



RTSOI Self-Certification Tools

Guidance to Self-Assessment of Sustainability Performance and Development of Sustainability Initiatives for Accommodations Providers.

**Guide to become a Responsible
& Sustainable Accommodation Provider**

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Procedure:

How can you get the RTSOI Self Audit Certificate for your establishment?

You will get the Responsible Tourism Society of India (RTSOI) Self Audit Certificate for your establishment by following these few simple steps:-

- Register with RTSOI and take the self assessment on the link provided.
- Send an email with the following information to admin@rtsoi.org
Establishment Name:
Are you a member of RTSOI:
- You will receive a revert with a self declaration form and link to Deposit the Certification Fee of Rs. 4,500/- per certification.
- Sign the self declaration form, enclose the payment transfer details and email to admin@rtsoi.org.

About the Certificate:

- The RTSOI Self Audit Certificate is valid for a period of 3 years from the date of award.
- Once the certification has been issued, the establishment is required to retake the self audit internally to measure improvement in its sustainability index as compared to the previous years. If the establishment has improved before the end of three years, it can reapply again with proof of improvement to move to the next certification level.
- Establishments will be better positioned to go for a STCI (Sustainable Tourism Criteria for India) certification once they achieve the Champion level.

RTSOI Self-Certification Tool

Target Group and Objectives

The RTSOI believes that it is the responsibility of every tourism business owner/manager to make their businesses sustainable, based on environmental, socio-cultural and economic parameters.

The Responsible & Sustainability Self-Certification Tool is designed for Tourism Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME). The objective of the Tool is to help tourism MSME determine their performance across the key areas of responsible and sustainable tourism. It focuses on the establishment's internal policies and practices. It showcases existing practices that support responsible and sustainable tourism and highlights where improvement is needed.

The Tool is based on the commonly understood parameters of Sustainable & Responsible Tourism as practiced by RTSOI and accepted as the Standard by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (GoI) viz the Sustainable Tourism Criteria of India (STCI)

These criteria provide common understanding of what “sustainable and responsible tourism” means and represent the minimal requirements that any tourism establishment should inspire to meet. The Self-Certification Tool is structured around the following five sections:

- Sustainability planning and sustainable management
- Maximizing social and economic benefits to local communities
- Maximizing sustainable tourism benefits for cultural heritage
- Reducing negative impacts on the environment
- How to become a responsible traveler.

The table below shall help you rate yourself

TABLE 1: METRIC'S INDICATOR

SCALE	METRIC	DESCRIPTION
4	Highly engaged <i>(75% and above)</i>	Comprehensive and part of the stated establishment policy.
3	To a large extent <i>(50-75%)</i>	Solid progress is made in implementing this task
2	To a small extent <i>(25-50%)</i>	Initial conceptual and planning work related to this task has just started
1	None <i>(Less than 25%)</i>	Implementation of this task has not been started yet
0	Not applicable	This task is not related to my operations

Self-Assessment of Sustainability Performance

The Self-Certification Tool may be used both as part of the Responsible Tourism Society of India (RTSOI) certification, and in the context of real-life operations of tourism MSME.

The RTSOI foresees carrying out self-assessment of responsible & sustainable performance as a first step of certification. It aims to help users reflect on sustainability of their respective businesses, identify areas of underperformance, and focus on the exploration of potential solutions for improvement. The Self-Certification Tool could be used at any time by any tourism stakeholder for evaluating their sustainability performance and planning potential improvements in its accommodation establishment.

The self-assessment involves the following steps:

1. Read the criteria and indicators in the Self-Certification Tool carefully.
2. Answer the questions by choosing the most appropriate metric – the degree to which your establishment complies with each indicator.
3. Think about the evidence you have available to support your responses. *Evidence may include any document/photograph which proves your compliance with the indicator.*
4. If the self-assessment results show that your establishment has underperformed in certain areas then you could engage with RTSOI to get ideas on possible improvement on the sustainability performance of your establishment.
5. Set priorities and plan improvement.
6. Develop an action plan with objectives, activities, budget, schedule and responsibilities.
7. Undertake the second self-assessment after taking actions to see how you have managed to improve your sustainability performance.

Self-Assessment Questionnaire (for Accommodation Units)

SECTION A: SUSTAINABILITY PLANNING AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT

A1 Responsible & Sustainability Management System

A1.1. Has your establishment created and implemented a Sustainability Management Plan? A good plan should address environmental, social, cultural and economic issues, as well as quality of services, health and safety, risk and crisis management issues.

