A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO ADVANCE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

While COVID-19 has faced the tourism sector with an unprecedented challenge, the climate crisis is expected to become no less problematic in view of its long-term impacts and the necessity to look and plan far ahead. However, we have learned that sustainability is not a problem to be solved, but a future to be created together.

Creating this future requires a common vision and a roadmap to ensure progress based on leadership, mutual learning and innovation. This is what the Global Leaders Program aims to offer to national and regional tourism organisations, destinations and business leaders.

Global Leaders are committed to being at the forefront of innovation in developing tourism, in managing tourism impacts, and in enhancing the benefits, quality and sustainability of their tourism offer.

Since 2015 Green Destinations has developed tailor-made country-based assessments and certification programs, enabling countries to achieve goals and ambitions towards greening their tourism sector.

The Global Leaders Program offers national and regional tourism boards, ministries, and other umbrella organisations the lessons learned from this approach. Program members are guided to introduce Green Destinations’ Award & Certification Program (ACP) to frontrunner destinations, customised to their own language, management, context, training needs and even branding. This allows members to benefit from a GSTC-Accredited certification program for destination sustainability, as implementation of a central sustainable tourism development & branding strategy. Additional promotional support is available through our affiliate Good Travel Guide and Good Travel Seal business certification.

www.greendestinations.org
OBJECTIVES OF THE GLOBAL LEADERS PROGRAM

The Global Leaders initiative aims to bring together leaders in tourism planning and management, to commonly promote sustainability through and beyond certification, and especially to:

- **build a country/regional program** and **roadmap** for sustainable tourism;
- **learn from other** global leaders in sustainable tourism;
- gain recognition for sustainability achievements, through **independent certification**;
- gain global **visibility** for sustainable destinations, businesses, products and services in the travel & tourism marketplace.

National or regional tourism boards, ministries and umbrella organizations are welcome to participate. Independent destinations that demonstrate leadership or ambition in the pursuit of sustainable tourism are also eligible for membership.
GLOBAL LEADERS MEMBERSHIP

Global Leaders members enjoy benefits for themselves and for a number of Destinations Management Organisations.

- **Meetings & webinars**: free access of board and staff to online Green Destinations webinars and conferences, incl. Global Green Destinations Days (GGDD).
- **International exchange of good practices**: free access of staff to discussions organized in the Global Leaders program. We will also facilitate any request for liaising with specific destinations participating in any of the Green Destinations programs.
- **Sustainable Top 100 competition**: a number of destinations within the country or region can enjoy discounted Top 100 Registration fees.
- **Good Travel Seal business certification**: small & medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) located in awarded destinations will benefit from a 33% discount on the regular price.
- **Good Travel Guide**: free basic pages for awarded destinations and certified businesses, with special promotional benefits.

**Membership fees**

Global Leaders membership fees depend on the size and location of the member. The program aims to recognise the contribution of experienced Global Leaders with a ‘Down to Zero’ fee structure: members with more destinations and businesses subscribed to the certification programs pay less than members new to the program.

Contact us for more information about membership and packages.
CREATE YOUR OWN SUSTAINABILITY SCHEME

The objective of the Global Leaders initiative is to assist countries and regions to develop a comprehensive program to make their tourism sector more sustainable, following the successful models implemented by Slovenia, Estonia, and other countries.

However, each member may have particular objectives and capacities. Therefore, Global Leaders members can create and implement their own tailor-made program with the guidance of Green Destinations partners, advisors and 'senior' members of the Global Leaders network.

