



Ministry of Tourism  
Government of India



# SUSTAINABLE TOURISM CRITERIA OF INDIA (STCI)

TOOLKIT FOR CERTIFICATION OF TOUR OPERATORS - 2023



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## INTRODUCTION

# 01

The success of the tourism business depends on the prudent application of various resources. Considering that the private sector mainly drives the tourism industry, assessing and defining the best practices to ensure environment-friendly, socially and economically inclusive tourism growth in India while preserving tangible and intangible heritage is necessary.

To mainstream sustainability in the tourism sector, there is a need to benchmark sustainable tourism practices for various tourism business enterprises. The structured approach to identifying such best practices for tourism industry players is through Certification.

The Certification aims to voluntarily evaluate and track tourism business enterprises' effects on the environment and society.

As a result, the industry can integrate, assess, and systematically monitor their sustainable tourism practices with the help of sustainable tourism certification, which enables them to make a concrete contribution to the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. With this mission, the Ministry of Tourism has launched the **Sustainable Tourism Criteria of India (STCI)**. This toolkit attempts to demystify STCI certification, especially for the tour operator sector.



## OBJECTIVE OF THE TOOLKIT

# 02

The objective of the toolkit is to give Tour Operators of India a comprehensive understanding of the Sustainable Tourism Criteria of India (STCI) Certification and support them in mainstreaming sustainability in their day-to-day operations.

The certification program encourages all tourism service providers, mainly tour operators, to obtain national-level recognition for sustainable business practices. This toolkit provides complete information for getting STCI certificates for tour operators.



## TARGET AUDIENCE

# 03



The toolkit is intended for the use of tour operators in India.

In order to obtain said certification, tour operators need to meet a set of criteria established by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. The applicability of the toolkit covers all the Tour Operators registered and operating in India.

With a vision to position India as a preferred global destination for sustainable and responsible tourism, the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India has prepared a National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism in consultation with relevant Ministries, State Governments, and Industry Stakeholders.

The strategy aims to mainstream sustainability in the Indian tourism sector, and thus safeguard the country's natural as well as cultural resources while building a more resilient, resource-efficient, inclusive, and carbon-neutral tourism industry.

## NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

# 04

THE STRATEGY RESTS ON KEY OBJECTIVES IDENTIFIED AS THE "STRATEGIC PILLARS", WHICH ARE DEMONSTRATED BELOW :



## SUSTAINABLE TOURISM CRITERIA OF INDIA (STCI)

# 05

The Sustainable Tourism Criteria of India (STCI) is a measure for assessing and approving tourism-related activities on the basis of the established principles. These principles and indicators are benchmarked against the global best practices and adopted according to the needs of the country.

After a comprehensive evaluation of the sustainability criteria for different service providers in tourism, detailed principles and indicators of STCI were formulated and launched by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. At present, it includes accommodation units, tour operators and destinations. The purpose of sustainable tourism certificates is to voluntarily evaluate and track the effects tourism organisations have on the environment and society.

An exhaustive assessment and consultation process was carried out to finalise the different steps of STCI certification. Later, the STCI Certification was configured and integrated into the NIDHI Plus Portal (<https://nidhi.tourism.gov.in/>), a one-stop shop for all digital services provided by the Ministry of Tourism.



# 06

## NIDHI PLUS PORTAL

**National Integrated Database of Hospitality Industry (NIDHI)** is an initiative towards Aatmanirbhar Bharat to use technology to empower businesses.

NIDHI aspires to become a gateway to opportunities for the Hospitality & Tourism Industry. Stakeholders like Accommodation Units, Tour Operators and Destinations will be able to register their entities on this platform

and avail electronic delivery of various services and benefits through a Unique **NIDHI ID (NID)** allocated to them.

NIDHI will also serve as a platform for hospitality organizations to ideate, share best practices and connect with the Government for ease of business. Through a QR code-based review and feedback system, NIDHI monitors the adherence of tourism service providers to certification standards.

A ground breaking initiative has been launched by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, to mainstream sustainability in the tourism sector through the NIDHI Plus Portal. The platform shall facilitate the implementation of Sustainable Tourism Criteria of India (STCI) for tourism service providers.

The screenshot displays the NIDHI Plus Portal interface. At the top, the logo 'nidhi' is followed by 'NATIONAL INTEGRATED DATABASE OF HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY'. Navigation links include Home, About, Definitions, Sustainable, Register your unit, and Login. A QR code is provided for scanning to access the portal. Below the navigation, a grid of accommodation units is shown, categorized by unit type and destination. The categories and their statistics are as follows:

Unit Type	Showcased	Registered	Classified
Hotel	167	24694	1507
Bed and Breakfast	116	9276	347
Guest House	8	5514	0
Resort	16	2190	5

At the bottom of the page, there are links for QUERY (Guidelines, FAQs, Query Form), SUPPORT (State Nodal Officers, Contact Us), and POLICY (Copyright, Privacy, Hyperlink, T&C).



## STCI PRINCIPLES AND INDICATORS

# 07

### STCI for a Tour Operator identifies 4 major themes:

# 1

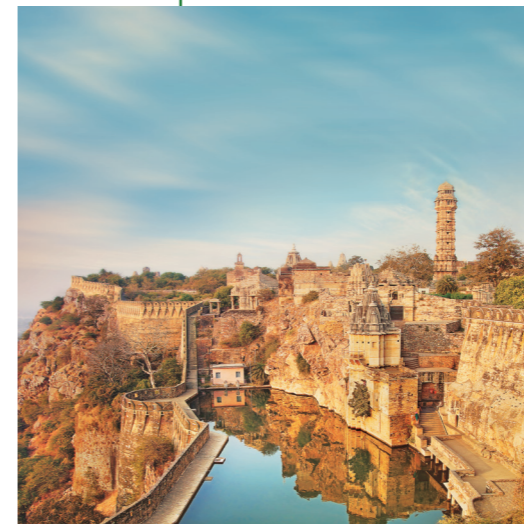
#### Demonstrate Effective Sustainable Management

##### Effective sustainable management by the tour operator ensures that:

- The organisation has implemented a long-term sustainability management system that is suitable to its reality and scale, and that considers environmental, sociocultural, quality, health and safety issues.
- The organisation is in compliance with all relevant national legislation and regulations
- All personnel receive periodic training in the management of environmental, socio-cultural, quality health and safety practices.
- Customer satisfaction is measured and corrective action taken, where appropriate.
- Promotional materials are accurate and complete and do not promise more than can be delivered by the organisation.

##### Design and construction of buildings and infrastructure:

- Comply with land usage and protected or heritage area requirements
- Respect the natural, cultural, social, built and heritage surroundings in siting, design, impact assessment, land rights and acquisition in, so far as new construction, including additions and extensions to property, is concerned.
- Use locally appropriate principles of sustainable construction, including local styles, skills and materials for new construction and additions or extensions to property.
- Provide access and facilities for persons with special needs in accordance with principles of universal design.
- Information about and interpretation of the natural surroundings, customs, local culture and cultural heritage is provided to visitors, as well as explanations of appropriate behaviour while visiting natural areas, living cultures and cultural heritage sites.



## 2

**Maximise social and economic benefits to the local community and minimise negative impacts**

**Sustainability is ensured when then local community stakeholders also reap the benefits. The principle of maximising socioeconomic benefits ensures that:**

- The organisation actively supports initiatives for social and community participation and development, including infrastructure, education, health, and sanitation.
- Local residents are trained and employed, included in management positions, wherever feasible.
- Local and fair trade services and goods, particularly from MSMEs, are purchased by the organisation, wherever available.
- The organisation encourages the means for local small entrepreneurs to develop and sell sustainable products that are based on the area's nature, history, and culture (including food and drink, crafts, performance arts, agricultural products).
- A code of behaviour for activities in indigenous and local communities has been developed, with the consent of, and in collaboration with the community and/or neighbourhood.
- The organisation has implemented a policy against commercial exploitation, particularly of children and adolescents, including sexual exploitation.
- The organisation should provide equal opportunities in recruitment and career growth to all segments of society, irrespective of caste, creed, religion, ethnicity and gender, while completely shunning child labour.
- All employees, including contractual labour, are treated in accordance with national legislation and are paid a fair wage, with the minimum being in accordance with the law.
- The activities of the organisation do not jeopardise the provision of basic services such as water, energy or sanitation to neighbouring communities.



## 3

**Maximise benefits to cultural and historical heritage and minimise negative impacts**

**The cultural and historical assets identified as heritage must be preserved and as a stakeholder involved in the promotion of local heritage, tour operator shall ensure that :**

- The organisation follows established guidelines or a code of behaviour at culturally, ecologically or historically sensitive sites, in order to minimise visitor impact and maximise satisfaction
- Historical and archaeological artefacts are not sold, traded or displayed, except the one's which are permitted by law.
- The organisation contributes to the protection of local, historical, archaeological, culturally and spiritually important properties and sites, as well as natural phenomena, and does not impede access to them by local residents.
- The intellectual property rights of local communities will be respected whenever the organisation uses elements of local art and tradition, architecture, or cultural heritage in its operations, design, decoration, food or shops.



## 4

Maximise benefits to the environment and minimise negative impacts

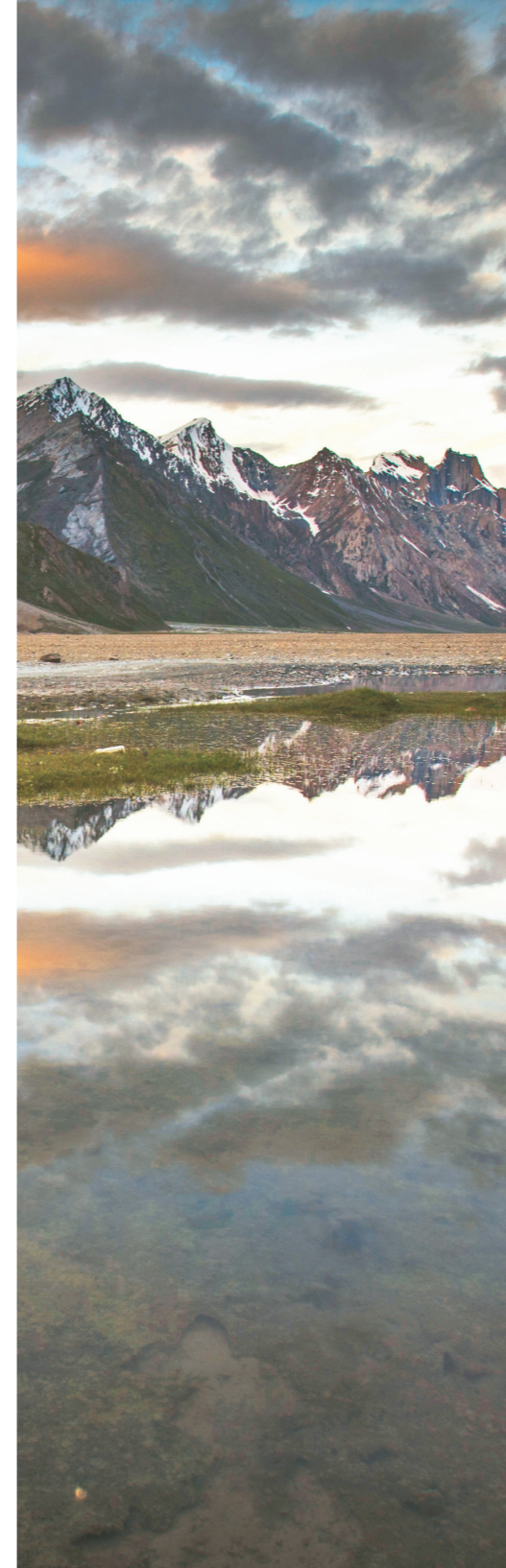
**The resources of the environment have been over- exploited for human use. The tour operator, recognised as an essential contributor to ecosystems and biodiversity conservation, shall ensure :**

#### CONSERVING RESOURCES

- Purchasing policy favouring environmentally responsible and eco-friendly products for building materials, capital goods, food and consumables.
- The purchase of disposable and consumer goods is measured, and the organisation actively seeks ways to reduce their use.
- Energy consumption should be measured, sources indicated, and measures to decrease overall consumption should be adopted, while encouraging the use of renewable energy.
- Water consumption should be measured, sources indicated and measures to decrease overall consumption, should be adopted. The organisation practices rainwater harvesting wherever water tables have been receding.

