



**CU GREEN CHOICE
SUSTAINABLE TOURISM
STANDARD**



INTRODUCTION

Sustainable or ecological tourism is an area of tourism that has begun to gain strength when choosing a destination, since the generation of environmental awareness and preservation of biodiversity are achievements that several movements and organizations worldwide have been reaching, thus allowing the conservation and proper use of resources. While it is true that climate change is one of the most important political, economic, and social issues, it also allows the dissemination of some policies and good practices in the use of resources, contributing to the globalization of a clear term: sustainability.

Sustainability includes meeting the needs of populations while ensuring the supply of resources for future generations. It implies a balance of resources, the application of adequate and respectful practices.

On the other hand, it is essential to have a seal or guarantee that supports the application of the concepts of sustainability, the use of good practices, the conservation of biodiversity and the contribution to local communities in the development of tourism operations. In this context, the certification of sustainable tourism activities is a key element that will allow marketing and recognition in this area. With this context in mind, CU Green Choice: A Sustainable Tourism Certification Standard was developed.

OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

The objective of the Sustainable Tourism Standard is to provide a standard based on established global sustainable tourism policies adapted to local conditions.

Sustainable Tourism Certification is an evidence-based, verifiable process. Its requirements are applicable to tourism services that demonstrate that they are developed under adequate social, environmental, and economic conditions, reinforcing the image of the tourism sector, and promoting responsible tourism development.

Sustainable Tourism Certification can be granted to all types of tourism accommodation services that demonstrate that they are sustainably developed and comply with the principles of the Green Choice Sustainable Tourism certification standard.

NORMATIVE ELEMENTS

The Sustainable Tourism Standards are based on national and international norms and policies. The following instruments were used to develop the standard:

- Mohonk Agreement: Proposal for an International Certification Program for Sustainable Tourism and Ecotourism.
- Managing Tourism & Biodiversity. User's Manual on the Convention on Biological Diversity.
- Basic line of criteria. Sustainable Tourism Network of the Americas.
- United Nations Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Tourism (UNWTO)
- Principles and Criteria of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC).
- Manual of Good Environmental Practices for the Tourism Guide of the National Tourism Quality Plan of Peru - CULTUR.
- Manual of Good Practices for Sustainable Tourism. PROMPERU.

CONDITIONS FOR CERTIFICATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE CERTIFICATE

The Green Choice standard has 3 levels of certification, which are designated by the Certifier according to the rating obtained by the unit during the audit.

The categories are:

Green Choice Classic - Basic compliance with the standard

Green Choice Ruby - Superior Compliance

Green Choice Sapphire - Exceptional Compliance

During audits, the auditor may find Non-Conformities (NCs) which can be of 3 types*. (***See Inspection Regulation Annex 16**)

1. Critical Non-Conformities
2. Major Nonconformities
3. Minor Nonconformities

No project can be certified with open Critical NCs and can be certified with open Major and Minor NCs. The deadline to close critical nonconformities is 1 month.

The deadline to close major NCs is 4 months.
The deadline to close minor NCs is 12 months.

Deadlines are valid from the time of the closing meeting with the auditor.

Failure to meet the deadlines may result in the suspension of your Green Choice certification, pending notification of the closure of the finding.

Follow-up

For the maintenance of the issued certificate, annual follow-up audits will be carried out; in which emphasis will be placed on the evaluation of major and minor non-conformities (if applicable). If the client does not satisfactorily demonstrate to the auditor and the certifier the lifting of the non-conformities; these are automatically converted to a higher status.

Exemption

If the inspection cannot be carried out (even though the units may fully comply with the standards), no certification is possible.

Notification of Suspension, Withdrawal or Termination of Engagement

- Based on the guidelines in the CERT.W01 General Program Manual.
- Suspension of any Green Choice certificate will be made public on the Control Union and Green Choice portals.
- CUC will notify you by letter if your project has been suspended, upon notification of the expiration of your non-compliances. The letters will specify the reason for the suspension or termination of certification, as well as the date of issuance.

