

GLOBAL BUSINESS TRAVEL



Learn about our membership with the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) and what it means for companies like yours

If your company is like many businesses today, you have sustainability goals. As your advocate, American Express Global Business Travel (GBT) is here to help you deliver on those goals. That's one of the reasons why we recently we became a member of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) which sets global standards for sustainable travel and tourism. These standards create common language around sustainability as it relates to hotels, accommodations, and the travel industry as a whole.

How GSTC is different

GSTC does not certify travel providers directly but partners with impartial third-party organizations that apply certification based on GSTC's requirements. Because of that, companies like yours have a credible verification of sustainability claims which carry weight and substance.

How that translates to hotels

When a hotel is certified by an accredited certification organization, it means that they comply with the GSTC Criteria, which serve as the global social and environmental standards.

Hotels and accommodations that are certified as sustainable and have completed a licensing agreement, can display the GSTC logo – helpful to know as travelers book hotels and you give thought to a sustainability strategy.



Common uses for GSTC Criteria

While the GSTC Criteria serve a multitude of purposes for tourism, let's look at just some of the use cases which may apply to you. GSTC Criteria:

- Serve as basic guidelines for businesses of all sizes to become more sustainable.
- Help businesses choose sustainable tourism programs that fulfill global criteria.
- Provide greater access to sustainable products.
- Serve as guidance for travelers and travel agencies when choosing suppliers and sustainable tourism programs.
- Help consumers identify sound sustainable tourism programs and businesses.

Diving deeper into the Criteria

GSTC Criteria for hotels and accommodations are framed around four themes which are also applied to the entire tourism industry.

Here's a look at those themes and some of the actions needed to remain compliant:

<p>Demonstrate effective sustainable management</p> <hr/> <p>Implement a long-term sustainability management system that is suitable to its size and scope.</p> <hr/> <p>Address environmental, social, cultural, economic, quality, and human rights.</p> <hr/> <p>Address health, safety, risk, and crisis management issues.</p> <hr/> <p>Drive continuous improvement.</p>	<p>Maximize social and economic benefits to the local community</p> <hr/> <p>Support initiatives for local infrastructure and social community development. Examples involve:</p> <hr/> <p>Education and training.</p> <hr/> <p>Health and sanitation.</p> <hr/> <p>Projects which address the impacts of climate change.</p>	<p>Preserve cultural heritage</p> <hr/> <p>Follow international and national good practice and locally agreed guidance to encourage visits to indigenous communities and culturally or historically sensitive sites. The intent is to minimize adverse impacts and maximize local benefits and visitor fulfilment.</p>	<p>Minimize negative impacts to the environment</p> <hr/> <p>Identify and calculate significant greenhouse gas emissions when possible.</p> <hr/> <p>Implement procedures to avoid or minimize those emissions.</p> <hr/> <p>Offset remaining emissions.</p>
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To support these themes, GSTC provides key performance indicators so that hotels and accommodations can gauge how well they're complying with the GSTC Criteria.

Supporting your needs

Sourcing the right hotels that align with your sustainable strategy requires careful thought. To inform your decisions, you may want to look further into GSTC Criteria, their mission, and outcomes.

[Click here to learn more.](#)