#### REDUCING POLLUTION

- The organisation implements a step-by-step plan to identify, and then quantify, sources of greenhouse gas emissions under its control, and activate measures to offset climate change in a time-bound manner.
- Wastewater, including the gray water, is and should be treated effectively and reused, wherever possible.
- A solid waste management plan is implemented, with quantitative goals to minimise waste that is non-biodegradable, not reused and not recycled in nature.
- The use of harmful substances including pesticides, harmful chemicals, swimming pool disinfectants and cleaning material is minimised or substituted whenever available by innocuous products. All chemical which are used is properly managed.



- The organisation implements practices to reduce pollution from noise, light, runoff, erosion, ozone-depleting compounds, air and soil contaminants.

#### CONSERVING BIODIVERSITY, ECOSYSTEMS AND LANDSCAPES

- The organisation does not participate in, accept, allow or encourage the use of, or display or trade in endangered species of flora and fauna, except the trophy displays items which are permitted under the law.
- No wildlife is held in captivity.
- The organisation uses endemic native species for landscaping and restoration as well as taking precautionary measures to avoid the introduction of invasive alien species.
- The organisation supports biodiversity conservation, including supporting natural protected areas and areas of high biodiversity value.
- Interactions with wildlife must not produce adverse effects on the viability of populations in the wild. Any disturbance of natural ecosystems is minimised, and, if it occurs inadvertently, steps are taken for immediate rehabilitation and/or compensatory contribution to conservation management.

**The detailed checklist of indicators under all four themes is as per the list enclosed in Annexure 1.**

## WHY STCI CERTIFICATION?

# 08



The STCI certification is a stamp of approval on all activities conducted by the respective tour operators in terms of sustainability of all operations, including not only sustainable nature of the tours, but the commercial side of the operations as well.

Studies show that Post COVID, Indian tourism market is demanding for sustainable tourism services and travellers are affected by the impact that they create both on the local community as well as the climate.

The tour operator is guaranteed a focused demographic of tourists looking exclusively for the products offered by an STCI-certified organisation. With more and more visitors choosing to reduce their carbon impact, the certification may be leveraged as a Unique Selling Proposition (USP) to target such population in their marketing efforts.

**91% OF INDIANS WISH TO TRAVEL MORE SUSTAINABLY, ACCORDING TO TRAVEL RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY BOOKING.COM IN 2022. ACCORDING TO STATISTICS FROM AMADEUS TRAVEL TRIBE 2023, INDIAN TRAVELLERS ARE AWARE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT THEY HAVE AND PLACE IT AMONG THEIR TOP THREE TRAVEL PLANNING OBJECTIVES. AMONG TRAVELLERS, 32% ARE EAGER EXPERIMENTERS AND 40% ARE TRAILBLAZERS.**

## BENEFITS OF STCI CERTIFICATION

# 09



## THE FIVE-STEP PROCESS OF STCI CERTIFICATION

# 10

### The Five-step process of STCI Certification



The tour operator will have to first register on the Nidhi Plus portal. After approval of the unit registration, the unit shall receive unique login credentials.

Using the credentials, the user will reach the Nidhi Plus User dashboard from where the user can select STCI certification under My Certifications. The applicant must read the instructions and make a payment of Rs. 5000 in order to process the application in the category of the applicant's choice i.e. Gold, Silver, and Bronze. Following the transaction, the applicant must provide the details and upload the required documents of the tour operator unit which shall complete the process of submission of the application.



The documents uploaded by the applicant shall be scrutinized and assessed for validity by the concerned authority. Upon conformance of all submitted documents the units shall be notified regarding the next step in the verification process which is the on-site assessment of the tour operator property.

In case of non-conformance, the concerned authority will notify the unit for submission of proper action.

**The documents required for desktop assessment is as per the list enclosed in the Annexure 2.**



## Step 03 Physical Assessment

A team of assessors consisting of representatives from all areas of expertise in the hospitality industry, accountancy, sustainability, academics, etc. shall visit the property to verify the property's compliance with the established standards of the criteria and its indicators. In challenging conditions, a remote site inspection may also be considered.

**The suggestive documents for the phase of on-site/physical assessment is as per the list enclosed in the Annexure 3.**

The mechanism involved in the assessment of the tour operator is indicator-based scoring. The format currently consists of 161 indicators which address overall sustainability. The unit shall be evaluated through allotment of points for each indicator summing it against a total maximum point of 100.

For complete conformance of every indicator, the unit shall receive a maximum score of 0.62. For every partial conformance of the indicator 0.31 points shall be allotted. And for non-conformance of an indicator score shall be 0.

The total score of all the indicators shall serve as a base to classify the unit into three categories namely Gold, Silver & Bronze.

Points scored	Category
Above 75	Gold
50 to 75	Silver
25 to 50	Bronze

Table 1.1 Classification of Tour Operator units



## Step 04 Classification of Establishment



## Step 05 Issuance of ST Certification

Upon the submission of final results by the assessors, a report shall be generated indicating the points earned by the unit against each criteria. The report shall also establish the category to which the unit has been certified. The certificate shall be valid for a duration of 3 years from the date of issue, after which it can be renewed.



## HOW CAN TOUR OPERATORS MAKE USE OF STCI CERTIFICATION?

# 11

As a tourism service provider, the tour operator can optimise its products and services by applying and procuring the certificate accompanied by the listed benefits:-

- The operator shall receive National level recognition for the sustainable services being offered.
- The operators can endorse the certification as a label for enhanced service quality to boost the positioning and marketing of their sustainable services.
- The certification helps distinguish the pro-sustainable service providers from pseudo-sustainability and green washing.
- The certification can be used as an effective tool for distinction from the competition.
- The certification enlightens tourists about environmentally friendly and socially inclusive services thereby helping in decision-making.
- It sensitises both the service provider and the tourist regarding the responsible travel practices involved in the product and services offered.
- The certification boosts the business to improve their service and raises the bar of service quality high, increasing the industry standards.

STCI certification, in the long run, can become a primary factor that a tourist might look forward to while filtering and choosing service providers at destinations, especially with regard to the change in tourist behaviour and the rise in demand for more sustainable services. The certification might offer the service provider an upper hand in meeting the demand of the audience.

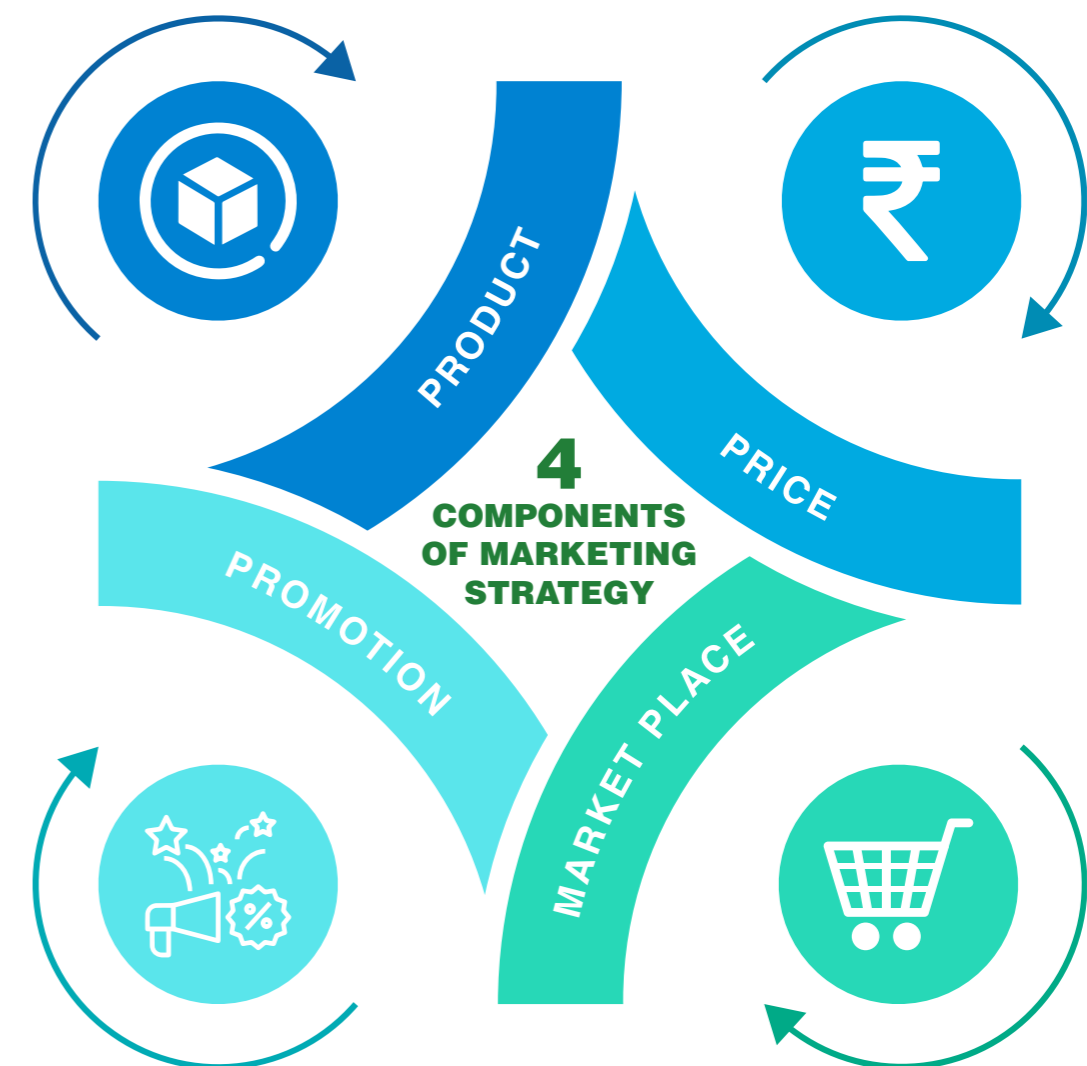


## HOW TO MARKET SUSTAINABLE SERVICES?

# 12

The branding and appearance of the marketing campaign must reflect the unit's commitment to a sustainable approach.

The four components of a marketing strategy are the Product, its Price, its Promotion, and the Place for selling it. A range of tools and methods revolving around them can be utilized in order to promote existing sustainable products and/or services offered by the tour operators.



**The following are a few tips that can be followed by the service provider in order to market the sustainable services for high visibility and profitability.**

**1**

Encourage customers to post their experiences to all major rating platforms. Also, incorporate links that include additional review web pages to incite affirmative reactions and impressions.

**3**

Online booking software is an easy way to increase bookings for the company without any extra marketing costs. Nidhi will act as a gateway and facilitate the integration of certified accommodation units with major online booking systems.

**5**

Considering highlighting the long term perspective in all the methods of advertising and promotion of sustainable services. The ads intended towards the customer may be positioned around the benefits derived from making a sustainable choice over any other form of an tour service.

**7**

The mid-sized and small tour operators can target specific areas or destinations and provide customers with distinct products or the best tourism experiences or services not available on mainstream services.

**2**

Make communications to a customer more impactful through attractive videos , and increase the click-through rate by mentioning "video" in the subject line.

**4**

Consider innovative ways to present your offerings to the fans and followers on your social media pages. Post a stay experience from a tour operator's perspective or behind-the-scenes content highlighting sustainable themes and measures.

**6**

YouTube is the go-to platform to capture a highly responsive market and help build your online existence as a sustainable tour service. An ideal video is only a few minutes long and the description includes a direct link to the main webpage.

**8**

Most tour operators businesses compete by prices unless they are targeting luxury or business segments. Therefore, even though sustainable tourism products aren't particularly cheap, the pricing must consider buying behaviour.

## HOW TO IMPROVE SUSTAINABILITY?

# 13

The Tour Operators Initiative (2003) outlines five key areas where tour operators can undertake activities and formulate organisational policies to improve their tourism sustainability. They are listed below:

### 01 INTERNAL MANAGEMENT

The first step of integrating sustainability into the organisation's practices is ensuring that the internal operations and policies are sustainable. Key areas of improvement include training the staff on sustainable practices, minimising waste generated by office operations, laying down policies for employee treatment, establishing effective channels for communication and grievance redressal, etc.