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

A2 Staff engagement

A2.1. Does your establishment provide employees with periodic guidance and training regarding their roles and responsibilities in the implementation of the Sustainability Management Plan?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

A2.2. Does the establishment have a dedicated resource responsible for ensuring internal sustainability compliance?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

A3 Reporting and communication

A3.1. Does your establishment communicate its sustainability policy, actions and performance to customers and other stakeholders, through its website (for example) , and seek to encourage their support?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

A4 Customer experience

A4.1. Does your establishment monitor customer satisfaction with its products and services, including sustainability aspects, and keep record of corrective actions?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

A5 Accurate promotion

A5.1. Does your establishment provide accurate and transparent information regarding its products and services, including sustainability claims, in its promotional materials and marketing communications?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

A6 Legal compliances

A6.1. Does your establishment comply with all applicable local and national legislation and regulations including, among others those relating to: health, safety, labour and environmental aspects?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

A7 Sustainable practices and materials

A7.1. Has your establishment used locally appropriate and sustainable materials, practices and crafts in construction, design or decoration of its buildings and premises?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

A8 Accessibility

A8.1. Are the premises accessible to including people with special needs? Special needs includes individuals requiring hearing, visual, walking assistance.

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

A9 Information and interpretation

A9.1. Does your establishment provide customers with information about the natural surroundings, wildlife, culture and heritage in the region?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

A9.2. Does your establishment inform customers about appropriate behaviour in the region?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

A9.3. Is your establishment involved with sustainable tourism planning and management in the destination, partnering with local communities or NGO's, where such opportunities exist?

- Highly Engaged (75% and above)
 To a large extent (50-75%)
 To a small extent (25-50%)
 None (Less than 25%)
 N/A (Not Applicable)

Total Score For Section A:

Section Number	Highly engaged <i>(75% and above)</i>	To a large extent <i>(50-75%)</i>	To a small extent <i>(25-50%)</i>	None <i>(Less than 25%)</i>	Not applicable
A1.1					
A2.1					
A3.1					
A4.1					
A5.1					
A6.1					
A7.1					
A8.1					
A9.1					
A9.2					
A9.3					
Total Score					

SECTION B: MAXIMIZING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES

B1 Community support

B1.1 Does your establishment support any initiatives/ projects related to social development of the local community?

- Highly Engaged
75% and above
 To a large extent
50-75%
 To a small extent
25-50%
 None
Less than 25%
 N/A
Not Applicable

B2 Local employment

B2.1. Does your establishment employ 70% local residents?

- Highly Engaged
75% and above
 To a large extent
50-75%
 To a small extent
25-50%
 None
Less than 25%
 N/A
Not Applicable

B3 Local purchasing

B3.1. Does your establishment purchase goods and services from locally owned businesses?

- Highly Engaged
75% and above
 To a large extent
50-75%
 To a small extent
25-50%
 None
Less than 25%
 N/A
Not Applicable

B4 Local entrepreneurs

B4.1. Does your establishment partner with local entrepreneurs for marketing and sale of responsible and sustainable products and services?

- Highly Engaged
75% and above
 To a large extent
50-75%
 To a small extent
25-50%
 None
Less than 25%
 N/A
Not Applicable

B5 Equal opportunities

B5.1. Does your establishment offer equal employment opportunities for all?

- Highly Engaged
75% and above
 To a large extent
50-75%
 To a small extent
25-50%
 None
Less than 25%
 N/A
Not Applicable

B6 Decent work

B6.1. Does your establishment provide regular career progression counselling and training for its employees?

- Highly Engaged
75% and above
 To a large extent
50-75%
 To a small extent
25-50%
 None
Less than 25%
 N/A
Not Applicable

Total Score For Section B:

Section Number	Highly engaged <i>(75% and above)</i>	To a large extent <i>(50-75%)</i>	To a small extent <i>(25-50%)</i>	None <i>(Less than 25%)</i>	Not applicable
B1.1					
B2.1					
B3.1					
B4.1					
B5.1					
B6.1					
Total Score					

SECTION C: MAXIMIZING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM BENEFITS TO CULTURAL HERITAGE

C1 Cultural interactions

C1.1. Does your establishment manage and promote visits to cultural sites and local/indigenous communities in compliance with accepted guidelines and local customs and norms?

- Highly Engaged
75% and above
 To a large extent
50-75%
 To a small extent
25-50%
 None
Less than 25%
 N/A
Not Applicable

C2 Presenting culture and heritage

C2.1. Does your establishment incorporate authentic elements of local art, craft, cultural heritage and traditions in its package?

