



Sustainability & HR: Two Peas...



Speaker:

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Acknowledgement

I would like to acknowledge that I am honoured to present today in the Ottawa region, which is the traditional and unceded territory of the Anishinabeg Algonquin, who have stewarded, travelled and inhabited these lands for millennia.

Agenda

- 01 | Introduction to Sustainable Tourism
- 02 | GreenStep's Sustainable Tourism Framework
- 03 | Sustainability & HR Practices
 - UN SDGs
 - Creating a Sustainability Team
 - GreenStep's Certification & HR Best Practices
 - Measuring your Baseline
- 04 | Sharing your HR Sustainability Journey



Introduction

- Business Development Executive with GreenStep since January 2024
- From 2015 to 2023, Account Manager - Travel Trade, International & Emerging Markets (sustainable tourism) with Destination Sherbrooke
 - GSTC Professional Certificate - Summer 2021
 - Sustainable Tourism Policy - February 2022
 - Strategy and Action Plan - February 2023
 - Eastern Townships sustainable tourism steering committee member
 - Destination Certification - Fall 2023
 - Co-created sustainable business cohort in Townships - Summer 2023





Let's change the world...

GreenStep Overview

- Founded in 2008 to help businesses and organizations measure and improve sustainability performance
- GreenStep provides industry-specific assessments, certifications, tools, and consulting support to help organizations measure and improve their sustainability performance.
- GreenStep is the only **Canadian-owned** company offering tourism business and destination certifications with criteria recognized by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC)



Our Clients & Partners

GreenStep has worked with thousands of businesses across Canada and internationally with a focus on the tourism and hospitality industry





Building a Common Language





Sustainability Today

"Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

- Bruntland Report, 1987



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS





SDG Examples relating to HR from [UN Tourism](#)



Tourism requires a **large workforce**. Thus, it has the potential to promote sustainable and inclusive socioeconomic development; and **skillful workers** are key for a sustainable tourism sector to prosper. Education programmes tailored to tourism businesses and their workers can increase opportunities for career growth, development and provide the knowledge and the skills necessary to succeed in the field. Furthermore, tourism stakeholders may play a significant role in sensitizing clients and local communities on their contribution to the SDGs.



SDG Examples relating to HR from [UN Tourism](#)



Tourism is one of the sectors with the **highest share of women** who are employed or entrepreneurs, although women working in tourism are often concentrated in low-skilled or informal work. The sector can be a tool for women to unlock their potential, helping them become fully engaged and leading in every aspect of society. It can empower women in multiple ways, particularly through the provision of jobs and through income-generating opportunities in small - and larger-scale tourism and hospitality-related enterprises.



SDG Examples relating to HR from [UN Tourism](#)

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



Responsible and sustainable management of tourism will unlock tourism's potential to stimulate **job creation**, particularly for vulnerable groups, contribute to **rural development**, favour **economic diversification** through the tourism value chain, promote **cultural awareness and inclusiveness**, and help preserve **local cultural traditions**, among others.



SDG Examples relating to HR from [UN Tourism](#)



Tourism can be a powerful tool for **reducing inequalities** if it engages local populations and all key stakeholders in its development. Tourism serves as an effective means for economic integration and diversification, and poverty reduction. It can impact on earned income and people's livelihoods, development of local and rural economies, as well as on the natural and cultural environment. Furthermore, it can contribute to urban renewal and rural development by giving people the opportunity to prosper in their place of origin.

SDG Examples from UN Tourism

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



Due to its cross-sectoral nature, tourism can **strengthen public-private-community partnerships** and engage multiple stakeholders – international, national, regional and local – to **work together** to achieve the SDGs and other common goals. Public policy and innovative financing are at the core of achieving the 2030 Agenda. Tourism development contributes to all goals, not just for those involved in tourism, as the development of the sector can mandate a wider range of effects through diverse partnerships.



Sustainable Tourism





What is Sustainable Tourism?

“Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.”



The Potential of Sustainable Tourism



*“...the question is no longer if sustainable tourism is a viable solution but rather, just how far can we take it to **realize tourism’s full potential to bring benefits** to local communities, support green growth and economies, foster innovation, safeguard cultural and natural heritage, and protect the environment.”*

Why sustainable tourism?