### 02 PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT & MANAGEMENT

Tour Operators can ensure that they minimise the environmental and socio-economic impacts of the products they offer on the destination and the global climate in general. Tour Operators may address emissions and energy consumption by transport, the inclusion of cultural attractions for tourist sensitisation, and the involvement of locals during the tour.

### 03 SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

Since Tour Operators are intermediaries between the tourists and the tourism service providers, they can ensure that the service providers they collaborate with comply with sustainability standards. For instance, the standards of hygiene for raw materials, employee training, grievance policies of partner providers, etc., help manage the sustainability of the tour operator's supply chain.

## 04 CUSTOMER RELATIONS

No organisation can be economically sustainable without the knowledge of the customer's demands and preferences and a positive image among their customer base. Tour Operators may therefore collect feedback. Regularly improve interaction with customers both online and offline, as well as engage in education and sensitisation of customers regarding sustainable practices.

## 05 COOPERATION WITH DESTINATIONS

Each tour at a destination directly impacts its environmental, social, and economic well-being. Therefore, tour operators may contribute towards minimising this impact for the destination to retain its unique attractions.

For instance, empowering the communities through local purchasing and relying on locals for human resource, contributing towards conservation and support programs through funding, etc. are vital activities that can be undertaken by tour operators.

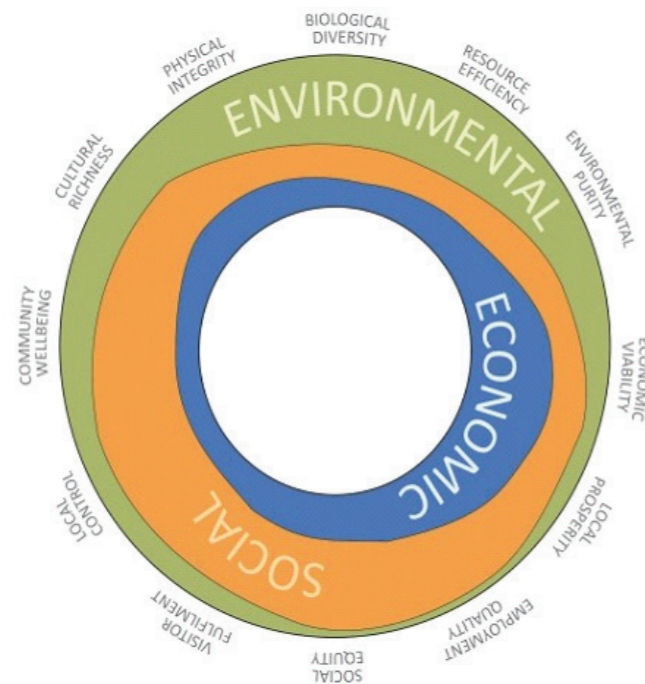



Figure 1: Making Tourism More Sustainable:  
A Guide for Policy Makers, World Tourism Organisation, 2005






## Annexure 1 STCI Principles, Indicators, and SDGs


The annexure contains the detailed list of indicators mapped under the broad STCI principles and correlated with the U.N. Sustainable Development Goal.

PRINCIPLES	INDICATORS	SDGs
<b>Section A: Demonstrate Effective Sustainable Management</b>		
<p><b>A1 Sustainability Management System</b> The establishment has implemented a long-term sustainability management system that is suitable to its reality and scale, and that considers environmental, sociocultural, quality, health and safety issues.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A Sustainability Management Plan exists that is appropriate to the business' size and scale.</li> <li>2. Sustainability Management Plan considers: Environmental, Socioculture, Quality, and Health and Safety Issues.</li> <li>3. Implementation of sustainability Management Plan: -                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) System is implemented.</li> <li>ii) Sustainability Management Plan is communicated internally and externally.</li> <li>iii) Plan is integrated at decision-making level, includes monitoring, analysis and evaluation and adaptive management.</li> <li>iv) Stakeholder input and progress reported.</li> <li>v) System is comprehensive.</li> <li>vi) Plan includes environmental, sociocultural, quality, health and safety issues.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	


**STCI PRINCIPLES,  
INDICATORS, AND SDGS**


# ANNEXURE 1

PRINCIPLES	INDICATORS	SDGs
<p><b>A2 Legal Compliance</b> The establishment is in compliance with all relevant national legislation and regulations.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Compliance with all relevant legislation and regulations.</li> <li>2. Procedure exists for maintaining and implementation of up-to-date list of legal requirements, according to market practices, specially where the country is a signatory to international treaties.</li> </ol>	
<p><b>A3 Training</b> All personnel receive annual training in the management of environmental, socio-cultural, quality health and safety practices.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Literature exists on some limited topics.</li> <li>2. Some literature is available and staff is made aware of where it is located.</li> <li>3. Literature on all critical issues exists and staff is informed of location.</li> <li>4. Literature on all critical issues is available and provided to management staff.</li> <li>5. Literature on all critical issues available and provided to all staff.</li> <li>6. Training plan exists; staff is provided training materials in the local language; time for learning on their own and a mixture of classroom and self-paced training is provided at company's expense.</li> <li>7. Formal training plan and programme exists, is functional and certain percentage of staff participate at company's expense.</li> </ol>	  

PRINCIPLES	INDICATORS	SDGs
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. Periodicity of training, approximately once in two years. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Number of days of training per employee is recorded.</li> <li>b. Number of employees trained per specific training activity/ topic, is recorded.</li> <li>c. Amount of money invested in training per employee, including value of in-kind contribution, is recorded.</li> <li>d. Elements of sustainability are covered in trainings.</li> <li>e. Employee evaluations include elements of sustainable operations.</li> <li>f. Focus on training of trainers.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	
<p><b>A4 Customer Satisfaction</b> Customer satisfaction is measured and corrective action taken where appropriate.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Average Customer Satisfaction rating is measured.</li> <li>2. Corrective action plan exists.</li> <li>3. Number or type of complaints received as percentage of total guests, is recorded.</li> <li>4. Percentage of complaints received that have been resolved, is recorded.</li> </ol>	






PRINCIPLES	INDICATORS	SDGs
<p><b>A5 Promotional Materials</b> Promotional materials incorporate requisite environmental concerns, are accurate and complete and do not promise more than can be delivered by the organisation.</p>	<p>1. Scale: i) Materials are accurate in description of services. ii) Materials are complete.</p> <p>2. Customer and/or Tour operators survey questions (i) Marketing materials complete and accurate and not exaggerated. (ii) Marketing materials set realistic expectations for clients and are available in print and electronic formats.</p>	
<p><b>A6 Design and Construction of Building and Infrastructure</b></p>		
<p><b>A6.1 Land-Use Compliance</b> Comply with local zoning and protected or heritage area requirements</p>	<p>i) Land use is in compliance with local zoning and protected or heritage area laws and regulations. ii) Penal provision for non-compliance with building norms. iii) Land acquisition is legal.</p>	  
<p><b>A6.2 Buildings and infrastructure</b> The property respects the natural, cultural, social, built and heritage surroundings in siting, design, impact assessment, land rights and acquisition insofar as new construction, including additions and extensions to property, is concerned.</p>	<p>i) Where applicable, site plan has a documented design that takes into account all STCI with specific emphasis on risk areas of impact associated with setting and design. ii) Where applicable, design and construction reduce heating, cooling, lighting and water consumption through passive design appropriate to local conditions and technology.</p>	






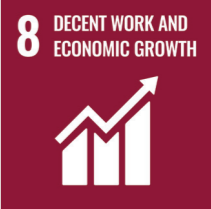
PRINCIPLES	INDICATORS	SDGs
	<p>iii) Where applicable, buildings have an emphasis on visual compatibility with the natural environment. iv) Where applicable, transportation and circulation has emphasis on minimizing fossil-fuel consumption. v) Where applicable, utility systems with an emphasis on energy-efficient heating, cooling and lighting, water conservation, waste water treatment and solid waste management are installed. vi) Where applicable, reduction of on-site and off-site development impacts on air, water and sound quality is ensured.</p>	
<p><b>A6.2.1 Natural and cultural heritage</b> Design and construction of buildings and infrastructure respects natural &amp; cultural heritage.</p>	<p>i) Where applicable, archaeological, cultural heritage and sacred sites have not been disturbed. ii) Where applicable, endangered wildlife has not been displaced or habitat destroyed. iii) Where applicable, buildings do not destroy scenic beauty. iv) Where applicable, earth movements have been minimized. v) Where applicable, water courses including aquifers and subterranean links have not been altered.</p>	

PRINCIPLES	INDICATORS	SDGs
	<p>vi) Where applicable, runoff from buildings, parking lots, and grounds is channelled and filtered and harvested and reused.</p> <p>vii) Where applicable, location of buildings not over water bodies and wetlands, whether seasonal or permanent.</p> <p>viii) Where applicable, location of buildings and roads not in designated no-building zones.</p> <p>ix) Where applicable, vegetation disturbance has been minimized and restored with endemic and not exotic species.</p> <p>x) Gardens, green areas, golf courses and sporting fields use local and endemic vegetation where ever possible or grasses that are adapted to local climate.</p>	
<p><b>A6.2.2 Natural and cultural heritage surroundings</b> Siting respects natural and cultural heritage surroundings.</p>	<p>i) Existing historic and cultural buildings and landscapes have been restored, in vernacular idiom, where applicable.</p> <p>ii) Buildings use regional construction materials, as long as these are obtained sustainably.</p> <p>iii) New buildings reflect regional vernacular architecture, and include regional art and crafts.</p>	


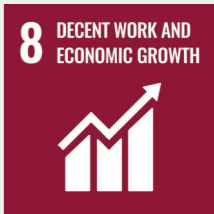


PRINCIPLES	INDICATORS	SDGs
	<p>iv) Existing structures have been restored on set heritage norms.</p>	
<p><b>A6.2.3 Impact Assessment</b> Natural and cultural impact has been assessed.</p>	<p>i) Environmental and social impact assessment has been completed.</p> <p>ii) Plans are in compliance with recommendations and are checked for continued compliance.</p>	
<p><b>A6.2.4 Land rights and acquisition</b> Land rights and acquisition respect natural and cultural heritage.</p>	<p>i) Land acquisition is in accordance with all protected area or cultural heritage regulations; action should take into account fencing and animal corridor blocking issues.</p> <p>ii) Local Community have not been involuntarily removed from the land.</p> <p>iii) Where local communities or indigenous peoples have legal, traditional, collective, or customary rights over the possession and use of the land, the Stakeholders affected have had the opportunity to accept or reject the proposed use.</p> <p>iv) Use for tourism has been authorized with the prior informed consent of stakeholders affected including Panchayats and NGOs with a redressal mechanism in place.</p> <p>v) Number of unresolved complaints by local communities, is recorded.</p>	 








PRINCIPLES	INDICATORS	SDGs
<p><b>A6.3 Use of Local Skills and materials</b> Design and construction of buildings and infrastructure use locally appropriate principles of sustainable construction take due cognizance of the vernacular idiom namely, oral, natural and built heritage. Cost of environment safeguards to be part of project cost.</p>	<p>i) Construction plan follows sustainable site design, and the plan incorporates use of architects and designers specialized in the vernacular idiom, conservation architects, landscape designers etc.</p> <p>ii) Construction plan documents meet all STCI, with specific emphasis on risk areas of impact associated with construction.</p> <p>iii) Minimize within acceptable norms areas of vegetation disturbance, earth grading, and water channel alternation.</p> <p>iv) Reduce wastes and emissions.</p> <p>v) Incorporate local materials and crafts into structures, native plants into landscaping, and local community consultations for programs and operations.</p> <p>vi) Safe and clean workplace provided.</p>	<p></p> <p></p> <p></p>
<p><b>A6.4 Universal Design for persons with special needs</b> Provide access for persons with Special Needs</p>	<p>i) Facilities and services are accessible to persons with special needs.</p> <p>ii) Level of accessibility is clearly communicated to the customer.</p>	<p></p> <p></p>


