



Guide to the application of the QualityCoast Award

2015

Version 2015/1
March 2015

Coastal & Marine Union - EUCC
Leiden – Barcelona – Malta - Klaipeda



QualityCoast is operated by the Coastal & Marine Union - EUCC. EUCC is financially supported by the European Commission. EUCC – QualityCoast is member of the Green Destinations Partnership, and of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC).

Application procedure

Once the registration is accepted, applicants can start completing the following steps:

- a) Fill in the Application Form electronically in Excel, following the instructions in this manual.
- b) Prepare a schematic map, indicating the boundaries of the destination, and the key features of your destination (features indicated on the General tab of the Form).
- c) Select 10 high quality digital pictures (preferably 2000 x 3000 pixels, free of copyright for us) that well illustrate some of the criteria. These pictures will be used in our website and publications. Please mention the name of the photographer; if you don't mention this name, we will use the picture only with a reference to the destination name. Please also send us the digital logo of the destination.
- d) You may annex documents that you consider very important for the assessment. Please check whether the QD-QC Team is able to read the language of the annexes.
- e) Please send the completed Application Form, pictures and annexes (digital format on a CD/DVD or USB pen drive) by post to:
EUCC QualityCoast
P.O. Box 11232
NL-2301 EE Leiden, The Netherlands
or by e-mail to: secretariat@qualitycoast.info.
Please note that e-mail annexes larger than 4 MB per e-mail will not arrive.
- f) Payment of the Participation fee (see *Participation Fees* below)
Well before sending your Application Form to EUCC, please request for an invoice of the non-reimbursable Participation fee, which amount depends on the size of the applicant (see table below), and is payable to:
EUCC / Kust & Zee
ING Arnhem, the Netherlands
IBAN NL 85 INGB 0001 025914
Swift/BIC Code INGBNL2A

Please note that the assessment process will only start after receipt of the payment, because for the first year this fee covers the cost of the assessment and review process by the QC Team, local expert and Jury, and serve as a contribution to common international publicity (page in the Award flyers, website etc.).

Completing the Application Form

You are advised to have the Application Form completed by your own local or regional tourism destination manager, or by a dedicated team including your own staff. Of course you can be assisted by external experts. But it is important to increase the capacity among your own staff in sustainable tourism planning and management.

Please ask the QC Secretariat or your national QC Coordinator if they are planning to organise a sustainable tourism seminar in your region or country. Such seminars will not only increase the capacity of your team of tourism destination managers, but will also provide direct assistance in completing the QC Application Form.

About the Excel file and tabs

The Form is an excel file composed of 4 sheets (tabs):

1. **General Info: All yellow cells need to be filled in.** Please indicate what kind of Award you are applying for, and what kind of destination you are.

General Information	
Name of Applicant	
Please specify are you	
Name of the destination	
Region	
Country	
Type of completion (mm/yyyy)	

Purpose (tick one)		Remarks (optional)
Quality Coast Award	<input type="radio"/>	
Quality Coast Nature Award	<input type="radio"/>	

Contact information	
Application prepared by	
Organisation or position in relation to applicant	
E-mail	
Phone	
Fax	
Postal Address	

Baseline information		Remarks (optional)
Population of territory		
Surface above water mark (ha)		
Length of coastline, lakeshore or length of riverside (km)		

	Land Use type	In number of hectares	% of territo
Built-up Areas	(1) Urban areas, (2) Industrial areas, (3) Military areas, (4) Other built-up areas (5) Parks, (6) Forests, (7) Agricultural areas, (8) Pasture, (9) Other (specify)		
Non built-up Areas	(10) Marine areas, (11) Other (specify)		

(*Please indicate land use categories on the MAP of the territory)



2. Quality with the 20 Award criteria mostly consists of BasiQ indicators.

Category	Code	Indicators: CORE indicators (mandatory) are in coloured cells	Unknown	No	Little	Limited	Good	Max	Rate	Instruction	
Criterion	01 NATURE	N1 CRITERIUM: NATURE & CONSERVATION	SELF RATE								All requested information should be given in the cells below. Try to be very brief, not writing more than five lines. Separate annexes may be attached.
		Presence of nature in the territory	In addition to the core indicators (coloured cells): Please complete at least 1 of the optional indicators (white) for this criterium, below								
Indicators	1.1	% wild nature area within the destination (terrestrial, protected and unprotected) (BasiQ N1)	unknown								
	1.2	% of destination that is designated for protection (ETIS/D.7.1)	unknown								
	1.2.a	National / internationally protected - Names and type of designation of the protected nature areas								Names and type (overwrite here)	
	1.2.b	Local - Names and type of designation of the protected nature areas								Names and type (overwrite here)	
	1.3	Distance between the destination's touristic centre and the nearest (terrestrial/marine) protected nature area (BasiQ N3)								Km (overwrite here)	
	1.4	The % of the sea or of other large waters that are under a protection regime for nature conservation (incl. under Natura 2000). FOR THE SEA: up to 12 nautical miles zone (BasiQ N3)		unknown							
	1.5	The overall ecological impact of tourism development before 1992								1 very bad, 5 very good	

3. **Policy and GSTC** with the 20 Award criteria mostly consists of GSTC-D suggested performance indicators.

