [here](#).

This document will be updated periodically as new information is developed. If you would like to suggest new indicators or other improvements, please send your suggestion to [criteria@gstc.org](mailto:criteria@gstc.org). Your suggestions will be taken into account during the next criteria revision process.

## **Performance Indicators**

The performance indicators presented here are designed to provide guidance in measuring compliance with the GSTC Attraction Criteria.

## Definitions of Terms Used in the Attraction Criteria

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Attraction</b>	An Attraction is a place of interest that is owned and/or managed by an identifiable entity for the purposes of attracting visitors, operating and delivering services and/or experiences including but not limited to recreation, leisure, natural, historical, cultural, educational, spiritual and/or religious experiences.
<b>Stakeholders of an attraction</b>	All individuals, groups or entities that have an influence over and/or are affected by the development and/or operations of the attraction, including visitors, local and Indigenous communities, staff, suppliers, tenants, sponsors, owners, regulators, government agencies, interest groups, academicians, researchers and scientists, and non-government organizations (NGOs).
<b>Staff</b>	Full-time and part-time staff, excluding volunteers and interns, employed or contracted by the attraction, also known as ‘employees’.
<b>Local produce</b>	Agricultural and/or horticultural products grown at and supplied from a local farm.
<b>Local products</b>	Manufactured and/or crafted products made in and supplied from a local manufactory, usually characteristic to the location and using primarily locally available materials and/or craftsmanship.
<b>Locally sourced (also locally supplied)</b>	Materials, components, ingredients and products that are produced and/or supplied by the local community.
<b>People of all abilities</b>	People, including people with disabilities. Abilities are a spectrum and does not just include two categories of able-bodied vs. disabled.
<b>Protected Areas</b>	A clearly defined geographical space, recognized, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values.
<b>Invasive species</b>	Species which have been introduced to an environment where they are non-native, or alien, and whose introduction causes environmental or economic damage or harm to human health.
<b>Non-transient person</b>	A person who resides in the same location and/or premises for a period of thirty or more days. Local residents and inhabitants are deemed to be non-transient persons.



<b>Stakeholder engagement</b>  (Also public engagement, engagement and “to engage”)	An active, systematic, and planned set of activities to conduct dialogue with, provide information, solicit feedback and guidance, and consult with person(s) and/or group(s) of people who have been identified as being affected and/or impacted by and/or influential to an organization’s decisions, actions, operations and business activities. These person(s) and group(s) of the people are usually deemed “stakeholders”. These engagement sessions will need to be planned, scheduled, and organized in a formal manner, with an agenda, pre-meeting information, meeting attendance, and post-meeting minutes recorded and documented.
<b>Water risk</b>	The probability and estimated severity of an entity experiencing a deleterious water-related event. The Aqueduct Water Risk Atlas maps aggregated scores of 12 key water indicators in 15,000 watersheds around the world. Alternatively, WWF has a Water Risk Filter at <a href="http://waterriskfilter.panda.org/">http://waterriskfilter.panda.org/</a> . Overall water risk identifies areas with higher exposure to water-related risks and it is an aggregated measure of all selected indicators from the Physical Quantity, Quality, and Regulatory and Reputational Risk categories.
<b>Water stewardship</b>	Water stewardship is about taking action to ensure that water is managed sustainably as a shared, public resource. It can be defined as the use of water that is socially equitable, environmentally sustainable and economically beneficial, achieved through a stakeholder-inclusive process that involves site- and catchment-based actions.
<b>Whistleblower policy</b>	A policy that protects the whistleblower where the attraction does not discriminate, disqualify and/or retaliate against a staff member or other person(s) who reports or brings a matter of public concern, such as an activity that may be deemed as illegal, dishonest, unethical and/or improper, before an independent or public body and/or court of law.
<b>Waste hierarchy</b>	A tool that prioritizes/gives top priority to waste prevention and minimization, followed by re-use, recycling, recovery, and finally disposal.
<b>Five domains of Animal Welfare</b>	The Five Domains Model is a science-based structure for assessing animal welfare, which recognizes that animals can experience feelings, ranging from negative to positive. It provides a best-practice framework to assess welfare in animals of all species. It includes nutrition, environment, physical health, behavior and mental domains.
<b>Scope 1-2-3</b>	Scope 1 emissions cover the Green House Gas (GHG) emissions that a company makes directly - for example while running its boilers and vehicles. Scope 2 emissions are the emissions the organization makes indirectly - like when the electricity or energy it buys for heating and cooling buildings, is being produced on its behalf. Scope 3 emissions include all the emissions associated, not with the organization itself, but that the organization is indirectly responsible for, up and down its value chain. For example, from buying products from its suppliers, and from its products when visitors use them.



## **Preamble to the Attraction Criteria**

These criteria and indicators are subject to:

- 1) the size, scale, and type of attraction (such as public, government-linked, publicly-listed, etc.)
- 2) the criterion being applied to an individual attraction on the same site rather than a holding group or company
- 3) the applicability and relevance to the scope and context of the applying attraction and its location and its stage of development







