

UPSCALING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM STANDARDS IN EAST AFRICA

TRAINING OF TRAINERS AND AUDITORS FOR THE PROPOSED HARMONIZED SUSTAINABLE TOURISM STANDARDS FOR EAST AFRICA COMMUNITY (EAC) COUNTRIES

VENUE: KENYA, TBC

DATES: NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2024, TBC

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

Application Deadline: 7 October, 2024

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THE EAC PROPOSED HARMONIZED SUSTAINABLE TOURISM STANDARDS

The global tourism industry is rapidly evolving, making it essential to maintain high-quality standards for customer satisfaction, safety, and sustainable growth. In Eastern Africa, the tourism sector is a key economic driver, rich in tourism resources and requiring constant adaptation to meet the diverse needs of its clientele.

To address the challenges and opportunities in this dynamic industry, UNEP's GO4SDGs Initiative and the One Planet Sustainable Tourism Programme initiated consultative development of the *Proposed Harmonized Sustainable Tourism Standards for the East African Community*. The standards were developed by Ecotourism Kenya and the Kenya Tourism Federation, with input from key tourism stakeholders from EAC countries. The main goal of the Standards is to guide the tourist accommodation providers, tour operators/travel agents, and those operating travel agents, to apply sustainable and responsible tourism practices as they undertake their business and interact with the host community and environment in a destination, aligning with the EAC region's strategy to become a leading sustainable tourism destination. While the application of these standards will be adapted to suit the unique characteristics of each destination, they are designed to ensure consistent and effective compliance across the region for sustainable tourism growth and development.

TRAINING OF TRAINERS (TOT) AND AUDITORS TRAINING

To facilitate the implementation of the *Proposed Harmonized Sustainable Tourism Standards for the East African Community*, the training workshop is being organized for the Auditors and ToT personnel from the EAC member states. The training will equip participants with the knowledge and confidence to help tourism businesses meet the EAC Proposed Harmonized Standards and conduct audits against these standards.

Participants

A maximum of two (2) auditors/trainers from each of the eight (8) EAC countries, namely the Democratic Republic of Congo, Federal Republic of Somalia, the Republics of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Uganda, and Tanzania will be selected provided the candidates meet the requirements outlined below.

Overview of Independent Auditor/Trainer Roles

The Independent Auditors role, on successful completion of the training will be assessment of the sustainability practices of accommodation providers and tour operators/travel agents as per the standards. These evaluations will ensure alignment with the *Proposed Harmonized Sustainable Tourism Standards for EAC*, which encompass environmental, social, and economic criteria in line with global sustainable tourism practices, the Sustainable Development Goals and the UN Tourism Indicators.

The Independent Trainers role, on successful completion of the training, will be to support accommodation providers and tour operators/travel agents with tools and knowledge to meet the criteria of the Proposed Harmonized Sustainable Tourism Standards for EAC.

Both roles are best suited to **people of self-employed status** and are expected to be part-time, with the workload varying based on the number of businesses seeking support and requesting audits to meet the Standards. **UNEP is providing support in building the capacity of future independent trainers and auditors, but should not, in any case, be perceived as a potential employer.**

The present training will be the first step in building a pool of auditors and trainers for the Harmonized Sustainable Tourism Standards for the EAC, once these standards are fully adopted in line with the regional and national processes in place within the EAC.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES OF AUDITORS

- i. Conduct comprehensive audits for accommodation providers, and tour operators/travel agents using the *Proposed Harmonized Sustainable Tourism Standard for EAC*
- ii. Plan and schedule audits, ensuring that they are conducted objectively, efficiently and within the agreed timelines.
- iii. Prepare clear, concise audit reports that outline findings, highlight areas of non-compliance, and provide practical recommendations for improvement, ensuring alignment with the Standards and supported by the provided documentation.
- iv. Assist in the development and updating of sustainability guidelines and criteria used for audits.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRAINERS

- i. Provide clear and actionable guidance to help businesses understand and meet the specific requirements of sustainability certification standards.
- ii. Educate and train business owners and staff on sustainable practices, ensuring they have the skills and knowledge to implement these practices effectively.
- iii. Conduct thorough assessments of the business's current sustainability practices, identifying areas for improvement and creating action plans to bridge any gaps.
- iv. Offer continuous support, including follow-up evaluations, to ensure that the business maintains compliance with certification standards and progresses in its sustainability efforts.

To prevent conflicts of interest, a trainer offering support to a business cannot serve as its auditor.

SELECTION CRITERIA FOR TRAINEE AUDITORS /TRAINERS

The selection of *Proposed Harmonized Sustainable Tourism Standards for the East African Community* trainers/auditors shall be based on a comprehensive set of criteria to ensure that the trainers/auditors are well-equipped to assess and promote sustainability in tourism practices.

Minimum Qualifications & Experience Required for Trainee / Auditors

Professional Qualifications and Certification

- i. Bachelor's degree in environmental science/management, Tourism Management, Business, or a related field.
- ii. Proven experience in auditing, with a preference for experience in sustainability audits or environmental / social assessments.
- iii. Familiarity with sustainable tourism principles, global sustainability standards (e.g., GSTC, ISO 14001, Travelife, Green Destinations), or relevant certification programs.
- iv. Analytical and critical thinking skills, with the ability to interpret data and information provided to you as evidence of compliance.
- v. Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal, with the ability to present findings clearly.
- vi. Proficiency in using Microsoft Office Suite.
- vii. Experience in Sustainable Tourism- a good understanding of the tourism industry, including community-based tourism, and sustainable practices.
- viii. Prior experience working in East Africa, with knowledge of local tourism dynamics, culture, and regulations.

Other Requirements

- i. Resident of one of the following countries: **Democratic Republic of Congo, Federal Republic of Somalia, the Republics of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Uganda, and Tanzania**
- ii. Passionate about sustainability and committed to promoting responsible tourism practices.
- iii. Ability to work independently and as part of a team, with a proactive and solution-oriented approach.
- iv. Technical and Analytical Skills including data analysis, Report Writing, and Problem-Solving Skills
- v. Proficiency in national languages of EAC countries and English for effective communication with stakeholders across the East African region
- vi. For Trainers: Experience in providing training and capacity-building programs to tourism operators and/or accommodation providers on sustainable practices

APPLICATION PROCESS

- Members of the EAC Proposed Harmonized Standard for Sustainable Tourism Working Group are invited to share the call for expressions of interest amongst their respective networks.



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- Applicants should submit the **completed application form and an up-to-date CV**, to unep-economy-go4sdgs@un.org by **7th October 2024**.
- Applications will be reviewed by an independent panel comprised of the United Nations, Regional and International Organisations, and the selection process will be documented.