- Climate crisis caused by GHGs
- Tourism is responsible for +/- 10% of global emissions
- Client demand
- Staff demand
- Operational costs
- Regulatory/fiscal requirements
- The desire to do better

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS





Let's Get Started



Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC)

- Develops and manages the GSTC Criteria, providing global baseline standards for sustainable travel and tourism
- Provide criteria for both destinations and tourism businesses
- **Does not** offer certification — they provide formal recognition of standards and accreditation to certification bodies, such as GreenStep





 GreenStep | Sustainable
Tourism

- 01 | An online platform and assessment framework for tourism businesses
- 02 | Aligned with Global Sustainable Tourism Council criteria, UNWTO indicators, and the UN SDGs





Management

Effective sustainability planning and management.

Sustainability Management System

Compliance

Building and Infrastructure

Guest & Employee Engagement

Marketing Communications





Social & Economic

Ensure viable, long-term economic operations, and socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are fairly distributed, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities, contributing to poverty alleviation.

Destination Management/Collaboration

Local Employment and Labour Rights

Social and Economic Monitoring

Ethical, Fair Trade and Local Products

Accessibility





Natural & Cultural

Respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserve their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values, and contribute to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance.

Cultural Heritage

Biodiversity, Ecosystems, and Landscapes





Environmental

Maintain essential ecological processes and help to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity.

Energy

Water Conservation

Solid Waste

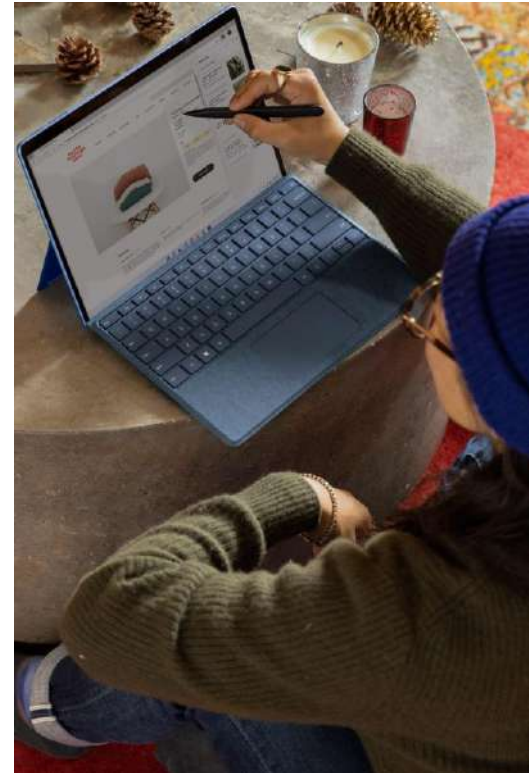
Minimizing Pollution

Environmental Monitoring



Sustainable HR Visioning 101

1. Create a Sustainability Team
2. HR & GreenStep's GSTC Criteria
3. Establishing a Baseline



Creating a Sustainability Team

Invite members from each department or operational area to be members of your sustainability team.

Expected Time Commitment:


- 1 hour a week to actioning sustainability
- 1 hour per month to meeting as a team

Pro Tip: Ensure the General Manager or at least one senior manager is a member of the sustainability team.

Your Sustainability Team

Which roles would you select to participate on the sustainability team?

<u>Full Time Staff</u>	<u>Part Time Staff</u>	<u>Community Members</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Owner(s)● Management● Accounting/Finance● Human Resources● Maintenance/Cleaning● Administrators● Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Front line employees● Backend services (kitchen, cleaning, etc.)● Contracted workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Community leaders/elected officials● Community organizations● Tourism operators/suppliers

A globe made of blue and green plastic waste, held by many hands. The background is a blurred outdoor scene with mountains.