Members may compose their own scheme choosing from the following elements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Customisation</th>
<th>Baseline Assessment of relevant sustainability policies and regulations</th>
<th>Translation of assessment and support tools in local language</th>
<th>Customisation of sustainability guidance and training content to local contexts</th>
<th>Brand your own tourism sustainability scheme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability assessment &amp; recognition</td>
<td>Top 100 competition</td>
<td>GD Award &amp; Certification</td>
<td>Tourism business certification</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training and learning</td>
<td>Top 100 training</td>
<td>ACP training (general and thematic workshops)</td>
<td>Local Auditor training (destination &amp; business certification)</td>
<td>Study tours to 'senior' GL members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion</td>
<td>Good Travel Guide and Promotional Packages</td>
<td>Sponsorship of GL and GD Events and programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Customisation** aims to enable more efficient and effective implementation of sustainability assessment and support tools; or branding it as a national/regional scheme (e.g. [www.slovenia-green.si](http://www.slovenia-green.si)).
- **Sustainability recognition** is the core of the program where sector stakeholders (destinations, businesses) assess their sustainability, obtain recognition for achievements, and follow recommendations for improvements.
- **Training and learning** is available in online and on-site formats; with special attention to learning from 'senior' GL members by paying a field visit and exchange experiences.
- **Promotion** aims to assist the GL member in making participation by stakeholders worthwhile in terms of publicity. Also, sponsorship of GL and GD events and programs enables the GL member to boost their profile as Global Leader.
To develop and implement the scheme, we will develop a 'roadmap' to introduce the scheme step-by-step with support from the Green Destinations partnership.

**DEVELOPMENT**
Initial analysis of the national/regional needs, setting up targets, working plan and team works.

**PREPARATION AND SETTING UP**
Set up working groups, customise platform, and tools. Selection of destinations, businesses and relevant stakeholders.

**TRAINING MISSION**
Building capacities among stakeholders in online and on-site training and workshops. Optional field visit to Global Leader countries (e.g. Slovenia, Estonia) to learn from their experience.

**DESTINATION ASSESSMENT**
Pilot destinations prepare applications for Top 100 Destination Sustainable Stories and GD Awards and Certification Program.

**TOURISM BUSINESS ASSESSMENT**
Pilot businesses prepare applications for the Good Travel Seal.

**PROMOTE ACHIEVEMENTS**
Building a national or regional brand for sustainable tourism and reward achievements with Awards and Certification.

**FEEDBACK & ASSESSMENT**
Analysis of pilot results, development of a dedicated procedure for implementing the scheme; continuous follow-up ‘help desk’ support.

Contact us for a proposal to develop a roadmap for your country or region.

www.greendestinations.org
The Global Leaders Program initiative started in 2018, inspired by the success of the Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism which was implemented since 2015 under the leadership of the Slovenian Tourist Board. Supported by GoodPlace and Green Destinations, the program aimed to feature Slovenia as the world’s most sustainable tourism destination.

Some of the achievements since the implementation of the program:

- **54** Slovenia Green Destinations
- **36%** of municipalities Awarded
- **78%** of tourists visit SG- Awarded destinations

The Slovenia Green Scheme expanded their scope and developed standards to award accommodations, parks, travel agencies, attractions, cuisine and beaches.
BACKGROUND AND MANAGEMENT OF THE INITIATIVE

Global Leaders is a joint program of Green Destinations Foundation and the Good Travel Guide. It results from an initiative taken in the Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development 2017 by Albert Salman, founder of Green Destinations. Co-founders: Brian T. Mullis, founder of Sustainable Travel International (STI); and Costas D. Christ, Editor of National Geographic.

The Global Leaders Network was founded by 50 invited experts at the first Global Leaders Conference, 25-26 September 2018 in the Dutch city of Arnhem, hosted by the Provincial Government of Gelderland and attended a.o. by the National Tourism Boards of the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia and Guyana and by Ecotourism Australia. Through this program, Green Destinations is preparing and implementing work programs in a series of countries through bilateral cooperation and by involving Green Destinations experts and trainers from around the world.

The program is managed by Albert Salman, Hugo de Jong, and Patricia Marull.

MORE INFORMATION AND PROGRAM REFERENCES

Green Destination Global Leaders
www.greendestinations.org/global-leaders

GD Awards & Certification Program (ACP)
www.greendestinations.org/programs-and-services/awards-certification

Green Destinations Events:
www.greendestinations.org/events
Note: next Global Green Destinations Days (GGDD) is planned to be online, October 2021

Green Destinations Training
training.greendestinations.org

Good Travel Guide
www.goodtravelguide

Good Travel Seal
www.goodtravelseal.com