



## **RTSOI Self-Certification Tools**

Guidance to Self-Assessment of Sustainability Performance and Development of  
Sustainability Initiatives for Travel Service Providers

**Guide to Become a Responsible  
& Sustainable Service 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](mailto: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](mailto: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 their sustainability index as compared to the previous years. If the establishment has improved before the end of three years, they 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	<b>Highly engaged</b> <i>(75% and above)</i>	<b>Comprehensive and part of the stated establishment policy.</b>
3	<b>To a large extent</b> <i>(50-75%)</i>	<b>Solid progress is made in implementing this task</b>
2	<b>To a small extent</b> <i>(25-50%)</i>	<b>Initial conceptual and planning work related to this task has just started</b>
1	<b>None</b> <i>(Less than 25%)</i>	<b>Implementation of this task has not been started yet</b>
0	<b>Not applicable</b>	<b>This task is not related to my operations</b>

## 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 towards 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 its 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 Travel Service Providers)

### A1. Are you a Responsible Travel Establishment? Is your office green?

#### A1.1. Does your establishment have a sustainability road map?

- 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

#### A1.2. Do you conserve electricity and encourage your employees and customers to do the same?

- 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

#### A1.3. Do you practice waste segregation and management? Do you encourage your employees and customers to do the same?

- 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

#### A1.4. Have you trained your travel associates to become responsible and adopt sustainable practices on the job and while selling tours to clients?

- 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

#### A1.5. 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

#### A1.6. Does your establishment encourage travel to destinations throughout the year and promotes the concept of off-season travel?

- 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

#### A1.7. 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

**A1.7.** Is your establishment certified by any sustainable certification program?

- 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

**A1.8.** Do you have your safety pledges on display?

- 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

**A1.9.** 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

**A1.10.** Does your establishment conserve water and electricity and encourage its employees and customers to do the same?

- 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

**A1.11.** Does your accommodation partners operate in-house 'green' programs (a 'green' hotel should support the three pillars of sustainable tourism: environmental, social and economic)?

- 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. While Traveling**

**A2.1. Choosing the Mode of Transportation**

Does your establishment advise its clients to select a mode of transport that allows them to offset carbon?

- 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. At Destination**

**A3.1 Bring their Own Personal Supplies**

Does your establishment request its customers to carry refillable? (drinking water, toiletries 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

### A3.2. Promote Local Cuisine

Does your establishment support a local entrepreneur/business and promote local dishes to appreciate the local culture and support the local economy to its customers?

- 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

### A3.3. Shop Local

Does your establishment promote and purchase handicrafts, souvenirs directly from the local community or authorized/ recognized emporia?

- 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. While on an Adventure Holiday

Does your establishment follow the principles of 'pack in, take back out' for the management of waste in remote regions and protected areas & use established trails while on a hike or trek?

- 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. Protect your Planet

#### A5.1. Guardian of Natural resources

Does your establishment reduce environmental impact by being a guardian of natural resources, and all habitats including forests and wetlands? by accessing only the places open to visitors?

- 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. Animal Welfare

Does your establishment prioritize animal welfare by being ethical and choosing tours and attractions that do not cause suffering or abuse to animals?

- 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 A:**

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
A1.1					
A1.2					
A1.3					
A1.4					
A1.5					
A1.6					
A1.7					
A1.8					
A1.9					
A1.10					
A1.11					
A2.1					
A3.1					
A3.2					
A3.3					
A4.1					
A5.1					
A6.1					
Total Score					

Kindly send this filled page to [anjunadhir@rtsoi.org](mailto:anjunadhir@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 several 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 and suggest ideas for improving sustainability of your tourism companies.

**Eligible for RTSOI Self Audit Certificate.**

**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 which specific areas of sustainability may require collaboration with an external advisor such as RTSOI which is 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**

## References

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4. Knezevic, R. (2008). Contents and assessment of basic tourism resources. Tourism and Hospitality Management, Vol. 14, No. 1, pp. 79-94.
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6. Industry Criteria (For Hotels and Tour Operators), Global Sustainable Tourism Council. Available from: URL: <https://www.gstcouncil.org/gstc-criteria/gstc-industry-criteria/>
7. Sustainable Destination Top 100. Available from: URL: <http://sustainabletop100.org/>
8. Green Destinations Green Solutions Platform. Available from: URL: <https://greendestinations.org/solutions/>