Tourism HR Canada Sustainability Committee

Common Ground

SINCE MARCH 2022

Tourism **HR**
Canada



RH Tourisme
Canada



PRIORITIES FOR COMMON GROUND

1

Alignment with Mandate

- Alignment with **the organization's core mandate of building a world-leading tourism workforce sustainably.**
- Importance of **integrating sustainability principles into workforce development activities.**

2

Focus on Sustainability

Prioritize efforts to promote sustainability within the Canadian tourism sector, emphasizing the organization's commitment to lowering its carbon footprint, growing its social handprint, and integrating sustainable practices into workforce development initiatives.

3

External Communication

- Optimize our diverse network to reach stakeholders effectively.
- Highlight the integration and cross-promotion of messaging across these channels to ensure maximum impact and engagement.

4

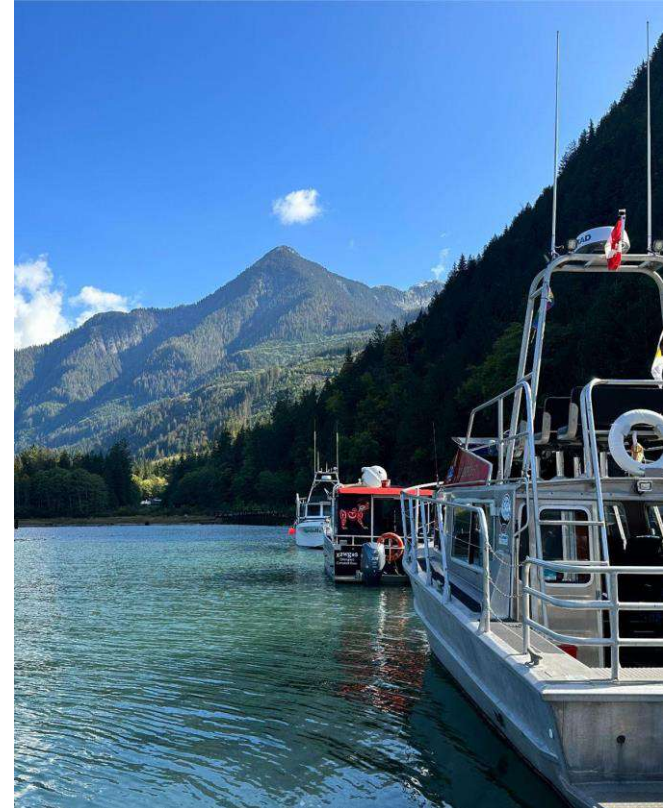
Internal Communication Strategies

- Communication strategies to foster a collaborative and informed workforce.
- Emphasis on sharing best practices, informing staff about the sustainable journey, and providing training sessions and resources for workforce development projects.



GreenStep's Assessment & HR

- **Quick overview of questions that apply to HR practices in both tourism businesses and destination management organizations (DMOs)**
- **2 certification assessments:**
 - **Businesses - 87 questions + sub questions**
 - **Destinations - 117 questions + sub questions**





29. In what ways does your entity participate in community projects?

Volunteering	
Monetary or in-kind donations	
Donation of used or unused goods	
Partnerships with community organizations	
Other	
We do not participate in any community projects	

30. What types of infrastructure and social community development initiatives does your entity support through cash or in-kind contributions at the local and international levels?

Education and Training	
Health and Sanitation	
Environmental projects (i.e. addressing the impacts of climate change)	
Other	
None, we do not support any infrastructure or social development initiatives	

Reformulation:

29. How do you get involved in your community?

30. What causes do you support?

	MICRO BUSINESS	SME
Examples of actions	Volunteering, donations of money, in-kind or used goods, partnerships with community organizations.	Formalized selection criteria for the choice of causes or projects to be supported, budget dedicated to volunteer time.
Examples of evidence	Documents or screenshots of official communications: email exchanges with organizations or partners, letters of agreement, donation receipts, photos of volunteer activities, social media posts, newspaper articles.	Community involvement policy with selection criteria, number of hours of volunteering budgeted, inclusion of community actions in annual reports: projects, partnerships, donations, volunteering and results obtained.



36. Does your entity offer opportunities for internal or external training and education for staff, beyond onboarding, to improve their skills, knowledge, promotability, etc.?