PRINCIPLES	INDICATORS	SDGs
<p><b>A7 Information and interpretation regarding the surroundings</b> Information about and interpretation of the natural surroundings, local culture and cultural heritage is provided to customers, as well as explaining appropriate behaviour while visiting natural areas, living cultures, and cultural heritage sites</p>	<p>i) Company has interpretation program.</p> <p>ii) Company has delivery mechanism for interpretations (i.e., collateral, tour guide, podcast).</p> <p>iii) Staff training programs in interpretation for tourism.</p> <p>iv) Interpretive materials are accurate.</p>	<p></p> <p></p>
<p><b>Section B: Maximise Social and Economic Benefits to the Local Community and Minimise negative impact</b></p>		
<p><b>B1 Community support</b> The establishment actively supports initiatives for social and community participation and development, including, among others, infrastructure, education, health, and sanitation</p>	<p>1) Percentage of annual gross income contributed to local community for public benefit through commercial, in kind, or pro bono engagement, is recorded.</p> <p>2) Plan developed in collaboration with community.</p>	<p></p> <p></p> <p></p>
<p><b>B2 Employment to Local people</b> Local residents are employed, including in management positions wherever feasible. Training is offered as necessary.</p>	<p>Following are measured and recorded:</p> <p>i) Percentage of local employees on staff, management and non management.</p>	<p></p>




PRINCIPLES	INDICATORS	SDGs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ii) Percentage of payroll distributed to local employees.</li> <li>iii) Number of trainings received within and outside of operations per employee.</li> <li>iv) Number of internal promotions of local population.</li> <li>v) Retention rate of trained employees, part-time, seasonal and full-time.</li> <li>vi) Ratio of local year-round employees to local temporary employees.</li> <li>vii) Amount of monetary investment in training and educational assistance as a percentage of payroll.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>B3 Local purchasing</b> Local and fair trade services and goods, particularly from MSMEs, are purchased by the establishment where available.</p>	<p>Following are measured and recorded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Percentage of purchases of services and goods from local providers.</li> <li>ii) Percentage of purchases that are fair trade purchases.</li> <li>iii) Number of facilities built using local material.</li> <li>iv) Purchasing policy gives priority to local and fair trade suppliers that meet quality and environmentally friendly criteria.</li> <li>v) Checklist of available local, sustainable goods, services, and contract services.</li> </ul>	  




PRINCIPLES	INDICATORS	SDGs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>vi) Percentage of available local, sustainable goods, services and contract services utilised.</li> <li>vii) Percentage of local owned restaurants, services, and shops utilised on tours.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>B4 Encouraging Local small entrepreneurs</b> The establishment encourages the means for local small entrepreneurs to develop and sell sustainable products that are based on the area's nature, history, and culture (including food and drink, crafts, performance arts, agricultural products).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Company provides access to enterprises, including handicrafts, food and beverage, cultural performances, or other goods and services, to sell directly to guests.</li> <li>ii) Promotion of local products in marketing activities and services.</li> <li>iii) Number of local enterprises promoted, is recorded.</li> <li>iv) Number of local jobs created as a result of company's intervention, is recorded.</li> <li>v) Number of new local enterprises incubated, is recorded.</li> </ul>	 
<p><b>B5 Code of Conduct</b> A Code of Conduct for activities in indigenous and local communities has been developed, with the consent of and in collaboration with the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Appropriate code of behaviour or any other scaling mechanism is integrated into the operations. Consultation and dialogue with the community and other stakeholders.</li> </ul>	 

PRINCIPLES	INDICATORS	SDGs
<p><b>B6 Equal Opportunity &amp; Prevention of Exploitation</b></p> <p>The establishment has implemented a policy against commercial exploitation, particularly of children and adolescents, including sexual exploitation.</p> <p>The establishment should provide equal opportunities in recruitment and career growth to all segments of society, irrespective of caste, creed, religion, ethnicity and gender while completely shunning child labour.</p> <p>All employees, including contractual labour, are treated in accordance with national legislation and are paid a fair wage, with the minimum being in accordance with the law.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of incidents reported with host destination authorities, is recorded.</li> <li>Following are measured and recorded: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of women and local minorities employees on staff is reflective of local demographics, both in management and non-management categories.</li> <li>Employee turnover by gender and local staff.</li> <li>Number of internal promotions, by gender and by local and non-local aspects reflects local demographics.</li> <li>Number of incidents of child labor as defined by the ILO/ national legislation.\</li> <li>Ratio of wage levels between men and women.</li> </ol> </li> <li>Overtime is paid for hours worked beyond the established work week hours and working hours must not exceed the legal maximums or those established by the ILO/ national regulations.</li> <li>All employees have the right to annual paid vacation.</li> <li>Health insurance or the equivalent is provided to all employees.</li> </ol>	  







PRINCIPLES	INDICATORS	SDGs
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employees receive training and capacity building.</li> <li>Training and capacity building is provided for local community non-employee residents to develop qualified local labor force.</li> </ol>	
<p><b>B7 Access to Basic Services for the Neighbouring Communities</b></p> <p>The activities of the establishment do not jeopardise the provision of or access to basic services such as water, energy or sanitation to neighbouring communities.</p>	<p>Changes in rates of energy, water, waste disposal costs are recorded.</p> <p>Number of incidents and reports of outages, reduced service or quality of product for the local community as compared to company, are recorded.</p> <p>Changes in energy, water, waste disposal costs as a percentage of community income, are recorded.</p> <p>Whether availability of water, waste, and energy to the local community has been reduced as the result of the business' activities.</p>	  
<p><b>SECTION C: Maximise Benefits to Cultural and Historical Heritage and remove impacts</b></p>		
<p><b>C1 Culturally, ecologically or historically sensitive sites</b></p> <p>The establishment follows established guidelines or a code of behaviour at culturally, ecologically or historically sensitive sites, in order to minimise visitor impact and maximise satisfaction.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Company policy includes established guidelines or code of behaviour.</li> <li>Changes in site management plan based on annual assessment.</li> </ol>	 







PRINCIPLES	INDICATORS	SDGs
<p><b>C2 Historical &amp; archaeological artefacts</b></p> <p>Historical and archaeological artefacts are not sold, traded or displayed, except as permitted by law.</p>	<p>i) Number of incidents and reports regarding inappropriate use of artefacts, is recorded.</p> <p>ii) Company policy exists.</p> <p>iii) Company policy is implemented and executed effectively.</p>	
<p><b>C3 Protection of local, historical, archaeological, culturally and spiritually important properties and sites</b></p> <p>The establishment contributes to the protection of local, historical, archaeological, culturally and spiritually important properties and sites, as well as natural phenomena, and does not impede access to them by local residents.</p>	<p>Following are recorded:</p> <p>i) Monetary and in-kind contribution to the protection of important properties and sites per unit sector activity, for instance per guest-night.</p> <p>ii) Number and percentage of local population that accesses properties and sites.</p> <p>iii) Cost to locals for access.</p>	 
<p><b>C4 Intellectual Property Rights of local communities</b></p> <p>The intellectual property rights of local communities will be respected whenever the establishment uses elements of local art and tradition, architecture, or cultural heritage in its operations, design, decoration, food or shops.</p>	<p>i) Number of incidents and reports of exploitation of local intellectual property, are recorded.</p>	 

PRINCIPLES	INDICATORS	SDGs
<b>SECTION D: Maximise Benefits to Environment and Remove Impacts</b>		
<b>D1: Resource Conservation</b>		
<p><b>D1.1 Environmentally Responsible Purchasing Policy</b></p> <p>Purchasing policy favours environmentally responsible and eco-friendly products for building materials, capital goods, food and consumables.</p>	<p>i) Percentage of purchases of goods and services from green or sustainable sources for building materials, capital goods, food and consumables, are recorded.</p>	
<p><b>D1.2 Purchase of disposable and consumer goods</b></p> <p>The purchase of disposable and consumer goods is measured, and the establishment actively seeks ways to reduce their use.</p>	<p>i) Purchasing policy requires re-usable, returnable and recycled goods, where available.</p> <p>ii) Waste management plan exists.</p> <p>iii) Packaging minimisation programme.</p> <p>iv) Number of types and quantity of products in disposable containers, are recorded.</p>	
<p><b>D1.3 Measurement of Energy Consumption</b></p> <p>Energy consumption should be measured, sources indicated and measures to decrease overall consumption should be adopted while encouraging the use of renewable energy.</p>	<p>Following are measured and recorded:</p> <p>i) Total energy consumed per tourist specific activity such as guest-night, tourists, etc. per source or renewable versus non-renewable fuel.</p> <p>ii) Percentage of total energy from renewable sources.</p> <p>iii) Monetary investment in energy saving devices, technologies and renewable energy as a percentage of total energy costs and investments or total turnover.</p>	

PRINCIPLES	INDICATORS	SDGs
<p><b>D1.4 Measurement of Water Consumption</b> Water consumption should be measured, sources indicated and measures to decrease overall consumption should be adopted. The organisation practices rainwater harvesting wherever water tables have been receding.</p>	<p>i) Water management programme exists. ii) Change to availability and access to potable water as a result of company activities. iii) Total volume of water in kilolitres consumed per source per specific tourist activity such as guest-nights, visitors, etc. iv) Percentage of water-using equipment and activities that employ a water conservation technique and rain harvesting techniques.</p>	
<b>D2: Reducing Pollution</b>		
<p><b>D2.1 Measurement of Green House Gases</b> The establishment implements a step-by-step plan to identify and then quantify sources of greenhouse gas emissions under its control, and activates measures to offset climate change in a time-bound manner.</p>	<p>Following are measured and recorded: i) Total direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions by weight. ii) Number of initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. iii) Carbon footprint, namely emissions less offsets, per tourist activity or guest-night. iv) Change in greenhouse gas emissions year on year.</p>	
<p><b>D2.2 Wastewater Treatment and Re-use</b> Wastewater, including gray water, is treated effectively and reused where possible.</p>	<p>Following are measured and recorded: i) Water waste plan, including treatments, exists. ii) Total water discharge by quality and destination iii) Volume in litres waste water reused.</p>	

PRINCIPLES	INDICATORS	SDGs
<p><b>D2.3 Solid Waste Management</b> A solid waste management plan is implemented, with quantitative goals to minimise waste that is non-biodegradable, not reused or recycled.</p>	<p>Following are measured and recorded: i) Total waste generated, in tonnes, by type and disposal method. ii) Kilograms of waste to landfill per sector specific activity, namely, guest-nights, visitors, revenue, etc. iii) Amount of waste incinerated. iv) Number of incidents of hazardous spills. v) Percentage of total waste that is reused and recycled.</p>	 
<p><b>D2.4 Use of Harmful Substances</b> The use of harmful substances including pesticides, harmful chemicals, swimming pool disinfectants and cleaning material is minimised, substituted when available by innocuous products, and all chemical use is properly managed.</p>	<p>Following are measured and recorded: i) Hazardous materials in use. ii) Percentage of bio-degradable and low phosphate chemicals used to total chemicals. iii) Pesticides in use per unit area. iv) Decreased usage of harmful substances by volume. v) Percentage of harmful substances substituted by sustainable alternatives. vi) Changes in water quality.</p>	 

PRINCIPLES	INDICATORS	SDGs
<p><b>D2.5 Practices to reduce Pollution</b></p> <p>The establishment implements practices to reduce pollution from noise, light, ozone-depleting compounds and air and soil contaminants and takes measures to counter runoff and erosion.</p>	<p>i) Number and types of incidents and complaints are recorded.</p> <p>ii) Pollution management plan exists for emissions, effluents and waste.</p>	 
<b>D3: Conserving Biodiversity, ecosystem and landscapes</b>		
<p><b>D3.1 Prevention of trade in endangered species of flora and fauna</b></p> <p>The establishment does not participate in, accept, allow or encourage the use of or display or trade in endangered species of flora and fauna, except trophy displays as permitted under the law.</p>	<p>i) Company policy exists.</p> <p>ii) Company policy is communicated to staff.</p> <p>iii) Company policy is communicated to guests.</p> <p>iv) Sustainable management plan (see Criteria A.1) developed with scientific experts which includes strategies, current and future plans.</p>	 
<p><b>D3.2 Wildlife</b></p> <p>No captive wildlife is held, except for properly regulated scientific activities, and living specimens of protected wildlife species are only kept by those authorized and suitably equipped to house and care for them, where this is deemed scientifically necessary.</p>	<p>i) Sustainable management plan developed with scientific experts which includes strategies, current and future plans.</p> <p>ii) Conservation policies are included in employee training.</p> <p>iii) Existence of captive wildlife for uses other than breeding or rehabilitation.</p>	 