## GSTC Attraction Criteria

Criteria	Indicators	SDGs
<b>SECTION A: Demonstrate effective sustainable management</b>		
<p><b>A1. Sustainability Management System</b></p> <p>The attraction has a long-term Sustainability Management System (SMS) that is suitable to its size and scope, addresses environmental, social, cultural, economic, governance, quality, human rights, health, safety, risk, and crisis management issues and drives continuous improvement.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction has a clearly documented Sustainability Management System that is reviewed and updated annually.</li> <li>2. The Sustainability Management System includes environmental, social, cultural, economic, governance, quality, human rights, health, safety, risk, and crisis management issues.</li> <li>3. The Sustainability Management System identifies the attraction’s key stakeholders.</li> <li>4. The Sustainability Management System includes a set of measurable sustainability goals for the short-term (1 year), medium-term (3 years) and long-term (5 years and beyond), taking into account the tenure of the attraction.</li> <li>5. The Sustainability Management System includes plans to address and manage risks and crisis situations.</li> <li>6. The attraction provides documented evidence of the implementation, performance monitoring, review and update of the Sustainability Management System.</li> <li>7. The Sustainability Management System includes a process for sustainability performance review, achievement of goals and continuous improvement.</li> <li>8. The Sustainability Management System identifies and defines the roles and responsibilities for sustainability planning and implementation within the attraction.</li> <li>9. The Sustainability Management System includes a visitor management strategy.</li> </ol>	
<p><b>A2. Legal compliance</b></p> <p>The attraction complies with all applicable local, national, and international legislation and/or regulations, where relevant including, among others, health, safety, labor, environmental, and animal welfare aspects.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction maintains and makes available an up-to-date list of relevant applicable legal requirements.</li> <li>2. The attraction provides valid certificates and/or documentary evidence of relevant applicable legal compliance.</li> </ol>	





<p><b>A3. Reporting and Communication</b></p> <p>The attraction communicates its sustainability policy, actions and performance to stakeholders.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction publishes an annual sustainability performance report online, shares it with all stakeholders, and makes the report available in an offline format upon request.</li> <li>2. The attraction includes sustainability policies and practices in its internal communications.</li> <li>3. The attraction includes sustainability policies and practices in its external communications.</li> </ol>	 
<p><b>A4. Staff engagement</b></p> <p>Staff are engaged in the development and implementation of the sustainability management system and receive periodic guidance and training regarding their roles and responsibilities in its delivery.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Evidence of staff involvement in the development of the Sustainability Management System is available.</li> <li>2. Evidence of staff involvement in the implementation of the Sustainability Management System is available.</li> <li>3. Records including attendance of courses, orientation, and on-the-job training are available.</li> <li>4. Staff training and instructional materials are available in appropriate languages and formats accessible to people with disabilities as needed.</li> <li>5. Staff hold valid certificates and qualifications in relevant disciplines/skills where necessary and appropriate.</li> </ol>	 
<p><b>A5. Visitor experience</b></p> <p>Visitor experience, including aspects of sustainability, is monitored, analyzed and corrective action is taken.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A visitor feedback system is in place.</li> <li>2. The attraction records and analyzes feedback and responses.</li> <li>3. The attraction provides evidence of improvements and/or corrective action taken.</li> </ol>	
<p><b>A6. Stakeholder engagement</b></p> <p>The attraction engages with its stakeholders in its sustainability policies and practices and is involved in sustainable tourism planning and development in the destination.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction provides evidence that it takes part in meetings/platforms that raise common issues related to the destination or contributes to any destination improvement solutions.</li> <li>2. The attraction is an active member of local stakeholder communities, such as NGOs, and other local public or private bodies, where these exist.</li> <li>3. The attraction takes into account results and decisions of the meetings and interaction with relevant stakeholders for destination management.</li> <li>4. The attraction has formal mechanisms for engaging stakeholders to solicit feedback and input on sustainability policies, practices and initiatives.</li> <li>5. The attraction conducts initiatives to raise awareness among stakeholders and customers about sustainability issues, policies, practices and initiatives.</li> <li>6. Contracts with tenants/lessees are to include sustainability requirements pertinent and relevant to each tenant/lessee.</li> </ol>	 



<p><b>A7. Information and interpretation</b></p> <p>The attraction provides information about and interpretation of its own offerings, products and services, the natural surroundings, local culture, and cultural heritage, as well as an explanation of appropriate behavior on and around its premises.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction makes available information and interpretation material of its offerings, products and services, site and local area, including but not limited to natural and cultural heritage.</li> <li>2. The attraction informs and trains staff about the natural and cultural heritage of the site and/or local area.</li> <li>3. The attraction provides visitors information regarding proper and expected conduct within its premises, facilities, and the surrounding local area and prevents undesirable behavior and actions that could harm and/or put at risk the environment, animals, local wildlife, staff, visitors and stakeholders.</li> <li>4. Information, interpretative and instructional material is available in relevant languages.</li> <li>5. Information and interpretive materials including guidelines for appropriate behavior are prepared in consultation with the local community.</li> <li>6. The attraction prioritizes the use of digital media for communication and information dissemination.</li> </ol>	  
<p><b>A8. Accurate promotion</b></p> <p>The attraction promotes and communicates itself, its sustainability claims, its products and services accurately and transparently and does not promise more than what is being delivered.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Texts and audiovisual material used in promotion are actual experiences and accurate representations.</li> <li>2. Sustainability claims are based on evidence and records of past performance.</li> <li>3. Sustainability claims are truthful and substantiated.</li> </ol>	 
<p><b>A9. Site selection, planning, and development</b></p> <p>Site selection, planning, and development of all facilities and activities take into account the capacity, integrity, and impact to the natural and cultural environment, including any new builds, additions, alterations, and upgrades to existing attractions.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All relevant and required licenses and permits are valid and up-to-date and are made available.</li> <li>2. The attraction consults the local community and addresses any concerns raised.</li> <li>3. The attraction optimizes the use of key resources, i.e. rainwater harvesting, renewable energy, energy-efficient infrastructure, composting, etc.</li> <li>4. The attraction gives priority and preference to local and sustainable materials, practices, and crafts.</li> <li>5. Site selection, size, design, and access have taken into account visual amenities, landscape, cultural, and natural heritage.</li> <li>6. Preservation of archaeological, cultural heritage, and sacred sites has been documented.</li> <li>7. Preservation of connectivity and integrity of natural sites and protected areas has been documented.</li> <li>8. Potential impacts on threatened or protected species have been assessed, and plans have subsequently been adjusted to mitigate and/or eliminate any impact on the threatened or protected species.</li> <li>9. Watercourses/catchments/wetlands are not altered and run-off is reduced.</li> </ol>	  