Yes	
No	

Reformulation:

36. Do you offer training and skills development opportunities for your staff?

	MICRO BUSINESS	SME
Examples of actions	Registration for online training platforms with a variety of courses and resources, internal workshops, participation in industry-related events (conferences, symposia, congresses, etc.).	Formal training programs with specific skills, budget dedicated to training and skills development, individual development plans, in-house mentoring, tuition reimbursement.
Examples of evidence	Receipts or confirmation of payments for registrations for training courses or events, list of topics covered in internal workshops, screenshot of online training platforms and list of training courses taken.	Document detailing the training programs in place (objectives, content, etc.), amount of budget allocated to training, example of an employee's skills development plan, a description of the internal mentoring program.



37. What percentage of your entity's employees come from the local community?

None	
1 - 20 %	
21 - 40 %	
41 - 60 %	
61 - 80 %	
81 - 100 %	
We do not track this	

38. What percentage of your entity's management is from the local community?

None	
1 - 20 %	
21 - 40 %	
41 - 60 %	
61 - 80 %	
81 - 100 %	
We do not track this	

Reformulation:

37 and 38. What percentage of employees and management are from the local community? To answer this question, you need to have a way to quantify it.

	MICRO BUSINESS	SME
Examples of evidence	Maintain a register of staff permanent addresses to know the percentage of employees who are from the local community (number of local employees / total number of employees).	

A "local community" employee refers to a person whose usual (permanent) place of residence is in the local area. This implies that they reside within a reasonable distance (within the same city or not) allowing a daily commute to the place of work, without having a permanent residence to which this person will return on weekends or after the tourist season.



39. In what ways does your entity support diversity, equity and inclusion in your employment standards and practices, to prevent discrimination based on gender, race, religion, diverse abilities, etc.?

Created and enforced a policy on diversity, equity, inclusion, and equal opportunity for local residents, specific to hiring practices and in the workplace	
Written policy/statement that is displayed on website and/or job postings	
Provide equal opportunity for management positions and internal promotions for all staff (including local residents) without discrimination by gender, race, religion, diverse abilities, etc.	
Offer training for staff on best practice in diversity, equity and inclusion	
Other	
N/A, our entity does not have employees	
None, we do not support diversity, equity and inclusion in our employment standards and practices	

Reformulation:

39. How is diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) integrated into your hiring process and your company's work environment?

	MICRO BUSINESS	SME
Examples of actions	Non-discrimination statement in job postings (see example in the appendix).	Official DEI policy, staff training on unconscious bias, inclusive hiring training, awareness campaigns.
Examples of evidence	Job offer with a declaration of non-discrimination.	DEI policy, list of training offered, screenshots or photos of an awareness campaign.



40. Which aspects of your employment standards and/or labour policy are actively implemented within your entity?

Prevention of commercial, sexual, or any form of exploitation and harassment	
Equal opportunity	
Prevention of child labour and sex tourism	
Identified groups at risk of discrimination (i.e. children, adolescents, women, minorities and other vulnerable groups)	
All employees are paid at least a living wage	
Health care and social security	
A safe and secure environment for employees and guests	
Diversity/Non-discrimination	
Other	
None, these aspects are not included or implemented in our employment standards and/or labour policy	

Reformulation:

40. What working conditions are actively implemented within your company?

	MICRO BUSINESS	SME
Examples of actions	Policy for the prevention of psychological or sexual harassment and the processing of complaints (employer's obligation), compliance with provincial labour rights and obligations, DEI actions mentioned on slide 20.	Policy for the prevention of psychological or sexual harassment and the processing of complaints (employer's obligation), compliance with the provincial labour rights and obligations, DEI actions mentioned on slide 20.
Examples of evidence	Policies, employee handbook, employment contract, documents attesting to compliance with provincial standards.	

The living wage is calculated on the basis of the cost of living by taking into account the main expenses for a resident of a given city or region.

For more information, visit the [Ontario Living Wage Network](#).



