



The QualityCoast Standard

Standard for the certification of tourism sustainability of island and coastal destinations through the QualityCoast Award

The QualityCoast Standard for the certification of island and coastal destinations as sustainable tourism destinations consists of two parts:

1. Destinations comply to the 2nd draft version of the Destination Criteria as issued by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC, Annex 1). If full compliance is prohibited by the local financial situation, local economies of scale, or major obstacles at regional or national level, the destination confirms its willingness to comply to the Criteria as soon as external obstacles are removed.
2. Provide maximum transparency on the performance of the destination on (a) the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) Destination Criteria, and (b) all QualityCoast BasiQ indicators (Annex 2).

Compliance to the Standard requires the confirmation of an independent 3rd party Local Expert who serves as Auditor.

The QualityCoast Award is owned and managed by the Coastal & Marine Union – EUCC. EUCC ensures the independent issuing of the QualityCoast Awards by:

- a. Not allowing any local, regional or park authority in its membership.
- a) Appointing an International QualityCoast Jury, responsible for assigning one or two of its members to check the independent Local Expert's report.
- b) Providing the unique mandate to the QualityCoast Jury to decide about the Award, in full agreement with the Local Expert. The Award Certificate is signed on behalf of the Jury, not on behalf of the EUCC Board.

Adopted in Leiden, January 3rd, 2013

Annex 1 – GSTC Destination Criteria vs 0.2

<p>SECTION A: DEMONSTRATE SUSTAINABLE DESTINATION MANAGEMENT</p>
<p>A1 Tourism Strategy</p> <p>The destination has established and is implementing a multi-year tourism strategy that is publicly available, is suited to its scale, that considers environmental, economic, social, cultural heritage, quality, health, and safety issues, and was developed with public participation.</p>
<p>A2 Tourism management organization</p> <p>The destination has an effective organization, department, group, or committee responsible for a coordinated approach to sustainable tourism. This group has defined responsibilities for the management of environmental, economic, social, and cultural heritage issues.</p>
<p>A3 Monitoring</p> <p>The destination has a system to monitor, publicly report, and respond to environmental, economic, social, and cultural heritage issues.</p>
<p>A4 Climate change adaptation</p> <p>The destination has a system to identify challenges and opportunities associated with climate change. This system encourages climate change adaptation strategies for development, siting, design, and management of tourism facilities. The system contributes to the sustainability and resilience of the destination.</p>
<p>A5 Inventory of attraction sites</p> <p>The destination has an up-to-date, publicly available inventory of its key tourism assets and attractions including natural, historical, archaeological, religious, spiritual, and cultural sites.</p>
<p>A6 Planning regulations</p> <p>The destination has planning guidelines, regulations, and policies that integrate sustainable land use, design, construction, and demolition. The regulations protect natural and cultural heritage, are publicly communicated, and are enforced.</p>
<p>A7 Access for all</p> <p>All tourist sites and facilities, including those of natural, cultural and historic importance, are accessible to all, including persons with disabilities and others who have specific access requirements. Where such sites and facilities are not immediately accessible, access should be afforded through the design and implementation of solutions that take into account both the integrity of the site and such reasonable accommodations for persons with access requirements as can be achieved.</p>
<p>A8 Property acquisitions</p> <p>Laws and regulations regarding property acquisitions exist, are enforced, consider communal and indigenous rights, and do not authorize resettlement without informed consent and/or full compensation.</p>
<p>A9 Tourist satisfaction</p> <p>The destination has a system to monitor, to publicly report and, if necessary, to take action to improve tourist satisfaction.</p>
<p>A10 Sustainability standards</p> <p>The destination has a system to promote sustainability standards consistent with the GSTC criteria for tourism enterprises.</p>
<p>A11 Safety and security</p>

The destination has a system to prevent and respond to tourism-related crime, safety, and health hazards.
A12 Crisis and emergency preparedness and response
The destination has a crisis and emergency response plan that is appropriate to the destination. Key elements are communicated to residents, tourists, and tourism-related enterprises. The plan establishes procedures and provides resources and training.
A13 Promotion
Promotion is accurate with regard to the destination and its products, services, and sustainability claims. The promotional messages are authentic and respectful.
SECTION B: Maximize economic benefits to the host community and minimize negative impacts
B1 Economic monitoring
The direct and indirect economic contribution of tourism to the destination's economy is regularly monitored. These results are publicly reported.
B2 Local career opportunities
The destination provides equal employment and training opportunities for local residents. The opportunities are open to women, youth, minorities, and other vulnerable populations.
B3 Stakeholder participation
The destination has a system that enables stakeholders to participate in tourism-related planning and decision making on an ongoing basis.
B4 Local community opinion
Residents' aspirations, concerns, and satisfaction with tourism are regularly monitored, recorded and publicly reported. Care is taken to ensure that key stakeholders are included and that responsive action is taken where needed.
B5 Local access
The destination protects, monitors, and safeguards local resident access to natural, historical, archaeological, religious, spiritual, and cultural sites.
B6 Tourism awareness
The destination provides regular programs to residents to enhance their understanding of tourism opportunities, tourism challenges, and the importance of sustainability.
B7 Preventing exploitation
The destination has a defined system and established practices to prevent commercial, sexual, or any other form of exploitation and harassment, particularly of children, adolescents, women, and minorities.
B8 Support for community
The destination has a system to enable tourism-related enterprises to support community and development initiatives.
B9 Supporting local entrepreneurs and fair trade
The destination has a system that supports local entrepreneurs and promotes fair trade principles.
SECTION C: Maximize benefits to communities, visitors, and cultural heritage and minimize negative impacts
C 1 Attraction protection