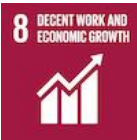

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. Risk factors (including climate change, natural phenomena, and visitor safety) have been assessed, and plans have subsequently been adjusted to minimize and/or eliminate risk.</li> <li>11. All development plans have taken into account the environmental and social footprint.</li> <li>12. Impact assessment (including cumulative impacts) has been undertaken and documented as required by local government regulations.</li> </ol>	
<p><b>A10. Buildings, construction, and infrastructure</b> Buildings, construction, and infrastructure development of the attraction have taken into account the local culture, ecosystems, and biodiversity, including any new builds, additions, alterations, and upgrades to existing attractions.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction gives priority and preference to local and sustainable materials, practices, methods and crafts.</li> <li>2. Native and/or endemic plants obtained from sustainable sources are used in landscaping and decoration.</li> <li>3. The attraction avoids invasive species in landscaping and decoration.</li> <li>4. The attraction has identified, minimized and mitigated the adverse impact on wildlife habitats and local communities.</li> <li>5. Run-off is reduced where possible, and any residue is captured or channeled and filtered and cleaned.</li> <li>6. The attraction selects plants for their ability to tolerate prevailing or anticipated conditions e.g., drought-tolerant plants.</li> <li>7. The attraction sorts and disposes of the waste from construction in an environmentally sound manner.</li> </ol>	  
<p><b>A11. Land, water and property rights</b> The attraction has acquired and used land, water, and property legally and compliant with local community and Indigenous rights, including their free, prior, and informed consent, and involuntary resettlement is averted and not required.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Land ownership and tenure rights are documented.</li> <li>2. User and access rights for key resources, including land and water, are documented where applicable.</li> <li>3. There is documentary evidence of communication, consultation, and engagement with local and Indigenous communities.</li> <li>4. Free, prior and informed consent of local communities is documented, where relevant (showing no involuntary resettlement or land acquisition).</li> </ol>	  



<p><b>A12. Access for all</b></p> <p>Where practical and appropriate, site, facilities and services, including those of natural and cultural importance, are accessible to people of all abilities. Information is made available on the accessibility of sites, facilities, and services.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Site, buildings, and activities are accessible to people of all abilities, persons with physical disabilities and other special needs, as appropriate to the nature of the operation.</li> <li>2. There is evidence of programs to improve accessibility for individuals with various access requirements, such as people with disabilities, pregnant and nursing mothers, people with allergies, and the elderly.</li> <li>3. Where sites and facilities are not immediately accessible, access is provided through the design and implementation of solutions that take into account both the integrity of the site and reasonable accommodations for persons with access requirements that can be achieved.</li> <li>4. Upon request, the attraction consults stakeholders and provides additional accessibility services or equipment when feasible.</li> <li>5. The attraction shares information about accessibility and how to request accessibility services and assistance with visitors prior to and on arrival.</li> <li>6. The communication materials of the attraction that are relevant to people with special needs are provided in accessible formats.</li> <li>7. Details on levels of accessibility within the site and facilities are provided on arrival and as necessary throughout the site.</li> <li>8. The attraction provides staff with guidance and training regarding their roles and responsibilities related to accessibility. Records of training or guidance are available.</li> <li>9. The attraction seeks feedback from visitors, staff and stakeholders about accessibility. Such feedback is analyzed and used for continuous improvement and future upgrades.</li> </ol>	 
<p><b>A13. Managing visitor volumes and activities</b></p> <p>The attraction has a visitor management strategy which is regularly reviewed.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction has a documented visitor management strategy.</li> <li>2. The visitor management strategy monitors and identifies seasonal visitor variations, traffic flow, crowd distribution, and visitor impact on entry, exit, and movement within the attraction throughout the year.</li> <li>3. The attraction monitors and addresses visitor mobility such as high traffic seasons, high-traffic areas, and choke or congestion points within the attraction.</li> <li>4. The attraction identifies, monitors and addresses the impacts of visitor volumes and activities on culture and environment, including through observation and stakeholder feedback.</li> </ol>	 

