Sustainable Tourism Management: Visitor Capacity, Communities and Green Operations

1 – 5 March 2027
Paris - Right Bank business hotel



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Ref: 77_9130 **Date:** 1 – 5 March 2027 **Location:** Paris - Right Bank business hotel **Fees:** 23500 SAR

Introduction:

Sustainable tourism management has become an operating requirement for destinations, hotels and attractions, as visitor growth strains natural sites, heritage assets, water and waste systems and the patience of host communities. Many organisations publish sustainability intentions without a baseline, indicators or site-level controls, so crowding, resource waste and weak local benefit continue. This Core Concept course gives tourism practitioners the criteria, visitor management methods, operational controls and indicators to run tourism sustainably. Participants apply them to real site and property data and build a Sustainable Tourism Action Plan and Indicator Dashboard.

Course Objectives:

- Assess a destination, hotel or attraction against the four pillars of the GSTC criteria: sustainable management, socio-economic, cultural and environmental impacts
- Set site capacity limits and apply visitor flow, zoning and timed-entry controls to reduce crowding and damage at sensitive sites
- Design local sourcing, employment and community participation arrangements that keep tourism spending in the host economy
- Implement energy, water and waste controls in hotel and attraction operations and track resource use per guest or visitor
- Select sustainability indicators, collect baseline data and report tourism sustainability performance to managers and stakeholders
- Build a Sustainable Tourism Action Plan and Indicator Dashboard with low-impact products and truthful sustainability claims

Target Audience:

- Managers responsible for planning and coordinating tourism within destinations, parks and protected areas
- Hotel, resort and lodge managers accountable for operations, procurement and resource use
- Managers of attractions, heritage sites, museums and visitor centres responsible for visitor flows and site condition
- Sustainability and environment managers in tourism, hospitality and travel organisations
- Tour and experience product managers responsible for itineraries, suppliers and guest communication
- Community and partnership managers responsible for relations between tourism operators and host communities

Course Outline:

Day 1: Sustainable Tourism Principles and Baseline Assessment

- Sustainable Tourism Definitions and the Triple Bottom Line for Visitor Economies
- Tourism Impact Mapping: Environmental, Social, Cultural and Economic Pressures
- Stakeholder Map for Destinations, Operators, Residents and Visitors
- Overtourism and Seasonality Diagnosis from Arrival and Occupancy Data
- Sustainability Baseline Checklist for a Destination, Property or Site

Day 2: GSTC Criteria and Sustainable Tourism Frameworks

- GSTC Destination Criteria: Structure and the Four Pillars
- GSTC Industry Criteria for Hotels and Tour Operators
- Criteria Gap Analysis Template for an Organisation or Destination
- Sustainable Tourism Certification Schemes: How Assessment and Recognition Work in General Terms
- Sustainability Policy and Management System Design for Tourism Organisations

Day 3: Visitor Management, Communities and Heritage Protection

- Carrying Capacity Assessment: Physical, Ecological and Social Limits
- Visitor Flow Controls: Zoning, Timed Entry, Routing and Pricing Levers
- Community Participation Methods and Resident Sentiment Surveys
- Local Economic Benefit: Local Sourcing, Employment and Leakage Analysis
- Heritage and Nature Protection Plans: Site Condition Monitoring and Interpretation

Day 4: Sustainable Operations, Measurement and Reporting

- Hotel and Attraction Energy Controls: Metering, Consumption per Guest Night and Quick Wins
- Water Stewardship in Tourism: Consumption Benchmarks, Reuse and Landscaping
- Waste Management: Food Waste Tracking, Single-Use Plastics and Supplier Take-Back
- Tourism Sustainability Indicator Set: Selection, Data Sources and Collection Routines
- Sustainability Reporting for Tourism Organisations and Avoiding Greenwashing Claims

Day 5: Case Work and the Sustainable Tourism Action Plan

- Protected Natural Area Case: Visitor Capacity and Zoning Plan
- Urban Heritage Quarter Case: Crowding, Residents and Local Business Benefit
- Resort Hotel Case: Energy, Water and Waste Reduction Plan
- Low-Impact Tourism Product Design and Responsible Marketing Messages
- Sustainable Tourism Action Plan and Indicator Dashboard Presentation

Skills You Will Gain:

- Tourism Impact Assessment
- Criteria Gap Analysis
- Carrying Capacity Planning
- Visitor Flow Management
- Community Benefit Design
- Resource Efficiency Tracking
- Sustainability Indicator Design
- Low-Impact Product Design

Why Attend This Course:

- Return with a Sustainable Tourism Action Plan and Indicator Dashboard built on your own destination, property or site
- Show managers and partners where crowding, resource use and weak local benefit are costing the organisation
- Replace general sustainability statements with measured baselines, targets and truthful guest communication
- Compare approaches with peers from hotels, attractions, parks and destination bodies across several countries

Conclusion:

Tourism stays viable only when sites, resources and host communities can absorb it year after year. This course moves from sustainable tourism principles and baseline assessment, through the GSTC criteria and certification in general terms, to carrying capacity, visitor flows, community benefit, heritage protection and resource controls in hotels and attractions. The final day applies these methods to cases from natural areas, heritage quarters and resorts and produces a Sustainable Tourism Action Plan and Indicator Dashboard participants can take back and use.