

GSTC Strategic Plan 2020

Background: The Global Sustainable Tourism Council is a global, multi-stakeholder membership organization dedicated to setting baseline sustainability standards for travel and tourism and applying the standards as an Accreditation Body that governs certification of sustainable products.

Born as a strategic coalition of partners the UN Foundation, the UN Environmental Program, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), and Rainforest Alliance, supported by many others, the GSTC brings together businesses, governments, non-governmental organizations, academia, individuals and communities engaged in and striving to achieve best practices in sustainable tourism. The GSTC serves as the international body for promoting education, understanding and adoption of global sustainable tourism practices. At the core of its work are the GSTC Criteria, which are developed and periodically revised via extensive and inclusive public consultation, striving to adhere to the Standards-Setting Code of the ISEAL Alliance. The Accreditation Program is designed to adhere to the Assurance Code and Impacts Code of the ISEAL Alliance.

Vision: Tourism fulfills its potential as a vehicle for social, cultural, and economic good while removing and avoiding any negative impacts from its activities in terms of environmental and social impacts.

Mission: To be an agent of change in the world of sustainable travel and tourism by fostering the increased knowledge, understanding, adoption and demand for sustainable tourism practices.

GSTC Criteria: The GSTC Criteria provide globally-applicable guiding principles. They serve as the basis of GSTC activities. There are two sets of criteria: GSTC Industry Criteria for the private sector and Destination Criteria for the public sector. GSTC Industry Criteria provide guiding principles for sustainability to all subsectors and business types, with specific Performance Indicators provided for hotels/accommodations and for tour operators including DMCs and land-transport providers. These criteria represent the minimum requirements necessary for any travel and tourism businesses and destinations 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.

2020 Strategic Plan

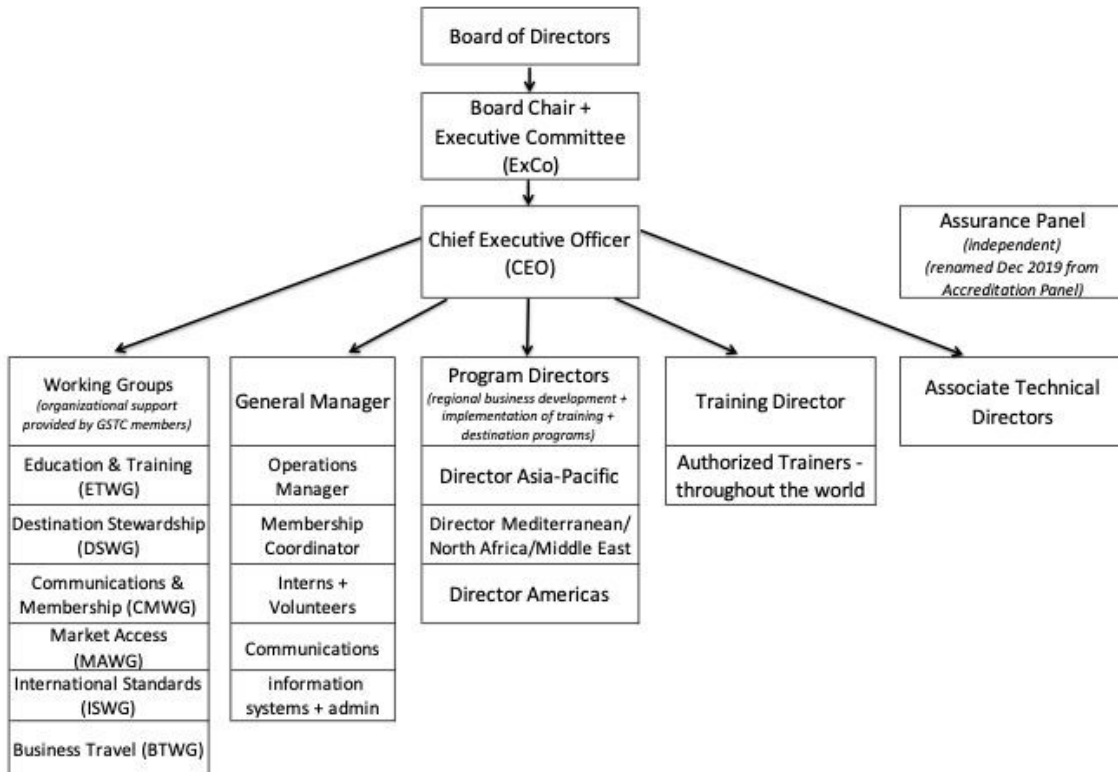
Overview: GSTC will continue to promote the widespread application of the GSTC Criteria as global baseline standards for sustainable travel and tourism. The Criteria serve as vital tools for elevating good practice and policy, plus driving market demand, by all players in travel and tourism.

All activities undertaken by the organization in 2020 will be designed to support one or more of the following strategic goals:

<u>Strategic Goals</u>	<u>Activities in 2020 to support the goals</u>
1. Maintain the GSTC Criteria for relevance to current market conditions	a) Manage the conversion of widespread application of the GSTC Destination Criteria from the original 2013 version to the revision of December 2019 and the formal January 2020 release of GSTC-D v2.0 b) Continue to consider the value of expanding the GSTC Industry Criteria into additional subsectors
2. Encourage greater market access to certified sustainable travel product	a) Promote the concept of B2B procurement based on eco-labeling of products certified by GSTC-Accredited Certification Bodies b) Encourage OTA's (online travel agencies) to provide information on sustainable-certified hotels and tour operators

<p>3. Raise awareness and education levels of all travel and tourism players of sustainable tourism concepts in order to support sustainable consumption and production</p>	<p>Continue to grow the Sustainable Tourism Training Program (STTP) to provide more access to more tourism players</p>
<p>4. Continue to enhance compliance monitoring and enforcement of the Accreditation Program per the ISEAL Alliance Assurance Code</p>	<p>Recent development of the accreditation program allows for the significant reporting that relates to both the ISEAL Assurance Code and the Impacts Code (#4 and #5)</p>
<p>5. Develop impacts reporting mechanisms per the ISEAL Alliance Impacts Code</p>	
<p>6. Support the enhancement of tourism destinations' sustainable policies and practices through the application of the GSTC Destination Criteria and GSTC Destination Program.</p>	<p>a) Encourage the widespread adoption by destinations of the GSTC Destination Criteria</p> <p>b) Support destinations to manage more sustainability via the STTP and GSTC Criteria-based assessments</p>

Organizational Structure - The GSTC is a membership-based not-for-profit, non-governmental organization, which represents diverse stakeholders in tourism. Its organization and activities are guided by By-Laws and are conducted through the following organizational structure:



The [Board of Directors](#) is responsible for governance oversight of the council’s mandate, program of work, and operations. A semi-autonomous [Assurance Panel](#) manages the Accreditation Program and the “Recognition” of standards. Working groups, with representation by board members, undertake initiatives that support the strategic plan as it relates their designated [program areas](#) and are advisory in nature. The organization is managed by a [Secretariat](#) led by the Chief Executive Officer that leads and coordinates the implementation of the objectives and initiatives of the organization.