<p><b>A14. Climate change adaptation</b></p> <p>The attraction identifies and assesses risks and opportunities associated with climate change impacts through proactive measures to mitigate risks while leveraging opportunities for sustainable tourism development.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction has identified relevant climate change impacts and adaptation requirements or aligned with the national/international climate change strategies/action plans.</li> <li>2. The attraction takes into account climate change adaptation in the development and operation of its site and facilities.</li> <li>3. The attraction has an action plan to cope with the identified negative impacts and makes such a plan available and accessible to stakeholders.</li> </ol>	 
<p><b>A15. Risk and crisis management</b></p> <p>The attraction has a risk reduction, crisis management, and emergency response plan that is appropriate to its site and facilities. Key and relevant elements are communicated to visitors, staff, and suppliers. Procedures and resources are established for implementing the plan and are updated regularly.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction has a documented risk reduction, crisis management, and emergency response plan for the site and facilities.</li> <li>2. The plan recognizes a wide range of risks, including natural disasters, terrorism, health, resource depletion, animal welfare and others appropriate to the location and operation.</li> <li>3. The plan includes emergency communications and response procedures with relevant crisis management stakeholders.</li> <li>4. The attraction conducts periodic and timely reviews, updates and improvements to the plan.</li> <li>5. The plan includes staff training on risk and crisis management including emergency response.</li> </ol>	 
<p><b>A16. Sourcing and purchasing</b></p> <p>The attraction's sourcing and purchasing policies favor sustainable, local, and fair-trade suppliers and products. Purchasing procedures are managed to minimize impact on the environment.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction has a written sustainable sourcing and purchasing policy that prefers sustainable, local and/or fair-trade suppliers and products and addresses all products and services used by and channeled through the site subject to public procurement laws.</li> <li>2. The sustainable purchasing policy includes food &amp; beverage, building materials, temporary structures, promotional items, consumables, and souvenirs/merchandise purchased directly by the attraction.</li> <li>3. The attraction's sustainable sourcing and purchasing policy prefers reusable, returnable, and repurposable goods over consumable or disposable goods.</li> <li>4. The attraction's sustainable purchasing policy favors recyclable or recycled-content products when the purchase of consumable or disposable goods is unavoidable.</li> <li>5. The sustainable purchasing policy is being actively implemented and monitored.</li> <li>6. Contracts with suppliers are to include environmental sustainability requirements pertinent and relevant to each supplier.</li> <li>7. The attraction regularly reviews and evaluates the sources of sustainable, local, and fair-trade products.</li> </ol>	  

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. The attraction measures, monitors and manages the proportion of goods and services purchased from locally owned and operated businesses.</li> <li>9. All signage, on-site displays, marketing, promotions and communications materials are posted electronically, reusable for future use and/or printed on local recycled materials and/or recyclable materials.</li> <li>10. The attraction avoids and reduces single use items, especially plastics (in all instances like trade shows, retail/commercial environments) and promotes the same to their suppliers.</li> <li>11. The attraction avoids unnecessary packaging (especially from plastic), with a preference to buy in bulk as appropriate.</li> <li>12. The attraction does not use or sell threatened or endangered species.</li> </ol>	
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Criteria	Indicators	SDGs
<b>SECTION B: Maximize social and economic benefits and minimize negative impacts</b>		
<p><b>B1. Community support</b></p> <p>The attraction actively supports initiatives for local community benefit. Such initiatives shall include but not be limited to education, training, health and sanitation and projects which address the impacts of climate change.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction shows evidence that it engages with the local community in identifying needs and opportunities for community support and development and evaluating their potential benefit/impact.</li> <li>2. The attraction consults and supports the local community financially and/or in-kind. Examples of support include contributions to projects led by local partners relating to the local infrastructure, environment, culture, education, training, small business development, health, or sanitation.</li> <li>3. The attraction continually records and improves the level and nature of contributions made to initiatives / programs in the local community.</li> <li>4. The attraction offers the local community the opportunity to access its site and facilities. Examples of offers include differentiated pricing, special concession periods or organized visits for schools and less-fortunate groups for local residents.</li> </ol>	  
<p><b>B2. Local employment</b></p> <p>Local residents are given opportunities for employment, including temporary and management positions.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction has a policy to prefer local, non-transient residents for all permanent and temporary positions.</li> <li>2. The policy is being actively implemented.</li> <li>3. Local residents are given equal opportunity for advancement and employment in management positions.</li> <li>4. The attraction measures, monitors, and manages the proportion of local non-transient inhabitants of the local community with its total staff strength.</li> <li>5. The attraction measures, monitors, and manages the proportion of local non-transient inhabitants of the local community in management positions.</li> <li>6. The attraction offers training to local residents to enhance their employability.</li> </ol>	 
<p><b>B3. Local suppliers &amp; businesses</b></p> <p>The attraction cooperates with locally-owned suppliers and businesses in the development and sale of sustainable products and services that are based on the area's nature, history, and culture.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction gives locally-owned businesses access to its premises and visitors for commercial activity, where appropriate.</li> <li>2. The attraction provides feedback and advice to locally-owned suppliers, businesses and service providers with whom it engages in the quality and sustainability of their products and services.</li> <li>3. The attraction considers and pursues opportunities for financial, collaborative and cooperative joint ventures, investments and/or partnerships with local entrepreneurs and local businesses, where appropriate.</li> </ol>	  

<p><b>B4. Exploitation, harassment and human trafficking</b></p> <p>The attraction has implemented a policy against sexual or any form of exploitation or harassment and human trafficking, particularly of children, youth, women, Indigenous Peoples, minorities, people with disabilities and all vulnerable groups.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction includes procedure for monitoring, reporting, whistleblowing and responding to incidents of exploitation, harassment, and human trafficking, including forced labor in the policy.</li> <li>2. The attraction communicates the policy internally (examples: onboarding or orientation programs, staff handbooks, management policies) and externally to stakeholders (examples: for visitors: customer care charter; for suppliers and service providers: purchasing policies, purchasing orders, supplier contracts).</li> <li>3. The attraction provides staff with guidance or training relevant to their roles in recognizing and reporting incidents of exploitation or harassment. Records or evidence of training or guidance is made available.</li> <li>4. The attraction consults and engages with the local community, if possible with women-led and youth-led groups, and relevant stakeholders in working against exploitation, harassment and human trafficking, including forced labor.</li> <li>5. The attraction updates and maintains records of all staff, particularly their respective ages, as evidence of their undertaking not to support child labor as defined and prescribed by the International Labor Organization (ILO) conventions.</li> <li>6. The attraction takes action to prevent and respond to any forms of exploitation and/or abuse of, including but not limited to children (people under 18 years old) in travel and tourism.</li> </ol>	  
<p><b>B5. Employment inclusion and equality</b></p> <p>The attraction promotes inclusion and equal employment opportunities at all levels and positions, without discriminating against gender, age, race, nationality, ethnic origin, color, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, genetic characteristics, disability and/or in other ways.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction undertakes to practice, uphold and maintain an inclusive and equal employment policy at all times.</li> <li>2. The attraction has identified groups at risk of discrimination, including but not limited to women and local minorities, and monitors the proportion of staff drawn from these groups.</li> <li>3. Staff have been trained to recognize bias and discrimination and to identify groups at risk of discrimination, including women, local minorities, Indigenous Peoples, and people with disabilities.</li> <li>4. The attraction offers employment and advancement opportunities, including in management positions, without discrimination based on race, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, parental status, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, or other non-merit-based factors.</li> </ol>	 



