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• Introduction

• Part I: Indicators for Sustainable Development for Tourism Destinations

• Part II: Global Sustainable Tourism Council & Criteria
• Tourism industry key income earner & employer (esp for LEDCs)

• Tourism industry is complex, diverse, dynamic and pervasive – becoming more so

  ○ Climate change imperative has added new layer of complexity – and will cause significant change and restructuring over next 10-20 years

  ○ GDP & GNH agenda – likely to become increasingly relevant
KEY ISSUES 2

- Tourism planning goes beyond NTOs & embraces other government ministries & departments

- Complexity confusing to other ministries & departments – see only issue-based agendas & their role, not the whole picture

- Difficult for NTOs to get: a) political support; b) donor / development agency support; and, c) the human & financial resources needed to maximise industry returns & benefits

- What role can tourism indicators, GSTC & tourism observatories play in delivering:
  a) greater political, financial & human resource support to NTOs
  b) stakeholder buy-in to sustainable & responsible tourism?
WHY HAVE INDICATORS?

• Measure change and stress – assess risk and management needs

• Substantiate the needs for human and financial resources for effective management

• Help define desired outcomes – align with national development agenda

• Facilitate sustainable planning and management processes
INDICATORS LEAD TO

- Better decision-making – lower risks & costs
- Identification of emerging issues & impacts – to allow for prevention & corrective action, as well as maximisation of benefits
- Performance measurement – evaluate progress of plans and activities
- Reduced risk of mistakes – identification of limits
- Greater accountability & credible source of information
- Continuous planning & policy improvement – build solutions into management processes
INDICATORS AT DIFFERENT LEVELS

• National level (arrivals, visitor spend, length of stay, etc..)

• Regional level (flights & routes, cruise terminals, arrivals, etc..)

• Specific destinations (hotel numbers, employment data, sites visited, sewage treatment, food safety, etc..)

• Individual sites (seasonal visitors, energy consumption, community benefits, heritage conservation, etc..)

• Tour companies (tour numbers, employees, visitor satisfaction, training, social responsibility, etc..)

• Tourism establishments (recycling / waste management, noise levels, design / landscaping, gender equity, etc..)
TYPES OF INDICATORS

• **Early warning indicators** – decline in visitor numbers

• **Indicators of stress** – water shortages, crime

• **State of the industry** – occupancy rates, duration of stay

• **Impact of tourism activity** – expenditure, deforestation, direct & indirect employment

• **Management effort & effectiveness** – activity costs to address issues

• **Management effect** – changes in arrivals, improved environmental conditions
USES

- Assess wellbeing of host communities
- To sustain cultural and natural assets – manage scarce resources
- Measure tourist satisfaction
- Promote health and safety
- Maximise earnings & capture economic benefits
- Limit negative impacts – waste, sewage, air-pollution, noise levels
- Inform destination planning and control
ISSUES

• Qualitative & quantitative – which is most appropriate

• Not an end in themselves – part of a broader process

• Can be time consuming & expensive to collect, process, present and communicate data

• Stakeholders process – interpreted differently by different stakeholders – difficult to define limits of growth or change

• Other competing demands – growing the industry is often the over-riding priority

• Must be strategic, policy driven – identify key & specific indicators
1. Identify key issues (problems, targets, opportunities, concerns etc.) where information and measures are most needed

2. Identify indicators and develop specific measures to better understand, manage and represent these issues

3. Integrate the indicators into a comprehensive planning, management and communication processes

4. Secure highest level of government & stakeholder buy-in and support for specific indicators & measures
• Indicators should be destination specific – relevant to the specific characteristics of the site or destination

• Participatory approach to generating data & information should facilitate stakeholder buy-in

• Base-line indicators are needed to compare, standardise and communicate key points

• Wider objective to promote bench-marking and information exchange between national and international destinations, while allowing each destination to adopt indicators specific to the destination’s own needs
Peninsula Valdes, Argentina

- New ecosystem destination
- Fragile habitat for sea lions, whales
- Limited protection in place
- Opportunity to anticipate and prevent damage to key assets
- Indicators needed to measure impacts on destination