PRINCIPLES	INDICATORS	SDGs
<p><b>D3.3 Landscaping and Gardening</b></p> <p>The establishment uses endemic native species for landscaping and restoration and takes measures to avoid the introduction of invasive alien species.</p>	<p>i) Company policy prohibits use of invasive alien species in gardens, landscapes and other areas of operation.</p> <p>ii) Number of alien or invasive species present on property are recorded.</p> <p>iii) Percentage of area of property with alien or invasive species are recorded.</p> <p>iv) Plan exists for removal and restoration, where required.</p>	 
<p><b>D3.4 Biodiversity Conservation</b></p> <p>The establishment supports biodiversity conservation, including supporting natural protected areas and areas of high biodiversity value.</p>	<p>i) Percentage of annual budget allocated to support natural protected areas and biodiversity conservation, is recorded.</p> <p>ii) Land restoration area.</p> <p>iii) Habitats protected or restored area.</p> <p>iv) Whether assessment plan exists.</p>	 
<p><b>D3.5 Interactions with Wildlife</b></p> <p>Interactions with wildlife must not produce adverse effects on the viability of populations in the wild. Any disturbance of natural ecosystems is minimised and if it occurs inadvertently, steps are taken for immediate rehabilitation and/or compensatory contribution to conservation management.</p>	<p>i) IUCN Red List and national conservation list species and habitats affected by the company's operations with levels of extinction risk.</p> <p>ii) Habitats protected or restored by the company, including as part of participation in partnership projects by area.</p> <p>iii) Protected and high value land use owned or managed by the company in area and percentage.</p>	 

PRINCIPLES	INDICATORS	SDGs
	iv) Percentage of annual budget allocated by the company to restore or rehabilitate natural protected areas or biodiversity conservation, is recorded.	



## Annexure 2

### STCI List of Documents for Desktop Verification

The annexure entails the list of documents required to be uploaded at the first stage of verification i.e. the desktop verification.

PRINCIPLES	DOCUMENTS FOR DESKTOP VERIFICATION
<b>APPLICABLE TO ALL THE PRINCIPLES UNDER STCI - TOUR OPERATOR</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Licences/NOCs, if applicable</li> <li>2. Certificate from Chartered Accountant, if applicable</li> <li>3. Self-Declaration (Annexure V of Tour Operator Guidelines issued by the Ministry of Tourism)</li> <li>4. Registration Certificate of Entity, if applicable</li> <li>5. Bankers Reference letter</li> <li>6. Complete audited Balance Sheet, if applicable</li> <li>7. Income Tax acknowledgement</li> <li>8. Adventure Certificate of Field Staff, if applicable</li> <li>9. First Aid Certificate of Staff</li> <li>10. Insurance of the Agency</li> </ol>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. Sustainability Management Plan of the establishment.</li> <li>12. Certification from International/ National/Regional Association/Organisation on Sustainable tourism, if any.</li> <li>13. Details of initiatives taken by the establishment for social and community participation and development.</li> <li>14. Action Plan and Initiatives taken for protection of endangered species of flora and fauna.</li> </ol>

**STCI LIST OF DOCUMENTS  
FOR DESKTOP VERIFICATION**

# ANNEXURE 2



### Annexure 3

## Suggestive List of Documents for On-Site Verification

The annexure entails the suggestive list of documents for the second stage of verification i.e. On site verification. The following list of documents is to be maintained by the unit for inspection.

PRINCIPLES	SUGGESTIVE LIST OF DOCUMENTS FOR ON-SITE VERIFICATION
<b>SECTION A: Effective Sustainable Management</b>	
<b>A1 Sustainability Management System</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sustainability Management Plan of the establishment (The Sustainability Management Plan shall include strategies, current and future plans for Environmental, Socio-cultural, Quality, Health and Safety issues)</li> <li>2. Link providing public access to the establishment's Sustainability Management Plan</li> <li>3. Annual Review Report for Sustainability Management Plan for last 3 years including records of stakeholder inputs</li> <li>4. Details on Sustainable Tourism Practices of the organization</li> <li>5. Certification from International/National/Regional Association/Organisation on Sustainable tourism, if any</li> </ol>
<b>A2 Legal Compliance</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Declaration of Compliance of the organization</li> <li>2. Detailed Procedure for maintenance and implementation of legal requirements as per market practices</li> </ol>
<b>A3 Training</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Training Plan of the organization</li> <li>2. Training Material (in English and local language, if applicable)</li> <li>3. Details of trainings held in last 3 years for employees and trainers</li> <li>4. Any other documents pertaining to Training Modules on Sustainability prepared by the establishment</li> </ol>

**SUGGESTIVE LIST OF  
DOCUMENTS FOR  
ON-SITE VERIFICATION**

**ANNEXURE 3**

PRINCIPLES	SUGGESTIVE LIST OF DOCUMENTS FOR ON-SITE VERIFICATION
<b>A4 Customer Satisfaction</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Customer Feedback Collection System of the organization</li> <li>2. Customer Ratings furnishing details about average customer satisfaction, ratio of complaints received and percentage of complaints resolved</li> <li>3. Grievance Redressal Plan for indicative corrective actions to be taken to address customer issues</li> </ol>
<b>A5 Promotional Materials</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Toolkit for promotion and marketing strategy of the organization</li> <li>2. Website URL for accessing promotional and marketing materials about the organization</li> <li>3. Details of initiatives taken by the organization to switch to paperless office</li> </ol>
<b>A6 Design and construction of buildings and infrastructure</b>	
<b>A6.1 Land-Use Compliance</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. NOC from State Tourism Dept and/or Municipal Authorities and/or ASI / other departments, if applicable</li> <li>2. Site Plan, if applicable</li> <li>3. Land Acquisition documents like Sale Deed and relevant NOC, if applicable</li> </ol>
<b>A6.2 Buildings and infrastructure</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Environmental Management Plan, if applicable</li> <li>2. Environmental Clearance, if applicable</li> <li>3. Details on measures taken by the organization for optimal use of environmental resources, reduction of GHG emissions and combating climate change and promoting eco-friendly initiatives</li> <li>4. Details on Green transportation options used by the organization that help to offset carbon</li> </ol>

PRINCIPLES	SUGGESTIVE LIST OF DOCUMENTS FOR ON-SITE VERIFICATION
<b>A6.2.1 Natural and cultural heritage</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Details of how siting, planning and design maintain integrity of natural settings, if applicable</li> <li>2. Details on measures taken to ensure tourism development is appropriate to local environmental conditions, if applicable</li> <li>3. Details on green building practices of the organization, if applicable</li> </ol>
<b>A6.2.2 Natural and cultural heritage surroundings</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Restoration Plan, if applicable</li> </ol>
<b>A6.2.3 Impact Assessment</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Environmental Impact Assessment Report</li> <li>2. Social Impact Assessment Report</li> </ol>
<b>A6.2.4 Land rights and acquisition</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Proof establishing compliance of land acquisition with all protected area or cultural heritage regulations, as applicable</li> <li>2. Details of stakeholder consultations held prior to acquisition, if applicable</li> <li>3. Plan for redressal mechanism for local communities, if applicable</li> </ol>
<b>A6.3 Use of Local Skills and materials</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Details of usage of locally appropriate sustainable practices in siting, planning and design, if applicable</li> <li>2. Construction Plan</li> <li>3. Details of initiatives taken by company to reduce waste and GHG emissions</li> </ol>
<b>A6.4 Universal Design for persons with special needs</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Details of facilities available for differently abled guests by the organization</li> <li>2. Promotional material prepared by the company highlighting the accessible friendly services</li> </ol>
<b>A7 Information and interpretation regarding the surroundings</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promotional material available on the local culture and cultural heritage together with advice on appropriate behaviour</li> <li>2. Curriculum for Interpretation Programme for guests and employees</li> <li>3. Plan for implementation of Interpretation Programme for the organization</li> </ol>

PRINCIPLES	SUGGESTIVE LIST OF DOCUMENTS FOR ON-SITE VERIFICATION
<b>Section B: Maximize social and economic benefits to the local community and minimize negative impacts</b>	
<b>B1 Community support</b>	1. Details of initiatives taken by the organization for the communities' social and infrastructure development
<b>B2 Employment to Local people</b>	1. Details on employment provided to local residents in management and non-management positions by the organization & details on skill building trainings provided to local residents 2. Report covering all potential indicators, as applicable
<b>B3 Local purchasing</b>	1. Purchase/ Procurement Policy of the company giving preference to local, sustainable goods and services provided by Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, wherever applicable
<b>B4 Encouraging Local small entrepreneurs</b>	1. Details of initiatives taken by establishment to encourage MSME providers to develop and sell sustainable products directly to guests
<b>B5 Code of Conduct</b>	1. Code of Conduct
<b>B6 Equal Opportunity &amp; Prevention of Exploitation</b>	1. Company Policy against commercial and sexual exploitation, particularly of women, children, adolescents and tribal communities and procedure to prevent and address such exploitation 2. Details of incidents reported pertaining to commercial and sexual exploitation with host destination authorities 3. Details of employment provided to women and local minorities, both in management and non-management categories 4. Details of incidents reported in last 3 years for child labour as per ILO definition/ as per national guidelines 5. Procedure for setting working hours limit and corresponding compensation as per ILO standards/ national regulations

PRINCIPLES	SUGGESTIVE LIST OF DOCUMENTS FOR ON-SITE VERIFICATION
	6. Details of trainings, capacity building initiatives and employee welfare schemes implemented by the organization 7. Details of Health Insurance/ ESIC Coverage, as applicable
<b>B7 Access to Basic Services for the Neighbouring Communities</b>	1. Guidelines for mutual use of basic facilities and services, such as water, energy or sanitation by residents and tourists 2. Details of recorded outages, reduced service or quality of product for the local community as compared to company
<b>SECTION C: Maximize benefits to cultural heritage and minimize negative impacts</b>	
<b>C1 Culturally, ecologically or historically sensitive sites</b>	1. Guidelines on environmental, cultural , historically sensitive sites in vicinity and advised appropriate behaviour 2. Annual Assessment Report for visitor impact at culturally or historically sensitive sites
<b>C2 Historical &amp; archaeological artefacts</b>	1. Details of initiatives taken by the organization to safeguard historical and archaeological artefacts 2. Company policy and implementation plan for safeguarding historical and archaeological artefacts 3. Policy on prevention of sale/trade of Historical/ Archaeological Artefacts
<b>C3 Protection of local, historical, archaeological, culturally and spiritually important properties and sites</b>	1. Details of initiatives taken by the organization for the protection and maintenance of local, historical, natural, archaeological, culturally and spiritually important properties and sites 2. Details of access provided to local residents at historical, archaeological, culturally, and spiritually important properties and sites

PRINCIPLES	SUGGESTIVE LIST OF DOCUMENTS FOR ON-SITE VERIFICATION
<b>C4 Intellectual Property Rights of local communities</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Details of initiatives taken by the organization to safeguard intellectual property rights of local communities and using elements of local art, architecture, or cultural heritage in its operations</li> <li>2. Details of incidents reporting exploitation of local intellectual property</li> </ol>
<b>SECTION D: Maximize benefits to the environment and minimize negative impacts</b>	
<b>D1: Conserving Resources</b>	
<b>D1.1 Environmentally Responsible Purchasing Policy</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Purchasing Policy of the organization providing details about procurement of environmentally sustainable products for building materials, capital goods, food and consumables</li> </ol>
<b>D1.2 Purchase of disposable and consumer goods</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Guidelines for sustainable consumption of goods by the organization</li> <li>2. Waste Management Plan</li> <li>3. Guidelines for minimization of packaging and usage of disposable containers</li> </ol>
<b>D1.3 Measurement of Energy Consumption</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Details of monthly energy consumption per tourist specific activity for last 1 year</li> <li>2. Details of purchasing record and installation of energy saving devices</li> <li>3. Details of energy consumption of the organization</li> <li>4. Details of initiatives taken by the organization to encourage use of renewable energy, sustainable energy consumption initiatives and infrastructure</li> </ol>
<b>D1.4 Measurement of Water Consumption</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Water conservation Strategy of the organization</li> <li>2. Water Consumption Measurement Report for tourist specific activities</li> <li>3. Details of initiatives taken by the organization for sustainable water consumption and rainwater harvesting</li> </ol>