<p><b>B6. Decent work</b></p> <p>Labor rights are respected, a safe and secure working environment is provided, and staff are paid at least a living or fair wage that is commensurate with their skills, competencies and qualifications. Staff are offered regular training, experience, and opportunities for advancement.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction demonstrates awareness of and compliance with national labor regulations and/or International Labor Organization (ILO) standards and regulations.</li> <li>2. The attraction pays staff no less than the legal minimum wage prescribed by local and national regulations. Where such minimum wages are not regulated, the attraction pays staff a fair wage commensurate with their skills, competencies and qualifications comparable to local wages for similar work.</li> <li>3. The attraction offers training appropriate to the staff roles and relevant advancement and/or job enlargement opportunities. Training records are maintained for all staff, showing the level and frequency of training received.</li> <li>4. The attraction provides full-time staff with health insurance (if healthcare is not provided universally in the country where the attraction is based) and participates in the national social security program, if available. The attraction has a program to cover costs for staff for job-related injuries and illnesses.</li> <li>5. The attraction provides all staff with a safe and secure working environment.</li> <li>6. Water, sanitation, hygiene, workplace safety, and personal safety such as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and first aid amenities are provided for and accessible by all staff.</li> <li>7. Staff satisfaction is monitored, reviewed and managed.</li> <li>8. A staff grievance mechanism, issue and/or case escalation process is in place, documented in a human resource or staff handbook and communicated to all staff.</li> <li>9. The attraction maintains, updates and communicates a human resource or staff handbook covering the code of ethics and code of conduct, and employment processes and procedures for recruitment, selection, promotion, termination, retirement and disciplinary action, which is available and accessible to all staff.</li> <li>10. The attraction has a Whistleblower Policy.</li> </ol>	  
<p><b>B7. Community services</b></p> <p>The activities of the attraction do not jeopardize the provision of basic services to local and neighboring communities. A feedback mechanism is in place for local communities and any reduction in the availability of basic services caused by the attraction is addressed.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction monitors, reviews and manages its impact on the availability of basic services, such as food, water, energy, security, safety, health care, medical care, sanitation and/or emergency services.</li> <li>2. A communication mechanism is in place for local communities to report any reduction, restriction, and/or encumbrance in the availability of basic services.</li> <li>3. The attraction addresses and takes corrective action to any reduction, restriction and/or encumbrance in the availability of basic services to local communities. Such actions, including consultation and/or follow-up with affected stakeholders, are to be documented.</li> </ol>	  



<p><b>B8. Local livelihoods and traditional access</b></p> <p>The attraction’s activities do not adversely affect local traditional access to livelihoods, including land and aquatic resource use, rights-of-way, transport, and housing.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Local and traditional access to livelihoods is considered in the development and operational decisions.</li> <li>2. A communication mechanism is in place for local communities to report any instance of reduced, restricted and/or encumbered access to transport, local residences and local livelihoods.</li> <li>3. The attraction takes corrective action where appropriate, documents it, and consults the affected stakeholders for feedback.</li> <li>4. The operations and activities of the attraction do not restrict or adversely affect access to local residences, rights-of-way and transport.</li> </ol>	 
<p><b>B9. Code of conduct</b></p> <p>The attraction has a code of conduct to guide the behavior and actions of staff, suppliers and visitors.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The code of conduct reflects the attraction’s policies regarding appropriate behavior, and approaches to prevent the risks of exploitation, harassment, and human trafficking.</li> <li>2. The code of conduct encourages respectful treatment of all people regardless of race, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, parental status, national origin, age, disability, or political affiliation. The code of conduct shall include guidelines for verbal and non-verbal communications and interactions, appropriate physical contact and close proximity.</li> <li>3. The code of conduct includes guidelines for interactions with children, including guidance on appropriate physical contact, close proximity, and verbal and non-verbal communications. In particular, taking photos or videos of children, and giving gifts to children is discouraged without the permission of the child and child's parent or legal guardian.</li> <li>4. The code of conduct includes guidelines for interactions with vulnerable and marginalized groups, including people with disabilities. In particular, taking photos or videos of adults in the local community is discouraged without the subject's permission.</li> <li>5. The attraction communicates the code of conduct internally (examples: onboarding or orientation programs, staff handbooks, management policies) and externally to stakeholders (examples: for visitors: customer care charter; for suppliers and service providers: purchasing policies, purchasing orders, supplier contracts).</li> <li>6. The attraction provides staff guidance and training about the code of conduct. Records or evidence of training or guidance are available.</li> </ol>	   

