

# Sustainable Tourism Certification Is Becoming a Market Requirement

Tourism businesses are moving from sustainability claims to verified certification.

## WHY ACT NOW?

### GLOBAL INDUSTRY IMPACT

- Tourism represents ~9% of global GDP and 8% of global employment.
- 77% of 3-star hotels still have no sustainability certification, creating a major opportunity for differentiation.

### REGULATORY TRIGGER

- EU Green Claims Directive (2026) - Green marketing claims will need credible certification or verification.
- Companies will no longer be able to rely on self-declared "green" claims.

Certification becomes the proof behind sustainability claims.

### MARKET SHIFT

- Travel platforms, booking systems and tourism buyers increasingly prioritize verified sustainable accommodations and destinations.
- Certified businesses benefit from:
  - Stronger credibility with travelers
  - Improved brand reputation
  - Higher visibility in sustainable tourism platforms

## CERTIFICATION IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

Sustainability certification provides independent verification that tourism businesses operate responsibly.

Recognized standards help accommodations and destinations:

- Demonstrate credible sustainability performance
- Align with international sustainability frameworks
- Gain recognition in global tourism markets

Several certification schemes exist in the market, our portfolio includes:



## SUSTAINABLE TOURISM FOCUS AREAS

-  **Environmental Impact**  
Reducing emissions, managing waste, protecting biodiversity.
-  **Social & Cultural Impact**  
Respecting local communities and preserving cultural heritage.
-  **Economic Impact**  
Supporting local economies and responsible tourism development.

## WHY CONTROL UNION?

We are a globally trusted certification body supporting sustainable tourism worldwide from first steps to internationally recognized certification.

### Global Network

70+ offices worldwide with local auditors and expertise.

### Multiple Certification Programs

Accredited and recognized for several sustainable tourism standards.

### Independent Verification

Credible third-party certification that strengthens market trust.

### Integrated Sustainability Expertise

Support across tourism, agriculture, supply chains, carbon and sustainability systems.

### Who We Work With:

- Hotels & Resorts
- Eco-lodges
- Tourism Destinations
- Community Tourism Initiatives
- Tourism Groups & Operators

## CERTIFICATION PATHWAYS FOR TOURISM BUSINESSES

Every organization is at a different stage of sustainability maturity.

### STEP 1 – Entry Level

Baseline sustainability programs  
Gap assessments and readiness

### STEP 2 – Implementation

Operational improvements  
Sustainability management systems

### STEP 3 – Certification

Third-party certification under recognized sustainability standards

The Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) defines the global criteria for sustainable tourism certification.



### Start Your Sustainable Tourism Journey

Control Union helps tourism businesses turn sustainability into measurable impact and market advantage.

Contact our Sustainable Tourism Team  
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