Validity of Certification

Audits will be conducted on an annual cycle, and certification will be valid for three years after the initial issuance of the certificate. Control Unión Perú has the power to decide if an additional audit is necessary.

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRINCIPLES AND CRITERIA



PRINCIPLE 1. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

Sustainable tourism must be part of the company's development policy and strategy that demonstrates its commitment to environmental conservation, respect for local traditions, and its standards for promoting resource conservation.

Criterion 1.1. The company defines, establishes, and publicizes its position regarding the sustainable use of natural resources.

Indicador 1.1.1. CERTIFICATION INDICATOR. There is a company policy that establishes its commitments in relation to environmental care and social development. It contains a mission, vision, clear objectives, defined goals for a period of time established in relation to the environment and social development:

- a. Water resource management
- b. Flora and fauna management
- c. Air and noise pollution
- d. Waste management (solids, liquids, toxics, etc.)

This policy is made known to customers, employees, owners, visitors, etc.

Criterion 1.2. An environmental and social risk assessment has been carried out through a technical study identifying the impacts caused by tourism activities and the measures to be taken to address them.

Indicator 1.2.1. CERTIFICATION INDICATOR. The environmental and social risk assessment shall contain at least the following information:

- a. physical map or site plan indicating and reflecting the area and the company's facilities, adjacent lands, and activities,
 - b. flow chart of all the company's activities,
 - c. general characterization of the ecosystems in which the company carries out its activities,
 - d. assessment of the impacts (positive and negative) of each activity, including: use of resources, extraction, damage or destruction of ecosystems and habitats, increased erosion, alteration of the normal behavior of local and wild species and impacts during breeding seasons for critical or
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endangered species, increased possibility of fire hazards, irrational consumption of flora and fauna, deterioration of water quality, eutrophication of aquatic habitats, introduction of pathogens, solid waste management, land and water pollution, noise,

- e. social diagnosis, information on the educational level, occupation or employment levels of the local population, traditional production systems and their areas of action (fishing - river/lagoons, agriculture - land, livestock - pastures), health information (diseases, endemic, epidemics, etc.).

Indicator 1.2.2. CERTIFICATION INDICATOR. There is an action plan that specifies the measures to be taken for each of the impacts identified in point 1.2.1, indicating the timeframe for implementation, the people in charge, and the evaluation of effectiveness.

Criterion 1.3. Compliance with all relevant national and international policies and regulations.

Indicator 1.3.1. CERTIFICATION INDICATOR. The company is aware of and complies with all relevant national and international regulations such as health, safety, labor, and environmental aspects. It has all relevant documents, such as health cards, operating licenses, property rights, and workers' contracts, among others.

Criterion 1.4. If the company participates in environmental protection or social programs, these are disclosed and are in line with the company's environmental policy.

Indicator 1.4.1. The company has a means of publicizing its activities and its relationship with the environment and the local population.

PRINCIPLE 2. ENVIRONMENT AND BIODIVERSITY

All activities must be carried out considering the maintenance of essential ecological processes, generating the least impact on the environment and conserving biodiversity.

Criterion 2.1. Protection of flora and fauna

Indicator 2.1.1. **CERTIFICATION INDICATOR.** No wild animals are kept in captivity except in the case of authorized breeding, rescue, or reintroduction zoos, in accordance with the law and good practice, maintaining captive conditions in the best possible way for the development of the specimens kept.

No products or endangered species or species from unsustainable practices are consumed, sold, trafficked, or exhibited.

Indicator 2.1.2. **CERTIFICATION INDICATOR.** If the company consumes flora and/or fauna resources in the area, it must ensure that they are not endangered, and it must also have a system for replenishing them.

Indicator 2.1.3. If there are any threatened species of flora and/or fauna in the area where the company operates, the company collaborates with existing recovery projects or promotes recovery measures (individually or jointly with local institutions) if they have not yet been implemented.

Indicator 2.1.4. **CERTIFICATION INDICATOR.** Se adoptan medidas para que el ruido e iluminación de la empresa no afecten la vida silvestre.