The destination has a policy and system to conserve key natural, historical, archaeological, religious, spiritual, and cultural sites, including scenic, cultural, and wild landscapes.
C2 Visitor management
The destination has a visitor management system for attraction sites that includes measures to preserve and protect key natural and cultural assets.
C3 Visitor behavior
The destination has publicly available guidelines for visitor behavior that are designed to minimize adverse impacts
C4 Cultural heritage protection
Historical and archaeological artifacts are not illegally sold, traded or displayed.
C5 Site interpretation
Interpretive information is provided at key natural, historical, archaeological, religious, spiritual, and cultural sites. The information is communicated in relevant languages.
C6 Intellectual property
The destination has a system to ensure respect for the tangible and intangible intellectual property of individuals and communities.
C7 Visitor contributions
The destination has a system that encourages visitors to volunteer or contribute to community development, cultural heritage, and biodiversity conservation.
SECTION D: <i>Maximize benefits to the environment and minimize negative impacts</i>
D1 Environmental risks
The destination has identified key environmental risks and has a system in place to address these.
D2 Protection of sensitive environments
The destination has a system to monitor the impact of tourism on sensitive environments and protect habitats and species.
D3 Wildlife protection
The destination has a system to ensure compliance with local, national, and international standards for the harvest or capture, display, and sale of wildlife (including both plants and animals).
D4 Greenhouse gas emissions
The destination has a system to encourage tourism-related enterprises and services to measure, monitor, report, and mitigate their greenhouse gas emissions.
D5 Energy conservation
The destination has a system to promote energy conservation, measure energy consumption, and reduce reliance on fossil fuels. The destination encourages tourism-related enterprises to conserve energy and use renewable energy technologies.
D6 Water management
The destination has a system to conserve and manage water usage. The destination encourages tourism-related enterprises to manage and conserve water.
D7 Water security
The destination has a system to monitor its water resources to ensure that use by tourism is compatible with the water requirements of the destination community.

D8 Water quality

The destination has a system to monitor drinking and recreational water quality. The monitoring results are publicly available.

D9 Wastewater

The destination has clear and enforced guidelines in place for the siting, maintenance and testing of discharge from septic tanks and wastewater treatment systems.

D10 Solid waste reduction

The destination has a system to ensure solid waste is reduced, reused, and recycled. The destination encourages tourism-related enterprises to adopt waste reduction strategies.

D11 Light and noise pollution

The destination has guidelines and regulations to minimize noise, light, and visual pollution. The destination encourages tourism-related enterprises to follow these guidelines and regulations.

D12 Low impact transport

The destination has a system to increase the use of low-impact transport, including public transport, in the destination.

Annex 2 – BasiQ 3.1 indicators (titles only)

N	NATURE
N1	% nature area
N2	% protected nature area; (inter)national; local & regional
N3	% of protected marine area (MPA)
N4	% open and unbuilt area
N5	Opportunities to observe coastal & marine fauna
E	ENVIRONMENT
E1	Number of beaches awarded with a Blue Flag
E2	Number of marinas awarded with a Blue Flag
E4	% of Excellent bathing water points
E5	% of Good bathing water points
E7	% Permanent open water
E8	% of waste water treated before discharged into sea
E9	% of solid waste collected separately
E10	Air pollution in the destination
E11	Exposure to noise, of airports in particular
E12	% Renewable energy consumption
E14	Local production of renewable energy per 100 inhab.
E16	% of coastline length with seawalls and revetments
E18	% of coastline length with groynes and breakwaters
E19	Climate adaptation: protection and resilience of the coast
E20	Presence of touristic bathing beaches
E21	Presence of marinas
C	LOCAL IDENTITY & CULTURAL HERITAGE
C1	Cultural heritage with UNESCO World Heritage status
C2	Number of important monumental buildings
C3	Number of museums (incl. modern museums)
C4	% small scale cultural landscape
C5	Villages, towns and city centre(s) in local or traditional style
H	HOST COMMUNITY & SAFETY
H1	From independent source: Assessment of satisfaction of the destination by visitors
H2	From independent source: Transparency index (Transparency International)
H3	From independent source: Gender Gap index
H4	From independent source: Maplecroft Human Rights Risks index
B	TOURISM & BUSINESS
B1a	Subsidies received for the construction or modernization of fishing boats
B1b	Subsidies received for scrapping fishing boats
B1	Impact of the destination on the marine ecosystem
B3	Tourism seasonal pressure: number of busy months
B4	Number of accommodations with a sustainability or eco-label recognised by QualityCoast
B5	% of hotels with a sustainability or eco-label recognised by QualityCoast