- Highly Engaged
75% and above
 To a large extent
50-75%
 To a small extent
25-50%
 None
Less than 25%
 N/A
Not Applicable

C3 Use of artefacts

C3.1. Is your establishment aware of the fact that historical and archaeological artifacts are not sold, traded, or displayed, except as permitted by law?

- Highly Engaged
75% and above
 To a large extent
50-75%
 To a small extent
25-50%
 None
Less than 25%
 N/A
Not Applicable

Total Score For Section C:

Section Number	Highly engaged <i>(75% and above)</i>	To a large extent <i>(50-75%)</i>	To a small extent <i>(25-50%)</i>	None <i>(Less than 25%)</i>	Not applicable
C1.1					
C2.1					
C3.1					
Total Score					

SECTION D: REDUCING NEGATIVE IMPACT OF TOURISM ON THE ENVIRONMENT

D1 Conserving resources

D1.1 Environmentally preferable purchasing

Does your establishment make an effort to favour environmentally sustainable suppliers and products?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

D1.2 Efficient purchasing

Does the purchasing policy of your establishment favour reusable, and recycled goods, where available, and avoid plastic packaging as much as possible?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

D1.3 Renewable Energy

Does your establishment favour renewable energy sources and use equipment that supports energy conservation?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

D1.4 Energy conservation

Does your establishment carry out regular monitoring of the total energy consumed per tourist activity (guest-night, visitors, etc.)?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

D1.5 Water conservation

Does your establishment carry out regular monitoring of the total volume of water consumed?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

D1.6 Water Purification

Does your establishment have systems for water purification? If yes which systems do you follow- (Electric purifier, RO, Matka, cloth, any other)?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

D1.7 Promote Locally Grown Food

Does your establishment support and promote locally grown food?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

D2 Reducing pollution

D2.1 Transport

Does your establishment promote the use of local suppliers and transport options?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

D2.2 Wastewater

- Is wastewater from your establishment disposed either to a municipal or to a government approved treatment system?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

- Does your establishment treat gray water on site and ensures there is no adverse effect on the local population and the environment?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

D2.3 E-Waste

Does your establishment/tour operations have measures to manage e-waste?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

D2.4 Solid waste

Does your establishment have a solid waste management plan?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

D2.5 Harmful substances

- Are the chemicals, used in/by your establishment, stored and handled in accordance with appropriate standards?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

- Does your establishment try to minimize the use of harmful chemicals (pesticides, paints, swimming pool disinfectants, cleaning material, etc.) by substituting them with environmentally friendly alternatives?

Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

D2.6 Reduction of pollution

- Does your establishment have a specific policy in place that promotes minimization of noise, light, water and air pollution?

Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

D3 Conserving biodiversity, ecosystems and landscapes

D3.1 Use of Native Species

Does your establishment review landscaping of site and consider feasibility and use of native species. Is there a policy not to use exotic/invasive species?

Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

D3.2 Visits to natural sites

If your establishment operate in the proximity of natural ecosystems, does it have a program in place to minimize impacts and if necessary, address the disturbance/degradation caused by specific activities?

Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

D3.3 Wildlife trade

Does your establishment comply with national and international laws for any display or trade of wildlife and/or its products?

Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

D3.4 Wildlife viewing & interactions

Does your establishment engage with the development and implementation of guidelines for wildlife viewing as per the requirement of the area being visited?

Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

Total Score For Section D:

Section Number	Highly engaged <i>(75% and above)</i>	To a large extent <i>(50-75%)</i>	To a small extent <i>(25-50%)</i>	None <i>(Less than 25%)</i>	Not applicable
D1.1					
D1.2					
D1.3					
D1.4					
D1.5					
D1.6					
D1.7					
D2.1					
D2.2.1					
D2.2.2					
D2.3					
D2.4					
D2.5.1					
D2.5.2					
D2.6					
D3.1					
D3.2					
D3.3					
D3.4					
Total Score					

SECTION E: Good Practices

E1. Gender Equality

Does your establishment support gender equality?

- Highly Engaged (75% and above)
 To a large extent (50-75%)
 To a small extent (25-50%)
 None (Less than 25%)
 N/A (Not Applicable)

E2. Minimum Wages

Does your establishment provide minimum wages at remote locations?

- Highly Engaged (75% and above)
 To a large extent (50-75%)
 To a small extent (25-50%)
 None (Less than 25%)
 N/A (Not Applicable)

Total Score For Section E:

Section Number	Highly engaged (75% and above)	To a large extent (50-75%)	To a small extent (25-50%)	None (Less than 25%)	Not applicable
E1.1					
E1.2					
Total Score					

SECTION F : RESPONSIBLE PRACTICES

F1. Are you a Responsible Travel Establishment?