Indicator 2.1.5. In sensitive areas, measures are taken to prevent the introduction of pests and exotic species.

Criterion 2.2. Disposal of waste and solid waste.

Indicator 2.2.1. **CERTIFICATION INDICATOR.** The company has a system for classifying and treating waste and residues generated in each of its activities and monitors its links with existing municipal management systems or specialized

organizations. Special attention is paid to toxic waste (batteries, fuels, cleaning waste, etc.). The organic waste produced by the company is used in some management program, such as composting, composting, mulching, pet food, and others.

Indicator 2.2.2. Support and participate in recycling programs where they exist.

Criterion 2.3. Liquid waste disposal

Indicator 2.3.1. **CERTIFICATION INDICATOR.** The company has a wastewater treatment system or sanitary facilities that minimize or eliminate the generation of wastewater (composting toilets, bio-digesters, etc.) The company seeks systems for reusing water without harming the health of its guests and staff.

Criterion 2.4. Management of soil contaminants.

Indicator 2.4.1. **CERTIFICATION INDICATOR.** There are adequate areas for storing fuels, lubricants, and other toxic materials to prevent possible leaks. The same consideration is taken into account for the company's vehicle and/or equipment maintenance areas.

Indicator 2.4.2. Detergents, cleaning products in general, and biodegradable, non-eutrophying cosmetics are used. If these are not available, the company must have a water treatment system that ensures that it avoids soil contamination.

Criterion 2.5. Management of air pollutants

Indicator 2.5.1. Measures are taken to minimize emissions of gases, aerosol pollutants, unpleasant noise, and strong odors.

Criterion 2.6. Prevention of noise pollution

Indicator 2.6.1. The company's vehicles and/or equipment are in good working condition and do not generate excessive noise or emissions.

Indicator 2.6.2. The company has adequate facilities to isolate noise generated by equipment and/or machinery that could disturb the environment and tranquility.

Indicator 2.6.3. There are clear rules of conduct for tourists
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regarding noise generation (schedules, levels, permitted equipment, etc.) so as not to disturb the natural environment and the tranquility of other visitors. These rules are also specified for visits to conservation areas or areas of high archeological interest.

PRINCIPLE 3. FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

The hotel's facilities must not be contrary to the environment and must meet adequate safety and hygiene conditions.

Criterion 3.1. Type and design of lodging.

Indicator 3.1.1. The design must conserve the harmonious landscape of the area and, as far as possible, use the resources available in the area for the construction of the facilities, always ensuring their replacement.

Criterion 3.2. Infrastructure, safety, and hygiene

Indicator 3.2.1. There are established evacuation procedures in case of disasters and/or medical, environmental, and safety emergencies.

Indicator 3.2.2. There is at least one first aid kit and adequate equipment to deal with emergencies that may arise.

Indicator 3.2.3. Appropriate places for physiological disposal in areas where it is not possible to build sanitary facilities (Toilets) must be identified and made known to company personnel and tourists.

Indicator 3.2.4. Regardless of the category of service, facilities are maintained in a perfect state of hygiene and cleanliness.

Indicator 3.2.5. The infrastructure must be appropriate to the environmental characteristics and climatic phenomena of the area where it operates.

Indicator 3.2.6. Company personnel are trained and equipped to deal with the most common emergencies in the area and are familiar with the evacuation procedure if necessary.

Indicator 3.2.7. The company establishes clear hygiene standards for food handling; personnel are aware of and apply these standards.

Indicator 3.2.8. The company ensures that water for direct consumption or food preparation is fit for human consumption. Water is tested regularly.

Indicator 3.2.9. The company ensures that its equipment and facilities are in good condition to provide an adequate and safe service and generate the least possible impact on the environment.

Indicator 3.2.10. The company establishes and clearly marks the different areas assigned for the activities and services provided by the company, indicating the care and considerations that should be taken for the use of each one of them.

Indicator 3.2.11. **CERTIFICATION INDICATOR.** Necessary preventive measures are implemented to ensure the safety of tourists and company personnel during activities.