46. What aspects of your entity's marketing and communications for staff and guests meet accessibility requirements for those with diverse abilities (including physical, sensory, cognitive and other)? (i.e. materials are available in audio, visual, or other formats)

Education/interpretation provided on tours or at sites	
Print materials (e.g. brochure, business cards)	
Website (Level A of Web Content Accessibility Guidelines at minimum)	
Employee training and safety manuals	
Customer feedback system	
Other	
None of our marketing and communications meet accessibility requirements	

47. Does your entity offer activities and/or services catering to those with diverse abilities, where appropriate?

Yes	
No	

48. Does your entity provide information on the level of accessibility provided (or not provided) for guests and staff with diverse needs?

Yes	
No	

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines ([WCAG](#)) – overview (use the [Web Content Accessibility Checklist](#) to find out if your website meets the criteria for Level A of the WCGA standard)

Reformulation:

46. Do your communication and promotional tools meet the criteria of universal accessibility?

47. Are your facilities and services accessible to people with disabilities?

48. Do you promote the accessibility of your facilities and services?

	MICRO BUSINESS	SME
Examples of actions	Parking spaces reserved for people with disabilities, access ramps and lifts, adapted rooms (accommodation), clear signage (large print, high contrast, pictograms, etc.), website that complies with WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) level A standards, brochures, maps and documents in various formats.	
Examples of evidence	Photos of accessible facilities, examples of communication and promotional tools that meet universal accessibility criteria, screenshot of a section of the website dealing with accessibility of facilities.	



49. What aspects of social sustainability performance does your entity track?

Community impacts (e.g. charitable giving, impact, and/or community satisfaction with your organization, etc.)	
International impacts (e.g. charitable giving, impact, etc.)	
Guest satisfaction (e.g. feedback, return rate, etc.)	
Employee statistics (e.g. living wages, attrition rate, full time vs. seasonal)	
Employee diversity (e.g. socioeconomic status, race or ethnicity, gender, age, diverse abilities, etc.)	
Other	
None, we do not measure social sustainability performance	

Question
32

Reformulation:

49 and 50. Do you regularly collect qualitative or quantitative data to assess the social and economic impacts of your activities?

50. What aspects of economic sustainability performance does your entity track?

Percentage of purchasing that is from local suppliers (defined as privately owned suppliers whose headquarters are within 300 km of your location)	
Percentage of purchasing that is from sustainable suppliers (i.e. those suppliers that have a recognized sustainability certification or rating)	
Percentage of staff from the local community	
Other	
None, we do not measure economic sustainability performance	

Question
43

Question
44

Questions 37 &
38

	MICRO BUSINESS	SME
Examples of actions	Questions 49 and 50 are accompanied by examples of actions.	
Examples of evidence	Refer to the examples of evidence provided in questions 32, 37, 38, 43, 44	



B. Compliance

6. Is your entity aware of and in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations including, but not limited to, those below?

Local, national, and international laws and regulations such as health, safety, labour, accessibility and environmental aspects	
Zoning requirements and laws (i.e. planning, siting, design, construction, renovation, operation, and demolition) for protected and environmentally or culturally sensitive areas	
Tourism on sites with cultural and heritage importance	
Laws related to local habitats, ecosystems, and threatened/protected species	
Laws and regulations related to wildlife and animal welfare, including acquisitions, breeding and captivity laws and standards for housing, care, and handling of wild and domesticated animals	
Laws and regulations related to wildlife harvesting, consumption, display, sales and trading	
Minimum wage, employment standards, and labour rights	
Settlement, land and water rights of the inhabitants, that does not cause their involuntary resettlement	
Acquisition of land, water and property in compliance with local, communal and indigenous rights, including their free, prior and informed consent	
Other	
We are not compliant with one or more of these regulations	

THE ONLY QUESTION WHERE YOU MUST TICK ALL THE SUB-QUESTIONS TO BECOME CERTIFIED.

No one is supposed to be ignorant of the law.



C. Employee Engagement

8. How are employees of your entity engaged in the ongoing development and/or implementation of your sustainability efforts?