Criteria	Indicators	SDGs
<b>SECTION C: Maximize benefits to cultural heritage and minimize negative impacts</b>		
<p><b>C1. Cultural interactions</b></p> <p>The attraction adheres to international and national good practices and engages and consults with local communities and stakeholders for agreed-upon interpretations and presentations of, and, visits to Indigenous, ethnic and local communities, as well as their culture, heritage, history and people, and culturally or historically sensitive sites. The attraction ensures authenticity, accuracy and objectivity, while minimizing adverse impacts and maximizing local benefits and visitor fulfilment.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction demonstrates awareness of, and compliance with existing and/or prevailing international, national and local regulations, good practices and guidance for the interpretation and presentation of and visits to cultural, heritage and/or historical sites, as well as Indigenous, ethnic and local communities.</li> <li>2. The attraction engages and consults with the Indigenous, ethnic and local communities and stakeholders in creating, interpreting and presenting the attraction’s rendition of the culture, heritage, history and people of the subject site and/or community, reviewing guidance, and creating and agreeing upon additional guidelines as necessary.</li> <li>3. The attraction provides all staff with guidance on appropriate behavior, as well as information and practices related to the local customs, traditions and etiquette.</li> <li>4. The attraction takes measures to educate and advise visitors and prevent them from violating and disrespecting the local culture, heritage and traditions.</li> <li>5. Measures are in place to avoid culturally inappropriate and disrespectful interaction with people of Indigenous, ethnic and local communities.</li> <li>6. A communication mechanism is in place for local communities and Indigenous Peoples to report adverse impacts from visitors.</li> <li>7. The attraction takes corrective action where appropriate, documents it, and consults the affected stakeholders for feedback.</li> </ol>	  
<p><b>C2. Protecting cultural heritage and traditional access</b></p> <p>The attraction supports the protection, preservation and enhancement of local properties, sites, and traditions of historical, archaeological, cultural and spiritual significance. It does not impede access for local residents and stakeholders.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction supports through policy and/or investment in the protection and enhancement of local cultural heritage located on its site and operations, where appropriate.</li> <li>2. The attraction provides financial and/or in-kind support in the protection, preservation, enhancement and enjoyment of cultural heritage in the local area, where appropriate.</li> <li>3. The attraction allows and does not impede nor restrict local traditional access to cultural heritage.</li> </ol>	

<p><b>C3. Presenting culture and heritage</b></p> <p>The attraction incorporates authentic and accurate elements of traditional and contemporary local culture in its operations, design, decoration, interpretation, presentation, cuisine, merchandise, and souvenirs while respecting and observing all intellectual property rights.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Local culture is reflected and presented authentically and accurately in the design, décor, furnishing, presentation and installations of the attraction.</li> <li>2. Intangible cultural heritage and traditions are evident in amenities, such as shows, performances, music, food and beverage, souvenirs, merchandising and events.</li> <li>3. All copyright and intellectual property rights have been respected, observed, and documented.</li> <li>4. The attraction consults the local community and local stakeholders in the interpretation and presentation of local cultural heritage.</li> </ol>	 
<p><b>C4. Artifacts</b></p> <p>Historical, cultural and archaeological artifacts are not sold, traded or displayed, except as permitted by local and/or international regulations.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Any use of artifacts is declared and reported with documentary substantiation in accordance with local and/or international regulations and/or permissions.</li> <li>2. Where artifacts are used, laws and bylaws have been identified and permissions of use have been granted.</li> <li>3. Visitors are prevented from removing, damaging and/or disfiguring displayed or exhibited artifacts.</li> <li>4. The attraction undertakes to educate with authentic and accurate information on the displayed or exhibited artifacts and takes measures to prevent visitors from violating and disrespecting artifacts, such as disfigurement and graffiti.</li> </ol>	

Criteria	Indicators	SDGs
<b>SECTION D: Maximize benefits to the environment and minimize negative impacts</b>		
<b>D1 Conserving resources</b>		
<p><b>D1.1. Energy conservation</b></p> <p>Energy consumption is measured by type, and steps are taken to minimize overall consumption.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction has a written energy conservation/efficiency policy.</li> <li>2. The attraction uses renewable energy sources when available and measures the proportion of renewable energy in the total energy usage.</li> <li>3. The proportion of renewable energy in total energy usage is monitored and managed.</li> <li>4. The attraction pursues opportunities to produce renewable energy on-site where possible.</li> <li>5. The attraction measures the energy used in its operations, and the energy use over which it has direct influence or control. Energy is measured by type, such as gas, electricity, transportation fuel, etc. Data may be measured directly by the attraction or collected from relevant stakeholders.</li> <li>6. The attraction has annual energy consumption reduction targets.</li> <li>7. The attraction takes steps to minimize the overall consumption of energy, such as using energy-efficient lighting, natural ventilation, heating, and cooling equipment and/or turning off equipment and vehicles that are not in use.</li> <li>8. The attraction provides guidance to suppliers, visitors, and staff on minimizing energy use.</li> </ol>	
<p><b>D1.2. Water conservation</b></p> <p>The attraction assesses the Water Risk and measures and minimizes overall water consumption. In locations where Water Risk is high, the attraction identifies and pursues context-based water stewardship goals.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction has identified, assessed and documented the Water Risk in the location of its operations (see GSTC Glossary).</li> <li>2. In locations where Water Risk has been assessed as high, the attraction identifies and pursues water stewardship goals.</li> <li>3. The attraction measures water used in its operations and the uses over which it has direct influence/control. Data may be measured directly by the attraction or collected from relevant stakeholders.</li> <li>4. The attraction takes steps to minimize overall water consumption, including the use of water-saving equipment, devices and practices.</li> <li>5. The attraction's water originates from a legal source which has not been previously affected, and is unlikely to affect them in the future.</li> <li>6. The attraction has annual water consumption targets to reduce and minimize water usage and waste.</li> <li>7. The attraction guides guidance to suppliers, visitors, and staff on minimizing water use.</li> </ol>	

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

**D2 Reducing pollution**

**D2.1. Greenhouse gas emissions**

The attraction measures its greenhouse gas emissions, sets reduction targets, and takes steps to avoid and reduce emissions. Offsetting of the attraction's remaining emissions is encouraged.

