

GSTC Announcement: Call for Accredited Certification Bodies for Destination

Transitional Destination Certification Policy (v.2.0)

Date : July 5, 2023

To : GSTC Accredited Certification Body for Destination

CC : GSTC Assurance Panel Chair

1. Purpose

This document provides a short-term solution for occasional confusion between destinations and attractions. GSTC expects to reach greater clarity and a permanent solution on the distinction between definitions for attractions and destinations during the process of developing GSTC Attractions Criteria from Q4 2023 to Q4 2024.

Contacts: accreditation@gstcouncil.org

2. Change history

Version number	Date of release	Description of changes
1.0	19/05/2023	First announcement of Transitional Destination Certification Policy
2.0	04/07/2023	Amended expressions for clearer delivery of the eligibility for the transitional destination certification. Removal of the information on the ineligible candidates to prevent confusion. Addition of the effective date. Formatting changes. Contact email address change.

3. Effective Date

This transitional destination certification becomes effective on 19 May 2023.

GSTC Announcement: Call for Accredited Certification Bodies for Destination

4. Eligibility for the transitional destination certification

Places/sites that include all the following elements **will be eligible for** Destination Certification:

- Expanse of natural or cultural resources that require stewardship (e.g., national park, wilderness, island, protected area, etc.);
- Providing multiple tourist activities regardless of accommodation or community inside; and
- Connecting tourist visits/activities with the surrounding economy in the case there is a micro community that does not have much economic activities except their own living or there is no community existing.

Note: The neighboring community will not be included in the geographical scope for certification but will be audited to community relevant criteria of GSTC Destination Criteria.

5. Decision on the eligibility when there is a doubt:

If a CB cannot be sure if a client place/site is eligible for GSTC-D certification,

- Submit an official request to the GSTC to review the place/site.
- The GSTC Secretariat (Assurance Team) will review the case.
 - If it requires further review, the Secretariat will bring it to the Assurance Panel.
- The result will be sent to the CB.

Note: The procedure for the review will be developed by the Secretariat.

6. Transition to the Attraction Certification

- When the GSTC has the Attraction Certification Program, the certified places/sites under this new policy will be reviewed whether they fit in the definition of attraction and will be transferred to the Attraction Certification, if proper.
- The CBs will make a separate list of the destinations certified under this new policy.

GSTC Announcement: Call for Accredited Certification Bodies for Destination

Annex A. Definition of destination for the transitional certification

GSTC uses the following two definitions;

- A tourism destination is a physical space with or without administrative and/or analytical boundaries in which a visitor can spend an overnight. It is the cluster (co-location) of products and services, and of activities and experiences along the tourism value chain and a basic unit of analysis of tourism. A destination incorporates various stakeholders and can network to form larger destinations. (<https://www.gstccouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/GSTC-Destination-Criteria-v2.0.pdf>)
- A destination is a geographical area consisting of all the services and infrastructure necessary for the stay of a specific tourist or tourism segment. Destinations are the competitive units of incoming tourism. (<https://www.gstccouncil.org/gstc-criteria/glossary/>)