We have a sustainability team (or similar group) that meets regularly to specifically review and update our sustainability goals and/or actions	
We regularly review and internally communicate our sustainability goals/actions/progress at staff meetings	
We have an employee feedback system for our sustainability efforts	
We include our sustainability practices in new employee onboarding/orientation	
We offer employee reward programs or compensation incentives	
Other	
N/A, our entity does not have employees	
None, our employees are not engaged in our sustainability efforts	

11. Which aspects of sustainability does your entity's employee engagement/training program include?

Environmental	
Social and/or Community	
Culture and/or Heritage	
Economic/Financial	
Quality of Service and/or Experience	
Diversity and Human Rights	
Health and Safety Management	
Risk and Crisis Management	
N/A, our entity does not have employees	
None, our employee engagement/training programs do not include sustainability	



Measure Your Baseline

One of the most important sustainability actions your organization can take is to measure where you are starting from.

Baselines are a Snapshot of Current Performance

- Understand your starting point
- Quantify and track the impact of your actions
- Validate your marketing claims with data



2030 Sustainable Tourism Pledge

A free baseline score!



Three simple steps:

1. Make a public commitment to measure and improve your sustainability performance between now and 2030 (**VISION**)
2. Be recognized as a Pledge signatory (**CELEBRATE**)
3. Complete a Sustainable Tourism assessment to begin measuring your performance (**BASELINE**)

Sustainable Tourism 2030 Pledge

Tourism HR Canada took the Pledge!

- Insights from the process
- Advances since receiving their first score

Your Potential Grading:		Your Score: 61%		
Section	Measure	Points Scored	Points Available	%
Management		35	48	73%
A.	Sustainability Management System	8	10	79%
B.	Compliance	5	5	100%
C.	Employee Engagement	7	7	98%
D.	Guest Engagement	2	8	25%
E.	Marketing and Communication	5	7	76%
F.	Building and Infrastructure	4	7	57%
G.	Destination Management	4	4	100%
Social & Economic Impacts		31	40	78%
H.	Community Support and Infrastructure Projects	6	9	63%
I.	Local Employment and Labour Rights	7	7	95%
J.	Ethical, Fair Trade, and Local Products	10	14	71%
K.	Accessibility	6	6	97%
L.	Social and Economic Monitoring	3	4	80%
Natural & Cultural Interactions		9	22	41%
M.	Cultural Heritage	6	14	44%
N.	Biodiversity, Ecosystems, and Landscapes	3	8	35%
Environmental Impacts		27	58	47%
O.	Energy Conservation	7	13	54%
P.	Water Conservation	2	10	23%
Q.	Solid Waste	9	12	77%
R.	Minimizing Pollution	8	21	38%
S.	Environmental Monitoring	0	2	20%
TOTAL		102	168	61%



Sharing and Celebrating your HR Sustainability Journey





Internal Communications

- Hold a team celebration event
- Organize a volunteer day
- Provide training on sustainability policies and progress to all existing staff
- Post details of your action plan in staff gathering areas
- Add sustainability updates to your team meeting agendas and annual/quarterly reports
- Write a paragraph to include sustainability in job postings and duties in job descriptions
- Update your employee handbook and onboarding process to ensure that any policies or practices related to sustainability are included
- Publish an annual or quarterly sustainability report/update



External Communications

- ❑ Create a sustainability page on your website, detailing your sustainability goals, targets, action plan, policies, and initiatives
- ❑ Publish an annual or quarterly sustainability report that includes the progress made towards your responsible stewardship goals and any new initiatives
- ❑ Integrate sustainability into outbound communications and regular marketing activities such as websites, newsletters, social media, advertising
- ❑ Post details of your journey and opportunities for engagement, such as a QR code to a guest survey, in guest areas (e.g. common areas, website, guest rooms, etc.)
- ❑ Pursue awards or certification to have your sustainability achievements formally recognized



Conclusion





Personal anecdote...

When creating our sustainable organization at Destination Sherbrooke, I learned an important lesson:

“A sustainable organization requires three things: a management team that wants to be sustainable, staff that can operationalize sustainability, and adequate resources to be sustainable.”

Biggest HR/sustainability challenge in Canada today...

Questions?

William Hogg: william@greenstep.ca