F1.1. Does your establishment explore destinations and get acquainted with local nature and biodiversity?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

F1.2. Is your establishment certified for sustainability? Does it have safety pledges displayed?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

F1.3. Does your establishment use 'green' transportation that is fuel efficient, safe, reliable, economical and promote activities such as cycling, hiking and walking where possible?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

F2. Are you a Hotel with Responsible Practices

F2.1. Does your establishments operate in-house 'green programs' (a 'green' hotel should support the three pillars of sustainable tourism: environmental, social and economic)? Are these displayed on the establishments website?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

F2.2. Does your establishment encourage reuse of towels and bed linen on a daily basis?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

F2.3. Does your establishment promote 'to refuse' single use plastic, coffee stirrers and cutlery that are made of single use plastic?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

F2.4. Does your establishment prefer to share information electronically instead of paper and printouts?

- Highly Engaged To a large extent To a small extent None N/A
 75% and above 50-75% 25-50% Less than 25% Not Applicable

Total Score For Section F:

Section Number	Highly engaged <i>(75% and above)</i>	To a large extent <i>(50-75%)</i>	To a small extent <i>(25-50%)</i>	None <i>(Less than 25%)</i>	Not applicable
F1					
F2					
F3					
F2.1					
F2.2					
F2.3					
F2.4					
Total Score					

TOTAL SCORE OF ALL SECTIONS

METRIC	A	B	C	D	E	F
Highly engaged <i>(75% and above)</i>						
To a large extent <i>(50-75%)</i>						
To a small extent <i>(25-50%)</i>						
None <i>(Less than 25%)</i>						
Not applicable						
TOTAL SCORE						

Kindly send this filled page to anjudhir@rtsoi.org along with the filled document to evaluate your score.

Evaluation & Self-Assessment Results

Overall evaluation and recommendations

Kindly evaluate if your organisation is a sustainability (CHAMPION/ACHIEVER/ASPIRANT/BEGINNER/NOVICE) by checking your score ...% in responsible sustainability self-assessment.

SCORE RANGE	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE	DESCRIPTION
100% - 90%	Excellent	<i>Champion</i>
89% - 70%	Good	<i>Achiever</i>
69% - 50%	Average	<i>Aspirant</i>
49% - 30%	Fair	<i>Beginner</i>
29% - 0%	Poor	<i>Novice</i>

Novice (0-29%)

Overall evaluation:

There is a clear need for your company to improve prerequisites for sustainable performance. You are in the very beginning of the middle to long-term process of developing your internal policies and practices towards increased sustainability. At this point, it may be helpful for you to seek an external advice about improving sustainability of your company. You can reach out to RTSOI for getting more information.

Beginner (30-49%)

Overall evaluation:

Your company has made a few initial steps towards responsible and sustainable performance. However, there is still a lot of room for improvement. You are in the beginning of the middle to long-term process of developing your internal policies and practices towards increased sustainability. At this point, you should think whether it would be useful for your company to work together with an external advisor such as RTSOI who could suggest ways for improving sustainability of your tourism company.

Aspirant (50-69%)



Overall evaluation:



Your company has already made important steps towards sustainable performance. You are going through the middle to long-term process of developing your internal policies and practices towards increased sustainability. However, you will have to deal with even more challenges in this process. At this point, you should think whether it would be useful for your company to work together with an external advisor such as RTSOI who could give suggest ideas for improving sustainability of your tourism companies.

Eligible for RTSOI Self Certification

Achiever (70-89%)



Overall evaluation:



Your company has already built a strong foundation for sustainable performance. Your internal sustainability policies and practices are advanced. However, some further improvements are needed. At this point, you should decide the improvement of which specific areas of sustainability may require collaboration with an external advisor such as RTSOI which equipped with relevant knowledge and skills.

Eligible for RTSOI Self Audit Certificate.

Champion (90-100%)



Overall evaluation:



Your company has a robust foundation for sustainable performance. Your internal sustainability policies and practices are well advanced. Nonetheless, evaluate in which areas your company can improve its current position. Consider collaborating with an external advisor RTSOI who could suggest solutions for further sustainability improvement.

Eligible for RTSOI Self Audit Certificate.

Bank Details for RTGS/NEFT Transfer:

Name of Account: The Responsible Tourism Society of India (RTSOI)

Current Account No.: 0345209809

Bank Name & Address: Kotak Mahindra Bank, Plot No 2, Block No F, East of Kailash,
New Delhi - 48

IFSC Code: KKBK0004583

MICR CODE: 110485072

PAN NO. AAAAE2957R

RTSOI GST NO: Not Applicable

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