PRINCIPLES	SUGGESTIVE LIST OF DOCUMENTS FOR ON-SITE VERIFICATION
<b>D2: Reducing Pollution</b>	
<b>D2.1 Measurement of Green House Gases</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Detailed Plan for identification, measurement and reduction of GHG emissions</li> <li>2. Details on Year-wise progress in reduction of GHG</li> <li>3. Assessment Report on Carbon footprint per tourist activity</li> <li>4. Carbon Offset Plan of the Organization</li> </ol>
<b>D2.2 Wastewater Treatment and Re-use</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Details of Grey-water recycling system installed at the company, if applicable</li> <li>2. Details of furnishing record of quantity re-used and nature of re-use</li> </ol>
<b>D2.3 Solid Waste Management</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Solid Waste Management Plan &amp; Report for last 3 years (The Plan should measure the below on a monthly basis: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Total waste generated by type and disposal method</li> <li>ii) Kilograms of waste to landfill per sector specific activity</li> <li>iii) Amount of waste incinerated</li> <li>iv) Number of incidents of hazardous spills</li> <li>v) Percentage of total waste that is reused and recycled)</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<b>D2.4 Use of Harmful Substances</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Record furnishing data monitoring usage of hazardous materials and initiatives taken to minimize use of harmful substances at the organization</li> <li>2. Details of changes in water quality due to use of harmful substances</li> </ol>

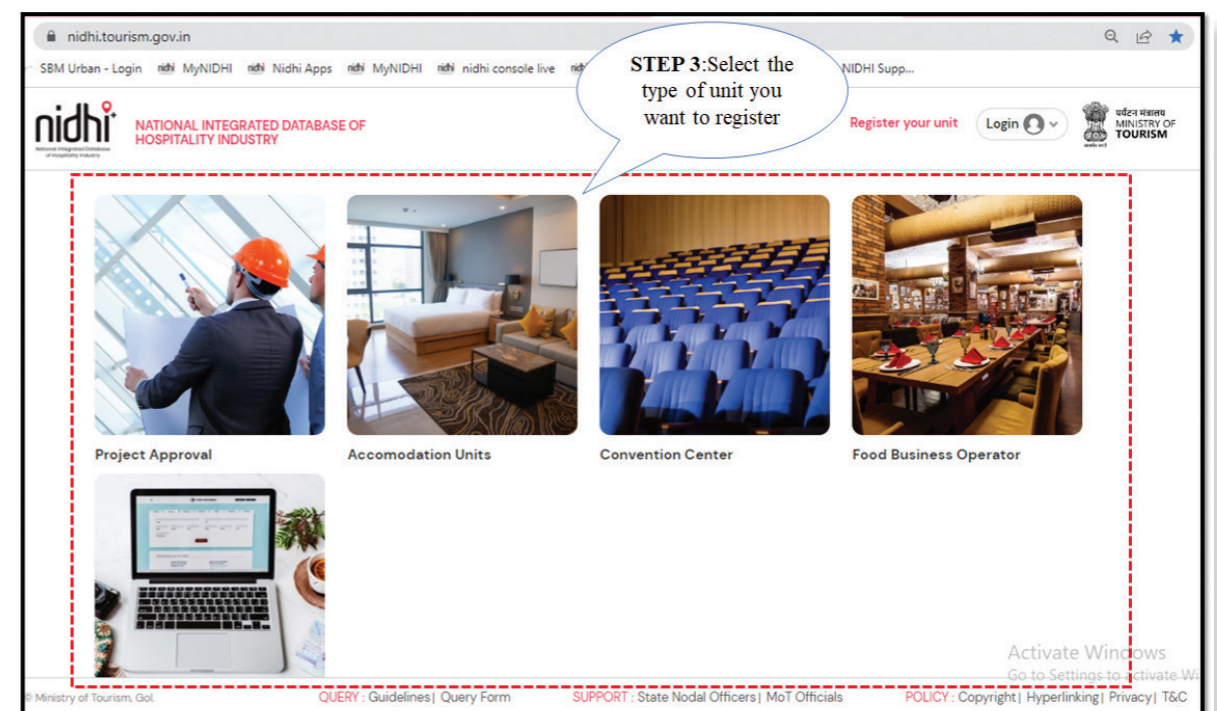
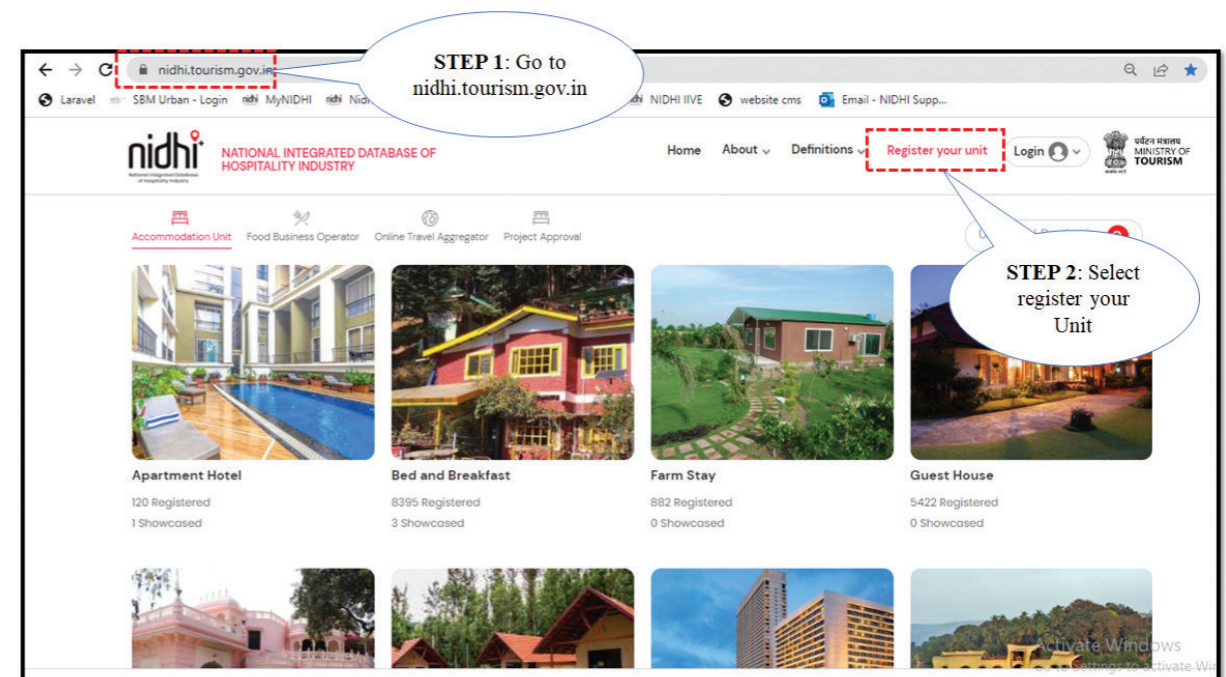
PRINCIPLES	SUGGESTIVE LIST OF DOCUMENTS FOR ON-SITE VERIFICATION
<b>D2.5 Practices to reduce Pollution</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Details of initiatives taken by the organization to monitor and reduce pollution from noise, light, ozone-depleting compounds and air and soil contaminants</li> <li>2. Details of measures taken by organization to measure and prevent counter runoff and erosion</li> <li>3. Pollution Management Plan of the organization</li> </ol>
<b>D3: Conserving biodiversity, ecosystems and landscapes</b>	
<b>D3.1 Prevention of trade in endangered species of flora and fauna</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Organizational Policy on protection of endangered species of flora and fauna, if applicable</li> </ol>
<b>D3.2 Wildlife</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Details of initiatives taken by the organization for wildlife conservation, if applicable</li> </ol>
<b>D3.3 Landscaping and Gardening</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Details of initiatives taken by the organization for inclusion of endemic native species for landscaping and restoration, if applicable</li> <li>2. Plan for removal and restoration of endemic species, wherever required, if applicable</li> </ol>
<b>D3.4 Biodiversity Conservation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Details of initiatives taken by the organization for biodiversity conservation in terms of financial support towards natural protected areas and biodiversity conservation, if applicable</li> <li>2. Assessment Plan for impact of tourist specific activities on biodiversity, if applicable</li> </ol>
<b>D3.5 Interactions with Wildlife</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Details of activities undertaken by the organization to minimize disturbance of natural ecosystems, if applicable</li> <li>2. Details of impact assessment conducted highlighting IUCN Red List and national conservation list species and habitats affected by the company's operations, if applicable</li> <li>3. Details of habitats protected or restored by the company and budgetary allocation for biodiversity conservation, if applicable</li> </ol>