1. The attraction measures greenhouse gas emissions in Scope 1, and Scope 2 and areas of significant influence in Scope 3 where practical.
2. The attraction has greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets aligned with Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) guidance.
3. The attraction takes steps to avoid and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from its operations and areas of influence.
4. The attraction encourages and collaborates with suppliers to avoid and reduce significant greenhouse gas emissions throughout the supply chain.
5. The attraction offsets its greenhouse gas emissions that remain after avoidance and reduction efforts have been exhausted, utilizing Carbon Credits recognized by national or global attractions (e.g., UNFCCC), where practicable.
6. The attraction has a policy to prefer offsets that are verified by a credible and independent organization.
7. The attraction encourages and collaborates with suppliers to avoid and reduce significant greenhouse gas emissions.
8. Where food is offered and/or sold, the attraction provides vegetarian/vegan options to reduce the carbon footprint of food services.





**D2.2. Transportation**

The attraction seeks to reduce transportation requirements and actively encourages the use of cleaner and more resource-efficient transport alternatives by visitors, staff, suppliers, and within its own operations.

1. The attraction actively encourages visitors to use the cleanest and most resource-efficient transport available. Information is provided prior to arrival.
2. The attraction actively encourages staff to use the cleanest and most resource-efficient transport options available.
3. The attraction provides resources such as specific information, itineraries, and incentives to encourage visitors' use of public transport.
4. The attraction favors local suppliers and minimizes multiple deliveries and extended supply chains.











<p><b>D2.3. Wastewater</b></p> <p>Wastewater, including gray water, is effectively treated and is only reused or released safely, with no adverse effects on the local population or the environment.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction documents the treatment arrangements for wastewater generated by the attraction’s activities.</li> <li>2. Wastewater from the attraction’s operations and activities is disposed of to a municipal or government-approved treatment system, if available.</li> <li>3. Where suitable municipal wastewater treatment is not available, the attraction works with local authorities to ensure that wastewater has no adverse impacts on people and the environment.</li> </ol>	 
<p><b>D2.4. Solid waste</b></p> <p>The attraction measures its waste and has mechanisms in place to reduce waste and reuse, donate, or recycle it. Action is taken to eliminate or reduce single-use items, especially plastics. Any residual waste disposal has no adverse effect on the local population or environment.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction measures solid waste by relevant waste types, such as recyclables, food waste, waste to landfill, and waste to incinerators, as applicable.</li> <li>2. The attraction has developed, documented, and implemented a solid waste management plan according to the Waste Hierarchy. The plan includes actions to reduce overall waste as well as reuse, recycle, or recover materials. The plan addresses food waste and construction materials where applicable.</li> <li>3. The attraction takes action to eliminate/reduce single-use items, especially plastics.</li> <li>4. Waste is disposed of in a government-run or approved facility.</li> <li>5. Where suitable municipal waste treatment and disposal is not available, the attraction works with local authorities to ensure that waste disposal has no adverse impacts on people and the environment.</li> <li>6. Staff are trained and guided to minimize, categorize, sort, and dispose of waste by its appropriate type.</li> <li>7. Visitors are guided to minimize and dispose of waste by its appropriate type.</li> </ol>	 
<p><b>D2.5. Harmful substances</b></p> <p>The attraction minimizes the use of harmful substances including but not limited to pesticides, paints, swimming pool disinfectants, and cleaning materials and substitutes when available with innocuous products or processes. All storage, use, handling, and disposal of chemicals are properly and safely managed.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction maintains an inventory and safety data sheet (SDS) for all harmful substances, including but not limited to pesticides, paints, disinfectants, and cleaning materials.</li> <li>2. The attraction substitutes the use of harmful substances with sustainability-certified alternatives when available.</li> <li>3. The attraction stores, handles, and disposes of chemicals in accordance with appropriate standards and regulations.</li> <li>4. The attraction posts relevant safety warnings about harmful substances for staff and visitors.</li> </ol>	 

<p><b>D2.6. Minimize pollution</b></p> <p>The attraction implements practices to minimize pollution from sound, light, access traffic, runoff, erosion, ozone-depleting substances, and air, water, and soil contaminants.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction identifies potential sources of pollution covered in the criterion, including through stakeholder consultation and feedback.</li> <li>2. The attraction monitors and reviews potential sources of pollution covered in the criterion.</li> <li>3. The attraction takes action to minimize and, where possible, eliminate pollution from sources covered in the criterion.</li> </ol>	 
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**SECTION D: Maximize benefits to the environment and minimize negative impacts**

