TOP 100 DESTINATION SUSTAINABILITY STORIES

2021 COMPETITION

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Republic of Palau, 2018 Top 100
ITB Earth Awards 2019
For the 7th edition of the Top 100 competition, Green Destinations intends to put in the spotlight local and regional destinations around the world that are taking incremental steps and making promising progress towards a more sustainable tourism industry.

More than ever, this year the goal is to share these destinations' innovative and effective sustainability tourism stories and good management practices as inspiring examples to other destinations, tour operators and travellers.

The unprecedented COVID-19 global health pandemic that rattled 2020 has disrupted the tourism industry worldwide. Now is the time to get together, learn from each other and celebrate these resilient destinations.

Green Destinations and the Top 100 Competition aim to acknowledge destinations that are working towards making the tourism industry more sustainable and responsible while creating a more attractive experience for visitors by sharing and putting their Good Practice Story in the spotlight.

Selection in this annual list does not mean the destination is sustainable. A sustainability check will ensure that participants are destinations that are making efforts and progress towards a more sustainable and responsible tourism industry. However, selection for the 2021 Top 100 list is fully based on Good Practice Story evaluations.

Applications can be submitted by any person, organisation or company on behalf of the destination.
Cities, towns, islands, and protected areas represented by a person, a team or an organisation in charge of tourism destination management and sustainability.

**Exceptional cases**: countries and regions may be eligible when their size is less than 50,000 sq km.

**Not eligible**: Accommodations, single buildings, attractions and theme parks are not eligible. However, eco-lodges and privately-owned protected areas are eligible if there is effective stewardship for a considerable area that is otherwise not managed.

### 2021 Application Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Step 1: Early Bird Deadline</th>
<th>Step 1: Submission Deadline</th>
<th>Step 2: Submission Deadline</th>
<th>Global Green Destinations Days</th>
<th>ITB Berlin 2022</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Bird Deadline</td>
<td>30 April</td>
<td>31 July</td>
<td>TBC</td>
<td>TBC</td>
<td>TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be eligible for feedback on submission</td>
<td>No feedback on submission provided</td>
<td>Only when passed Sustainability Check</td>
<td>Official unveiling of 2021 Top 100 list</td>
<td>Green Destinations Stories Awards ceremony</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Competition Stages

**Step 1: Sustainability Check**

Applicants submit their **Sustainability Reports** explaining compliance on core sustainability criteria of the **Green Destinations Standard** (recognised by GSTC).

- 1st year applicants: 15 criteria
- 2nd year applicants: 30 criteria

Destinations must reach at least **60% compliance** to be eligible to take part in Step Two. **Early bird** submissions (before 1st April) are entitled to receive feedback and the opportunity to update and re-submit their sustainability check before the final deadline.

**Step 2: Good Practice Story**

Once deemed eligible, 1st and 2nd year applicants will be asked to submit a **Good Practice Story** by the 31st of July 2021.

The format for the story as well as **training** are provided by the team to support destinations in this process, and to help **identify and write** a high quality Good Practice Story.

Alongside the story, the destination will be asked to provide at least **5 high resolution copyright-free pictures** to illustrate the destination's good practice.

[www.greendestinations.org](http://www.greendestinations.org)
HOW TO APPLY

Any interested local government, DMO or stakeholder can start the application on behalf of the destination by completing the registration form.

The application will be reviewed by the Top 100 team, and if eligible, the applicant will receive a login for the Green Destinations online platform and instructions to complete the sustainability check.

The applicant will also gain access to the following Green Destinations training modules: 1) The Green Destinations core criteria; and 2) Writing the best good practice story.

Application deadline: The final deadline for Step 1 submission on the Green Destinations online platform is 30th of April 2021. No feedback, and therefore no opportunity to update and re-submit evidence will be given to submissions received after the 1st of April 2021.

SELECTION REQUIREMENTS & FEES

REQUIREMENTS

- Applicants are required to submit a new or updated Good Practice Story.
- Applicants are required to provide at least 5 high-resolution copyright-free pictures relevant to their Good Practice Story.

1st and 2nd year Top 100 applicants who commit to proceed for GD Award or Certification after their Top 100 application can join the 2021 Top 100 for free as they:

- will benefit from the 50% ACP-discount for the Top 100 application fee;
- will have the remaining Top 100 fee discounted from their first ACP membership invoice.

We are also excited to offer 10 free spaces in the competition to allow even the smallest destinations to participate and get recognised. Please contact us to check if you are eligible for a free space.

APPLICATION FEES*

Destinations from Europe, Russia, Canada, US, AUS, New Zealand, China, Taiwan, Korea and Japan: 600€
- Good Travel Guide members (25% discount): 450€
- Green Destinations Award & Certification Program members (50% discount): 300€

Other destinations: 300€
- Good Travel Guide members (25% discount): 225€
- Green Destinations Award and Certification Program members (50% discount): 150€

Same fees apply for 1st and 2nd year participants, 3rd year participants are required to join the Green Destinations Award & Certification Program to be eligible for continued Top 100 participation.