Key indicators: use levels, habitat preservation, wildlife numbers
COZUMEL, MEXICO

• Island cruise ship destination - up to 11 ships per day

• Fragile reef ecosystem

• Visitor numbers may equal resident population

• Limited water availability

Key indicators: total tourist numbers, ratio to locals, water use, levels of ecosystem protection, currency leakage
BLACK SEA COAST, ROMANIA

- Beach and historic resorts on Black Sea coast
- Concern for beach pollution, image overseas, service quality
- Large-scale inclusive resorts targeted at foreign markets
- Need to manage quality of product and image in key markets
- Concern for loss of custom to other nations now that Central Europeans have access abroad.

Key indicators: water quality, service quality, tourist satisfaction
BHUTAN

- Unique approach with tariff system
- High seasonality
- Limited product / focus upon festivals
- Limited geographical spread / concentrated benefits
- Access difficulties – into and around the country
- Lack of market exposure / product misconceptions

Key indicators: contribution to GDP, total bed-nights, alignment with GNH (income & employment / district), arrivals by district, carbon footprint
QUESTIONS

• What are the most important indicators in use in your country at the national, provincial/district & flagship levels?

• Why are these most important?

• Are arrivals taken as the most important indicator by other government agencies – what others are seriously considered?

• Would defining, approving and communicating “key indicators” at the national, provincial/district & flagship levels make any difference to strategy planning and resource allocation?

• If yes, does your NTO have the resources and means to define indicators for the national, provincial/district & flagship levels? What partnerships would be useful to set these wheels in motion?
In 2007, a coalition of 27 organizations (formerly the GSTC Partnership, now the Global Sustainable Tourism Council) came together to develop the “Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria”

Since then the GSTC has...

- analyzed more than 4,500 criteria from more than 60 existing certification criteria banks, and

- received comments from over 2000 stakeholders
WHY WAS THE GSTC NECESSARY?

- Too many labels
- Little tourist understanding of what the labels are, what they stand for, what they measure and what they mean
- Little if any independent monitoring
- To avoid “green-washing”
- Criteria will allow true certification of sustainable practices by hotels, resorts & destinations
- Give travellers confidence that they can make choices to help the sustainability cause
The Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria have been developed in accordance with The International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labeling (ISEAL) Alliance Code of Good Practice.

The Code requires the Criteria to receive input every two years until feedback is no longer provided or longer unique.
CRITERIA FOR....

**Businesses** – 36 criteria under 4 main themes

- Sustainable management practices (12)
- Socio-economics (10)
- Cultural heritage (4)
- Environment – conserving resources (4) & minimising pollution (6)

**Destinations** – 45 criteria under 4 main themes

- Sustainable management practices (15)
- Socio-economics (10)
- Cultural heritage (7)
- Environment (13)


ALIGNMENT WITH EXISTING PROGRAMS & TRENDS

• Criteria designed as a way to harmonize and build credibility for existing certification and other programs

• Designed as an input for certification and other programs to demonstrate credibility by aligning with a globally accepted and endorsed baseline standard

• Achieve credibility and legitimacy through increased transparency of their certification procedures

• Achieve beneficial cooperative links with international tourism distribution channels

• Align their internal standards with those of other businesses and organizations in ways that lead to partnerships between certification programs
How will the criteria be used?

- Tourism providers, managers & destinations can use the GSTC Criteria as part of their process of identifying and assessing sustainability performance, both internally and externally.

- Also, the Global Sustainable Tourism Council is developing an accreditation program that will work with existing certification programs to align themselves with the GSTC Criteria and will accredit those that meet or exceed the Criteria and other procedural criteria.
• What’s the level of awareness of the GSTC in your country at the national, provincial/district levels and within the business community?

• How do you see the Criteria being received by different stakeholders – does it have a useful priority role to play now or in the future?

• What sort of enabling environment is required to make use of the Criteria?

• What capacity-building is required to ensure the Criteria becomes an effective management tool?