4. **YourChoice** with the 20 Award criteria mostly consists of ETIS and ECO XXI.

Indicators and Provision of Data

In the Quality, Policy and GSTC and YourChoice sheets (tabs) you are requested to provide information for the whole territory of the destination. This information should be as recent as possible.

Detailed clarification how and which information should be provided for the different indicators is given through the whole form via inserted remarks.

For all criteria, there are 3 types of indicators situated in 3 different sheets:

- **Quality tab**, you are requested to provide information on all mandatory (coloured cell) indicators and at least one uncoloured for each criterion (please follow instruction in the form).
- **Policy and GSTC** (coloured cells) are generally compulsory, so please try to address all of them. You are requested to address at least 75% of the GSTC-D indicators per criterion. If you have no or low compliance to indicators that are less relevant for the destination, you may ignore it and indicate why they are less relevant; you may do so with up to 25% of the indicators and criterion). In case you address less than 75% of GSTC indicators in the Policy tab, please compensate that in the YourChoice tab.
- **YourChoice** are optional indicators (not coloured); you are not requested to provide information unless you find appropriate indicators for the destination and/or want to compensate information from the Policy and GSTC tab.

For the provision of data there are two columns:

- *Column 3: Self Rate.* Here you are kindly requested to provide a self-assessment for your destination. When you tick an option in the column Rate will automatically appear 1-No; 2-Little; 3-Limited; 4-Good, Sufficient; 5-Maximum. Clarify with examples when you indicated 4 or 5. For the GSTC-indicators in the Policy and GSTC tab, you are invited to clarify external obstacles for improvements; this is not mandatory, but if you provide useful arguments or information, this may increase your score! We also use this information to improve or edit the GSTC-criteria for next years.
- *Column 4.* Here you are kindly requested to provide information, following the instructions on the sheet.

Addressing the minimum number of Core indicators is compulsory and in case the applicant fails to do so, the score for this indicator will be 1/5 (1 out of 5).

Usually the weight factors of Core criteria are higher than of the optional criteria; this means they make a larger contribution to the calculation of the average score for a criterion.

Applicants are encouraged to use the optional indicators to provide additional information, in particular if they will provide positive elements that better describe the efforts of the destination; this will additionally increase the score of the criterion. However, when no information is provided for an optional indicator, this will have no effect to the average of the criterion.

“Most important improvement(s) made in the last 2 years”

Please briefly describe the most important improvement(s) made in the past two years related to any criteria of a certain category.

For second time applicants, please consider the improvements that you expected in the previous application (2013); the Jury will evaluate information provided here against the situation described in 2013 and in the previous Jury report and recommendations.

If you do not complete this field, the Jury will assume that no improvements are made.

“For 2nd time applicants: perceptions from stakeholders / QC Committee”

2nd time applicants are encouraged to gather opinions and views from important stakeholders in the territory. Relevant stakeholders’ initiatives contributing to sustainability in the area can be mentioned,

A NGO organising beach clean-ups;

Or: the local hotel owners association pushed the Local Authority for a better waste management. The municipality has therefore worked with the association to review the possibilities.

Destinations that have formed a QC Committee should also use this section to provide their views and conclusions of discussions.

“Other important information, problems and constraints”

In the end of each category you will have the chance to provide any other information on any issue that you find relevant to be considered but also aspects that may be constraining the performance of the applicant in the criterion (e.g. if a particular issue is not within the jurisdiction of the applicant as reason for weak performance).

“Most important improvement(s) planned for the next 2 years”

Please briefly describe the most important improvement(s) planned for the next two years. This information will be evaluated when the destination re-applies for a QC Award in the future.

QualityCoast Committee

Since 2011 Awarded destinations are encouraged by the Jury to establish a local QualityCoast (or QualityDestination) Committee as a platform to discuss the Jury recommendations and their implementation, with representatives from stakeholders: NGOs and the business sector. In this way the Jury hopes to foster stakeholder participation, participatory planning, knowledge based management, etc. On the basis of this, the Committee can contribute to the preparation of the next QualityCoast application (in which case the input can be included in the section “Perceptions from Stakeholders / Input from local Committee”).

Key tips

Tip 1: the Application Form includes many optional indicators and the applicant has many opportunities to select those optional indicators that best fit the local situation (usually you will have to provide clarification at least one for each of the 20 criteria). Please use the clarification (small notes in the cells) in the electronic version of the Application Form.

Tip 2: you are kindly requested to provide brief information in all “Core indicators”.

Tip 3: try to be as brief as possible. We can always ask further information if needed.

Tip 4: in large figures or percentages there is no need to be very precise, the order of magnitude is most important.

Tip 5: in case you complete less than 75% of GSTC indicators in the 3. Policy and GSTC tab, please compensate that in the 4. YourChoice tab.

Tip 6: tick rate "max" in the 3. Policy and GSTC tab when the criterion is regulated by a national or regional policy, and there is a full implementation in the destination.

We wish you good luck!

In case of any questions, please let us know.

The QualityCoast Team