Fees required to be paid after the destinations registration form is approved.

www.greendestinations.org

*all fees exclude any applicable VAT
For the first time, this Top 100 edition will provide training to destinations to guide them throughout their application process and on their journey towards sustainability. The training, developed by the Green Destinations Training team, is based on 3 main components: pre-recorded training videos, webinars from industry experts and live Q&A sessions. Applicants will be able to go through the training at their own pace and learn about the following:

- **The Green Destinations core criteria** - 15 or 30 core criteria of the GSTC-recognised Green Destinations Standard - foundational knowledge, how to effectively report their initiatives how will they be evaluated, etc.
- **Writing the best Good Practice Story** - what is effective storytelling, how to identify and write a Good Practice Story, etc.

Applicants will develop essential skills in reporting and communicating sustainability efforts and develop a better understanding of the Green Destinations Standard that will prove useful in their next steps towards sustainability certification.

**YOUR GOOD PRACTICE STORY HAS GREAT VALUE**

The Good Practice Stories submitted are used as a basis for selection to the 2021 Top 100 list and can be selected to be presented in the Global Green Destinations Days 2021 (GGDD21).

The stories are also the basis for nomination to the ITB Berlin Awards - only for 2nd year participants and ACP members. We encourage destinations to use these stories as part of their destination storytelling and as a powerful message to share with visitors.

Please note that the stories are embargoed and not to be shared outside of the Top 100 team until the official unveiling of the 2021 Top 100 list. The stories selected will also be a main topic of communication for Green Destinations' social media channels to promote the 2021 Top 100 destinations. For destinations present on the Good Travel Guide, the stories selected can also be shared on their Good Travel Guide destination page and the Good Travel Guide's social media channels.
**BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION**

Benefits are available for every participant, no matter which stage of the competition they reach.

**For every participants of STEP ONE:**

- Sustainability assessment - further Feedback and guidelines provided to those who are NOT eligible to take part in 2nd Stage (did not achieve at least 60% in the eligibility check).
- Guidance and Good Practice examples available on the Green Destination online platform.
- Access to the Top 100 Training Courses.
- Discount on Green Destinations’ products (Award and Certification Program) worth the amount of the application fee.

**For every participants of STEP TWO:**

- Marketing Added Values:
  - Good Travel Guide - Promotion of the destination through the creation of a destination page on the website.
  - 20% Discount on the Good Travel Guide Destination Promotion Package.
  - For destinations reaching at least 70% compliance with the criteria they were evaluated on or their ACP program audit: editorial content on Sustainable First.
- Your story can be selected for GGDD and other thematic GD events throughout the year.

**For destinations selected to be part of the 2021 Top 100 list:**

- Right to use the 2021 Top 100 logo and other marketing material
- Exposure at the Global Green Destinations Days (GGDD) 2021 unveiling ceremony, and collection of the Top 100 Certificate and Score card.
- Opportunity to present your Good Practice Story at the GGDD 2021.
- Exposure as a finalist or winner at the Top 100 Destination Sustainability Stories Awards at ITB Berlin 2022 in case of nominated Good Practice Story, and collection of the ITB Award certificate - for 2nd year and ACP members participants only.
- Exposure through the Green Destinations social media channels as part of the 2021 Top 100 social media campaign.
TOP 100 PARTNERSHIP

The Top 100 competition and the Top 100 Stories Awards is an initiative of Green Destinations and the QualityCoast Awards program, supported by:

- **ITB Berlin**, Germany
- **GLP Films**, USA
- **TravelMole’s VISION on Sustainable Tourism**, France
- **Sustainable First**, United Kingdom / Thailand
- **Travelindex**, United Kingdom / Thailand
- **Asian Ecotourism Network (AEN)**, Thailand
- **Global Ecotourism Network (GEN)**, USA / Costa Rica
- **Destination Stewardship Center**, USA
- **Ecotourism Australia**, Australia
- **Travelife for Tour Operators and Travel Agents**, the Netherlands

The evaluation of applications will be supported by the Top 100 Team and by an international pool of experts from Partner organisations.

For questions about the Top 100 Stories competition or the Top 100 Stories Awards, please see our [FAQ section](#) or contact us at [top100@greendestination.org](mailto:top100@greendestination.org).

On behalf of the Green Destinations Top 100 Team,
Albert Salman, Green Destinations, Jury President
Louise de Hemmer, Top 100 Program Coordinator,
Leiden (NL) / Paris (FR)

[www.greendestinations.org](http://www.greendestinations.org)