## Annexure 4

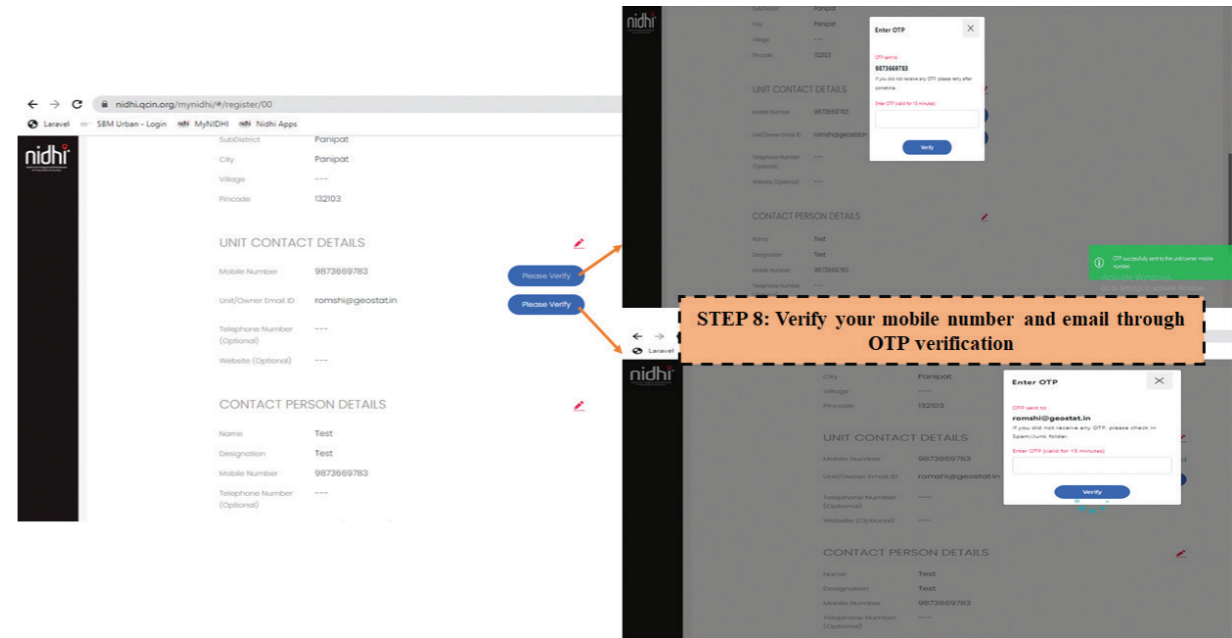
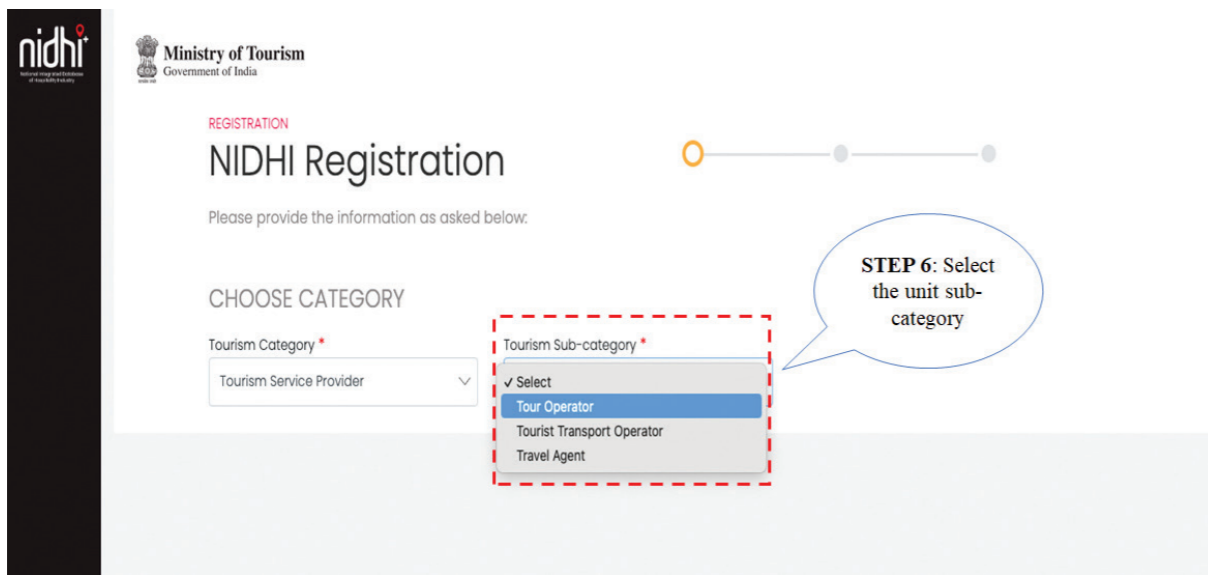
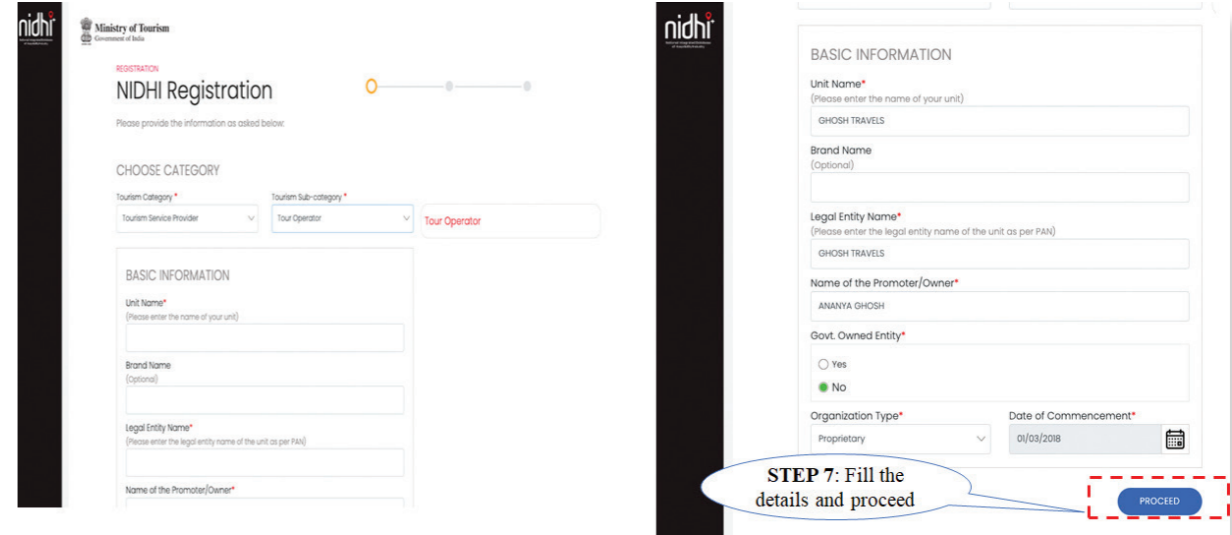
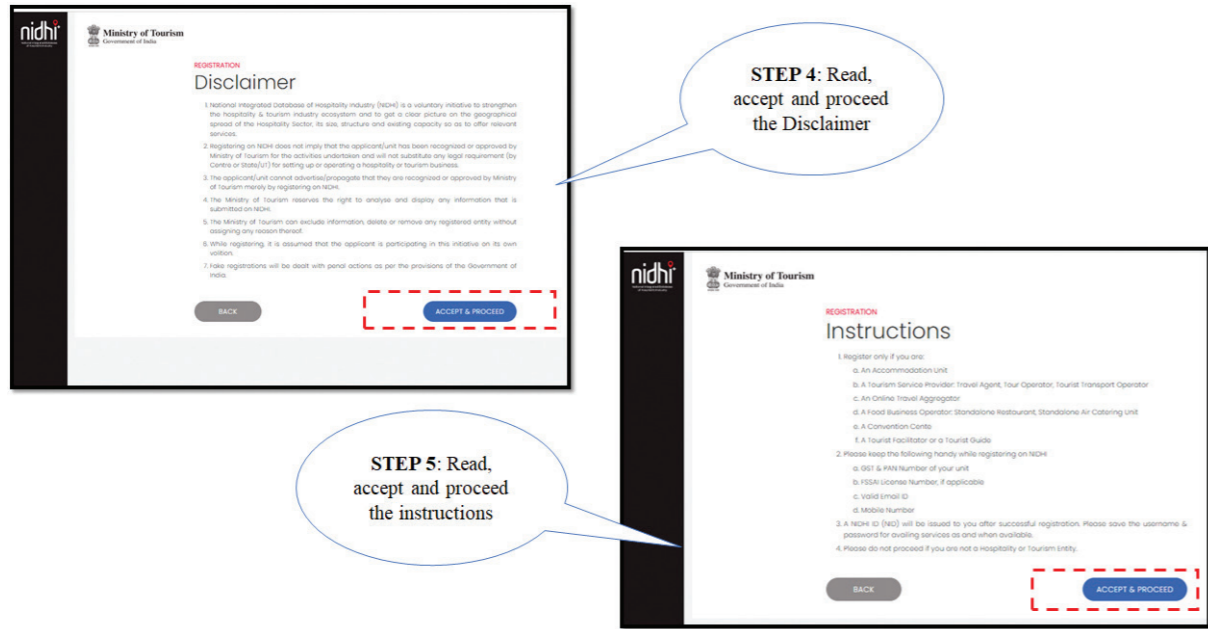
### How to Register on NIDHI Plus Platform?

The first step towards STCI Certification is Registration on the NIDHI Plus platform. Using the following steps, the unit can register to further avail of digital services like showcasing, classification and STCI Certification. The units that have registered before may skip this step and proceed towards STCI Certification using the Login credentials obtained earlier.



**HOW TO REGISTER ON  
NIDHI PLUS PLATFORM?**

**ANNEXURE 4**



**STEP 9: Read and take Pledge by clicking on Pledge tab**

Now, Your registration form has been submitted successfully and forwarded to the state for verification. After verification, you will get your entity credentials on your registered email.