Criterion 3.3. Resource management

Indicator 3.3.1. The company uses all available technological resources within its reach to save energy.

Indicator 3.3.2. The company establishes the most effective mechanisms to raise awareness among staff and tourists regarding energy and resource savings.

Indicator 3.3.3. The areas with the highest water and energy consumption are identified and monitored; if possible, meters are installed or, if not, measurement mechanisms are established for monitoring purposes.

Criterion 3.4. Hotel and service load capacity

Indicator 3.4.1. The carrying capacity of the most vulnerable areas involved in the company's activities and the receptive capacity of the facilities provided by the company have been technically calculated.

PRINCIPLE 4. SOCIAL VIABILITY

Sustainable tourism should maintain or enhance the long-term social and economic well-being of workers and local communities.

Criterion 4.1. Local development.

Indicator 4.1.1. The company should prioritize the hiring of local staff and the consumption of local products and services in order to promote the development of the local economy.

Indicator 4.1.2. The company maintains a harmonious and fluid relationship with local communities that allows for the development of joint protection mechanisms against natural and social threats.

Indicator 4.1.3. **CERTIFICATION INDICATOR.** Policies against commercial sexual exploitation, especially of children and adolescents, are adopted and publicized.

Criterion 4.2. Treatment of workers

Indicator 4.2.1. A harmonious and motivating work environment is established that contributes to the personal development of workers.

Indicator 4.2.2. No social, sexual, or racial discrimination is adopted or supported.

Indicator 4.2.3. Policies are in place and concrete actions are implemented to train personnel on environmental aspects related to the company's activities, socio-cultural aspects, as well as on the quality system, operational aspects, and emergency response.

PRINCIPLE 5. ECONOMIC VIABILITY

Sustainable tourism ensures a quality, viable, and long-term service to generate and maintain the economic development of the company and local populations.

Criterion 5.1.Accounting, Marketing, and Administration

Indicator 5.1.1. The enterprise has clearly established mechanisms and/or procedures for reservations, accounting, marketing, and administration.

Indicator 5.1.2. The enterprise promotes its services with accurate information.

Indicator 5.1.3. The enterprise is profitable or has a business plan to achieve profitability.

PRINCIPLE 6. CULTURAL ASPECTS

Sustainable tourism activities must be developed with respect for the rights and cultural manifestations of local and/or indigenous populations.

Criterion 6.1.1. Respect for local people

Indicator 6.1.1. **CERTIFICATION INDICATOR.** There are no conflicts between the company and the local population.

Criterion 6.2. Contribution to development / cultural heritage

Indicator 6.2.1. There are means of information and protection of local culture.

Indicator 6.2.2. Laws, rules, regulations for the protection of the historical and cultural heritage of the sites are complied with. Archeological artifacts and other objects of cultural value are not exhibited, traded, or smuggled.

Criterion 6.3. Contribution to health

Indicator 6.3.1. The company supports the development of healthy habits among the local population.

PRINCIPLE 7. EDUCATION AND CONSTRUCTIVE CAPACITY

Criterion 7.1.1. Development of environmental education programs

Indicator 7.1.1. The company publicizes its environmental achievements in order to raise awareness among the local population and encourage them to replicate environmentally friendly behavior.

Indicator 7.1.2. The company participates and/or promotes joint work with local educational institutions on environmental issues in order to develop environmental awareness among customers, employees, owners, children, and young people in the area.

Criterion 7.2. The company maintains a relationship with key local institutions.

Indicator 7.2.1. The company participates in and/or creates opportunities for dialogue with the main institutions operating in the area where the company operates.

Criterion 7.3 Suppliers / inputs

Indicator 7.3.1. The company has a policy of giving preference to certified suppliers or suppliers that employ good environmental and social practices.

Criterion 7.4. Continuous improvement

Indicator 7.4.1. There is a mechanism in place to receive evaluations, complaints, and comments from clients; a record is kept of these and of corrective actions taken.