**D3 Conserving biodiversity, ecosystems, and landscapes**

<p><b>D3.1. Biodiversity conservation</b></p> <p>The attraction supports and contributes to biodiversity conservation, including through appropriate management of its own property. Particular attention is paid to natural protected areas and areas of high biodiversity value. Any disturbance of natural ecosystems is anticipated and addressed, and a compensatory contribution to conservation management is provided.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction demonstrates awareness of protected and conserved areas, and areas of high biodiversity value within its premises and surrounding area.</li> <li>2. The attraction prevents, and where prevention is not possible, minimizes, and finally as a last resort rehabilitates any disturbance in natural ecosystems.</li> <li>3. The attraction provides and records monetary and/or in-kind support for biodiversity conservation in the area.</li> <li>4. The attraction actively manages the property to support biodiversity conservation, including raising awareness and education.</li> <li>5. The attraction identifies and mitigates activities that potentially disturb wildlife and habitats including through stakeholder consultation and feedback.</li> <li>6. The attraction remedies any disturbances that occur.</li> <li>7. The attraction encourages and provides opportunities for visitors to support biodiversity conservation.</li> <li>8. Where the attraction is nature-based and/or located in or near a natural area, the attraction engages with government agencies, local conservation NGOs and/or relevant stakeholders to identify environmental risks and takes measures to reduce and/or eliminate them.</li> </ol>	 
<p><b>D3.2. Invasive species</b></p> <p>The attraction takes measures to avoid the introduction of invasive species. Native species are used for landscaping and restoration wherever feasible, particularly in natural landscapes.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction identifies and monitors its site and all areas of operation for the presence of invasive species and all corresponding risks.</li> <li>2. The attraction takes action to ensure invasive species are not introduced or spread.</li> <li>3. A program is in place to eradicate and control invasive species.</li> <li>4. The attraction prioritizes the use of native species in the landscaping of its site.</li> </ol>	 

<p><b>D3.3. Interactions with wild animals</b></p> <p>Observation of and interactions with wild animals in the wild and in a captive environment are responsibly managed to avoid adverse effects.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction complies with existing local, national, and international regulations and science-based guidelines concerning interactions with wild animals in the wild, including viewing and, where applicable, interactions with wild animals in a captive environment.</li> <li>2. Direct interactions with wild animals in the wild (in particular feeding, swimming with, touching, holding or close photographs) are not permitted unless they are specifically permitted by applicable regulations and in compliance with internationally accepted standards or guidance.</li> <li>3. Methods used to handle, train and maneuver wild animals in a captive environment are to follow regulated guidelines.</li> <li>4. Baits, lures, supplemental feeding (including chumming), noises (including call playback), scents or other artificial stimuli are not used to attract wild animals in the wild.</li> </ol>	 
<p><b>D3.4. Animal welfare</b></p> <p>All attractions and/or facilities that keep, own or manage animals are to be appropriately and duly licensed by a government authority or appointed agency and subject to regular inspections. Housing, care, handling and viewing practice for all animals (wild and domestic animals, irrespective of circumstance) shall meet the highest standards in animal welfare. No species of wild animals will be acquired, bred or held captive, except by authorized and suitably equipped persons and for properly regulated activities in compliance with local and international law and recognized guidelines for animal-based tourism activities.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Where any animals are temporarily or permanently located at the attraction, or are transported between attractions, their housing, care, and handling complies with local, national and international regulations, meet species-specific standards of animal welfare and adheres to the concept of the Five Domains of Animal Welfare.</li> <li>2. Personnel responsible for animal care are suitably licensed and/or have appropriate qualifications and experience.</li> <li>3. The attraction regularly monitors and maintains records of the health and welfare of the animals, including their dietary requirements, any preventive and curative healthcare, behavioral traits, and any abnormalities incurred, for each animal in their possession and care.</li> <li>4. No wild animals are kept in captivity for the sole purpose of show, performance, display or public interaction. Instead, all animal-based activity must form part of a science-based approach to animal welfare, positively contribute to animal conservation and species survival, provide public education and be guided by recognized conservation expert advice.</li> <li>5. All attractions keeping animals for display or exhibition that are recognized as zoos or aquariums, must adhere to and be compliant with the provisions of World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) Code of Ethics and Animal Welfare, in the provision of species-specific care, and be certified to internationally recognized standards for zoological facilities.</li> <li>6. All attractions and/or facilities with animals, regardless of size, scope or scale, must be appropriately and duly licensed by a government authorities or appointed agency, where available and/or applicable.</li> </ol>	 



	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Animal-based activities and practices that compromise animal health and welfare or subject animals to inhumane handling or unnatural behavior are strictly prohibited. Examples include but are not limited to: shows and performances, handling and contact interactions with wild animals, walking or contact interactions with categorized dangerous animals (including cetaceans) and the use of animals for begging or touting.</li> <li>8. The attraction does not participate in the acquisition or breeding of wild animals except by authorized and suitably qualified and equipped persons in compliance with local and/or international law. Captive breeding programs managed by captive facilities must be part of a science-based conservation management plan for the species, which contributes directly to improving populations in the wild.</li> <li>9. Wild animal acquisition must be conducted under the direct authorization of a government authority or appointed agency of that country of origin, and only for demonstrable species conservation purposes. Animal acquisition, from the wild or a captive facility, must follow national and international regulations, including but not limited to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), and the respective IUCN guidelines.</li> </ol>	
<p><b>D3.5 Wildlife harvesting and trade</b></p> <p>Wildlife species will not be harvested, consumed, displayed, or traded, except as part of a regulated activity that ensures that their utilization is sustainable and in compliance with local and international laws and recognized guidelines.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The attraction is aware of and complies with relevant laws, regulations, and guidelines pertaining to wildlife harvesting, consumption, display, and trade.</li> <li>2. Visitors are informed of regulations pertaining to wildlife harvesting, consumption, and trade and of the need to avoid buying illegal products/souvenirs derived from threatened species of wildlife notified by the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species or the CITES Appendices.</li> <li>3. Where hunting is legally permissible, it is scientifically-based, managed properly, carried out sustainably, and adheres to conservation principles.</li> </ol>	