**REGISTRATION PROCESS COMPLETED**

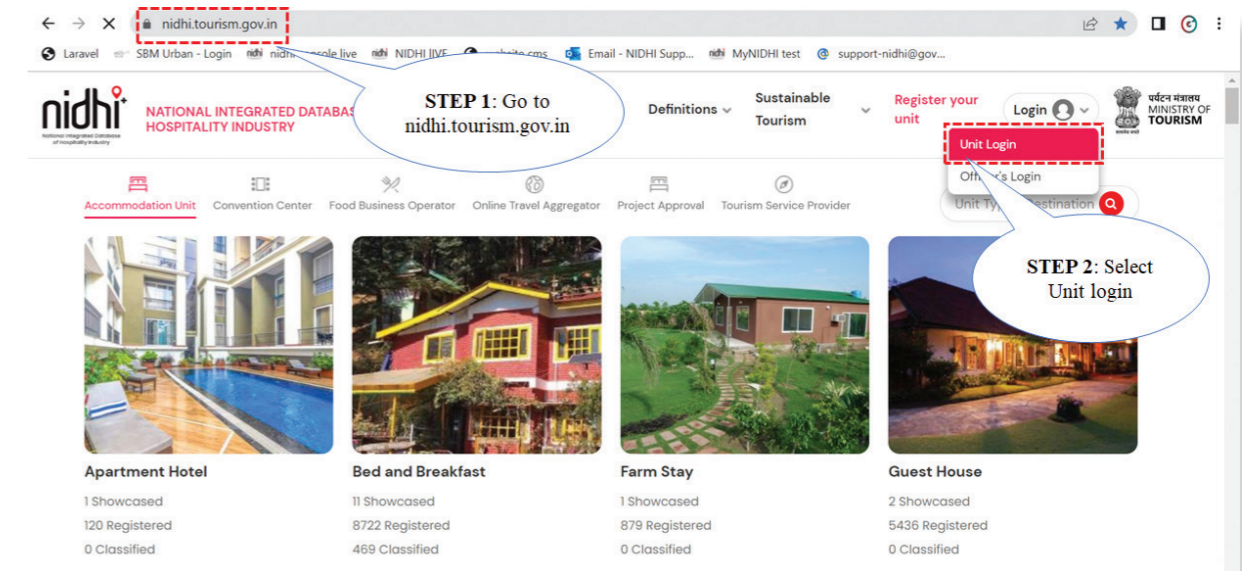




## Annexure 5 How to Apply for STCI Certification?

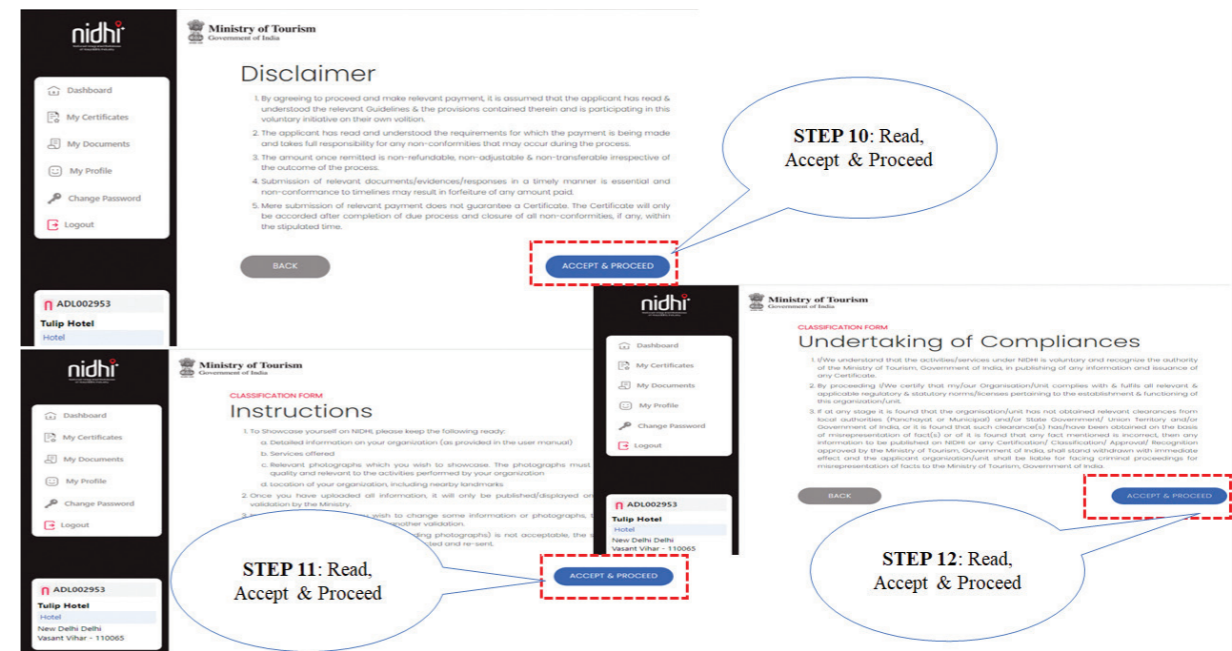
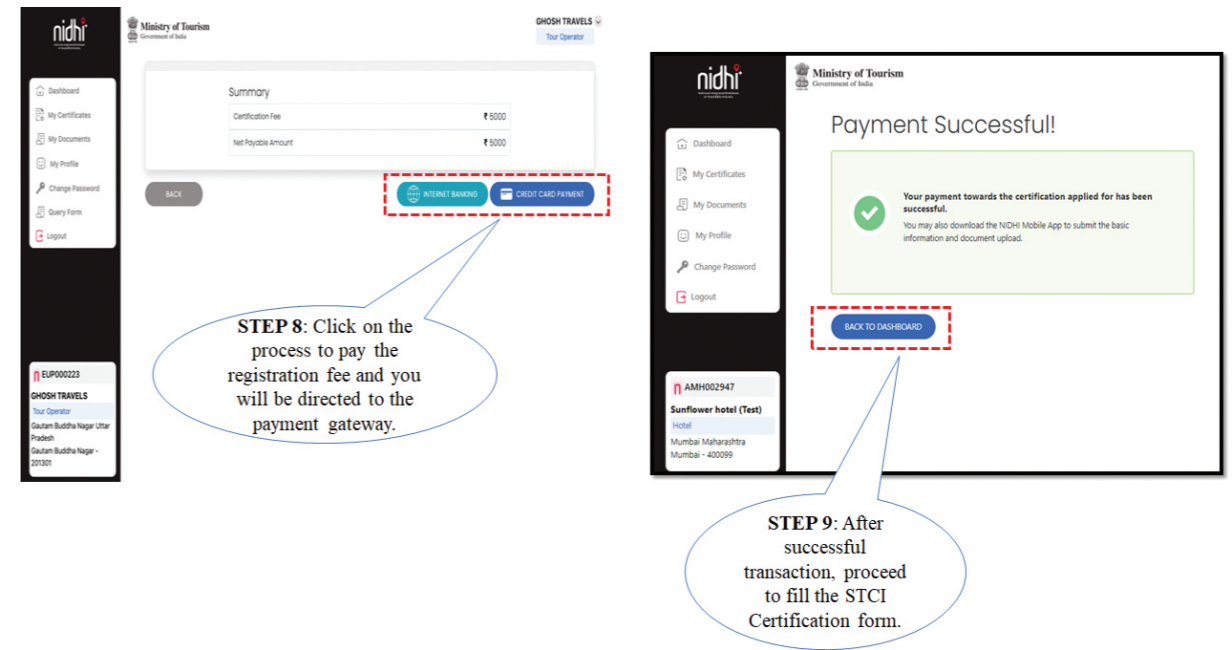
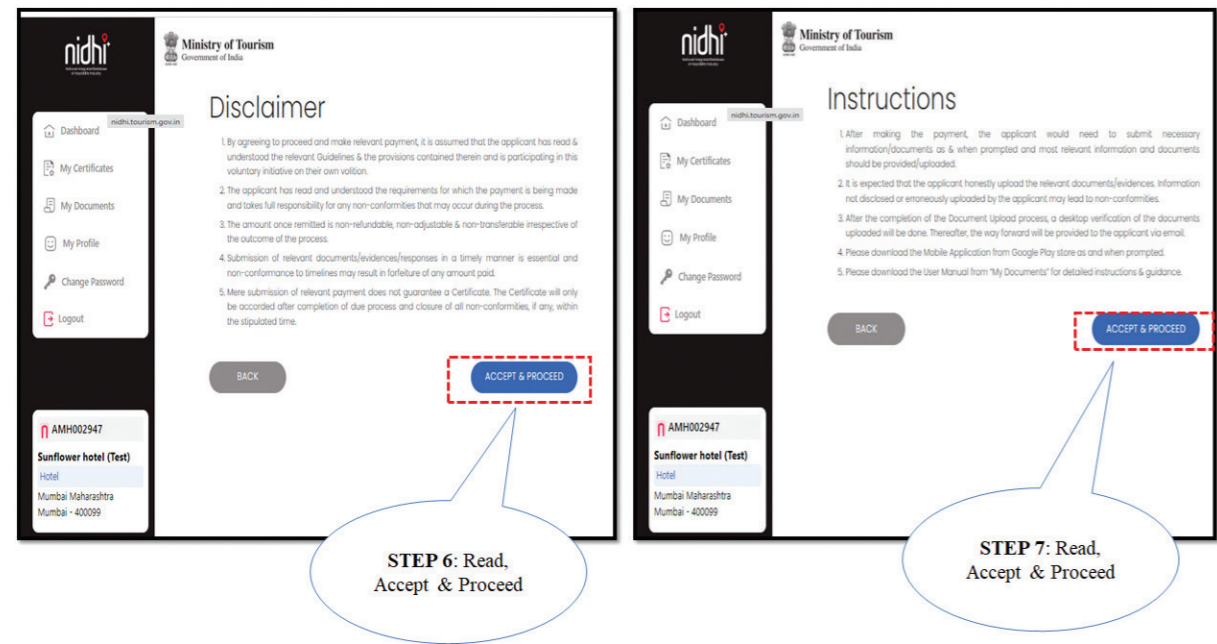
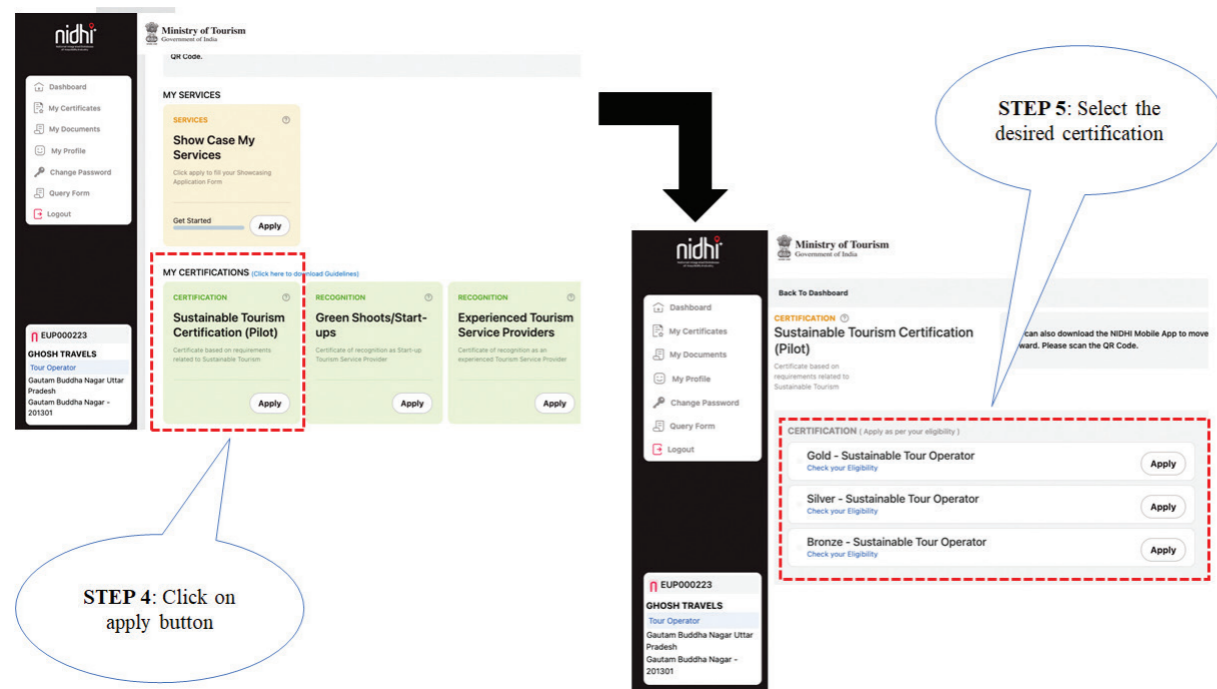
Upon approval of the unit's registration from the concerned authority, the Unit shall receive login credentials using which the unit may apply for STCI Certification.

The following steps are to be followed:

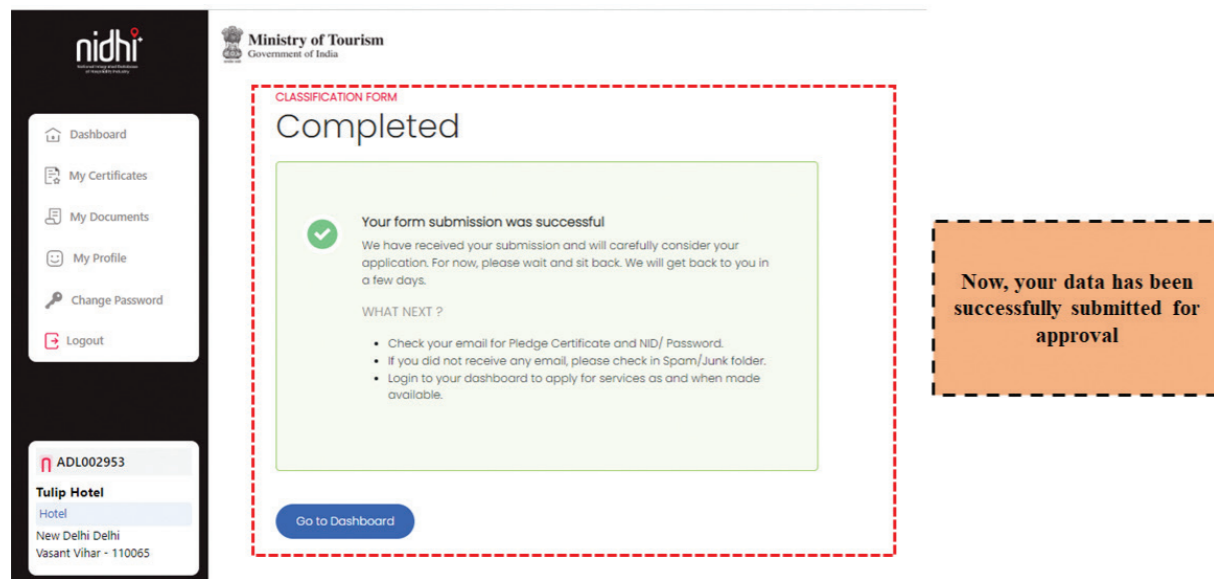
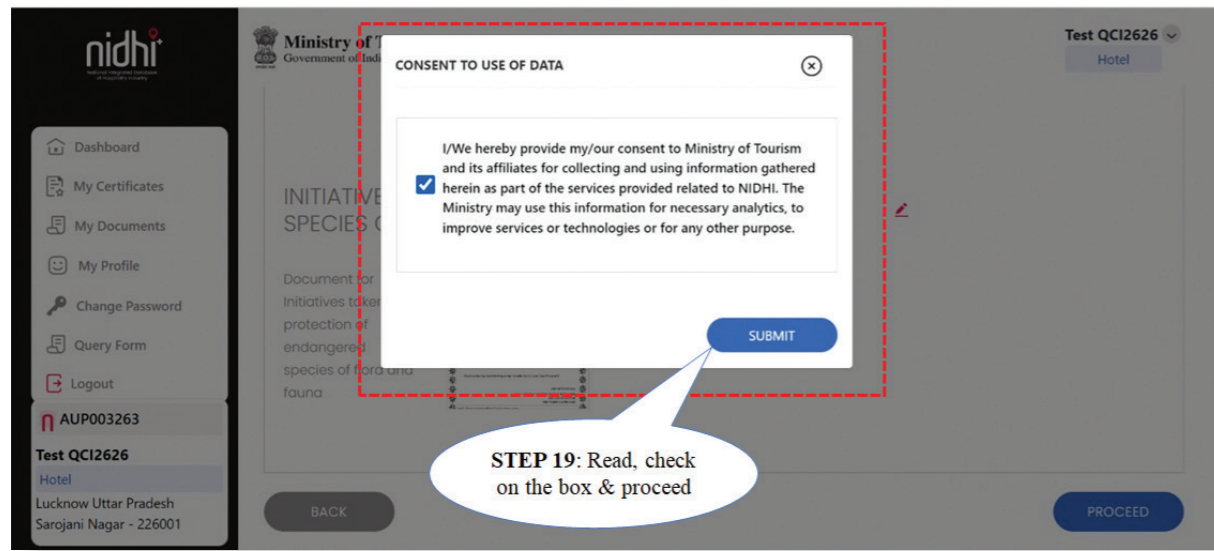


HOW TO APPLY FOR  
STCI CERTIFICATION?

ANNEXURE 5







## References

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सत्यमेव जयते

The Sustainable Tourism Criteria of India (STCI) Toolkit for Tour Operators was prepared by Central Nodal Agency for Sustainable Tourism (CNA-ST), IITTM, in 2023 under the aegis of the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.

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Central Nodal Agency for Sustainable Tourism

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Ministry of Tourism  
Government of India



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