Global Sustainable Tourism Council Criteria
adapted for the
Black Sea Sustainable Rural Tourism Program

SECTION A: Demonstrate effective sustainable management			NOTES
CRITERIA	INDICATORS	Approximate time to put criteria into effect **Green: Required for membership** **Short Term: (3-12)** **Medium Term: (12 – 24)** **Long Term: (24 – 36)**	The sections in Green are immediate for membership and to appear on the BSST travel portal.
A1 Sustainable destination strategy **The destination has written and is implementing a multi-year destination strategy that is publicly available, is suited to its scale; that considers environmental, economic, social, cultural, quality, health, and safety issues; and was developed with public participation.**	**a.** Multi-year destination strategy that includes a focus on sustainability and sustainable tourism and includes environmental, economic, social, cultural, quality, health, and safety issues **b.** Multi-year destination plan or strategy that was developed with public participation	Short Term – Ideally in 3 months. **This can only be started after the community organisation is established**	SRDI can assist in the development of a strategy
A2 Destination management organisation **The destination has an effective organisation group responsible for a coordinated approach to sustainable tourism, with involvement by the private**	**a.** An organisation has been formed that has responsibility for a coordinated approach to the management of sustainable tourism **b.** The private sector and public sector are involved in the organisation and coordination of tourism	This is a minimum requirement to become a partner community.	The community organisation should be established with a formal agreement with appropriate roles and responsibilities.

sector and public sector. This has defined responsibilities, oversight and implementation capability for the management of environmental, economic, social, and cultural issues.	c. The tourism organisation is suited to the size and scale of the destination d. Individuals in the tourism organisation have clear roles and responsibilities with implementation guidelines and processes.		
A3 Monitoring The destination has a system to monitor and respond to environmental, economic, social, cultural, and tourism. The monitoring system is reviewed and evaluated periodically.	a. Active monitoring and reporting of environmental, economic, social, cultural and tourism issues is implemented b. Monitoring system is reviewed and evaluated periodically c. Tourism impact mitigation procedures active.	Medium	SRDI can provide a model.
A4 Tourism seasonality management The destination dedicates resources to reduce seasonal variability of tourism to balance the needs of the local economy, community, cultures and environment and to identify year-round tourism opportunities.	a. Specific strategy is developed for marketing off-season events and attracting year-round visitors	Medium	The community should work to assure the web-portal accurately reflects off-season events.
A5 The destination has an up-to-date inventory and assessment of its tourism assets and attractions.	a. Current inventory and classification of tourism assets and attractions including natural and cultural sites has been collected and reported.	This is a minimum requirement	

A6 Access for all **Where appropriate, sites and facilities are accessible to all, including persons with disabilities and others who have access requirements. Where sites and facilities are not immediately accessible, access is afforded through design and implementation of solutions that take into account the integrity of the site and such reasonable accommodations for persons with access requirements as can be achieved.**	a. Policies supporting access to tourist sites and facilities, including those of natural and cultural importance, for individuals with disabilities and others who have specific access requirements, where appropriate. b. Accessibility solutions are designed to take into account the integrity of the site while making reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities	Long	Accessibility to all should be a goal of the community and each destination.
A7 Visitor and community satisfaction **The destination has a system to monitor visitor satisfaction, and to take action to improve it.**	a. Collection of data on visitor satisfaction is established as a process. b. Public reactions and concerns about visitor satisfaction and overall tourism policy is taken into consideration through periodic surveys. c. A feedback system to take action to improve visitor satisfaction is based on monitoring information. d. A programme of community information and outreach is formalized and implemented.	Short	A system can be a questionnaire that should be completed by visitors. The Program will also periodically check visitor satisfaction and provide results to the community organisation.

A8 Sustainability standards **The destination has a system to promote sustainability standards for enterprises consistent with the Criteria.** **The destination makes publicly available a list of sustainability certified or verified enterprises.**	a. A system is established to regularly inform the community and local businesses about sustainability issues. b. Publicly available list of sustainably certified or verified enterprises	Medium	
A9 Safety and security **The destination has a system to monitor, prevent, publicly report, and respond to crime, safety, and health hazards.**	a. Inspections of fire, food hygiene, and electrical safety for tourism properties in effect b. Safety precautions such as first aid stations at tourist attractions and system to respond to crime. c. Implementation of health measures for infectious diseases.	This is a minimum requirement.	SRDI will provide recommendations for health and safety requirements, particularly for accommodations. This is a critical need for the post-Covid environment.
A10 Crisis and emergency management **The destination has a crisis response plan that is appropriate. Key elements are communicated to residents, visitors, and enterprises.**	a. Publicly available crisis and emergency response plan that considers the tourism sector b. Crisis and emergency response plan developed and updated on a regular basis with input from the private sector and includes communication procedures for during and after a crisis or emergency	Medium	
A11 Promotion	a. Destination promotional messages represent local	Ongoing	**This is partially handled by the Program at no cost.**

Promotion is accurate with regard to the destination and its products, services, and sustainability claims. **The promotional messages treat local communities and tourists authentically and respectfully.**	communities and visitors authentically and respectfully b. Destination promotional messages are accurate in their description of products and services		Member communities and destinations must provide accurate information as required which will appear on the web portal and other marketing materials
SECTION B: Maximize economic benefits to the host community and minimize negative impacts			
B1 Local career opportunities **The destination supports new job opportunities in the tourism sector and promotes equal employment, training opportunities and fair wages for all.**	a. Policies supporting equal opportunities in employment for all, including women, youth, disabled people, minorities, and other vulnerable populations are in place.	Continuous	This is a cooperative effort that primarily involves the community organisation and individual destinations since it may require new regulations to implement. Training that is identified as a need by the community organisation should be communicated to SRDI so that the Program can develop plans to meet the need.
B2 Support entrepreneurs **The destination has a system that encourages tourism spending locally by supporting local businesses in the tourism supply chain.** **The community encourages local participation in destination planning and decision making on an ongoing basis.**	a. System in place for involving public and private community stakeholders in destination management planning and decision making. b. Periodic public meetings to discuss destination management issues each year. c. Assist local businesses such as farmers, artisans and food suppliers with market access and sustainable practices and assure local products are for sale to visitors.	Short	This should be part of the strategic plan so that the plan is established and put into effect. SRDI will assist with this.

B3 Local access **The destination monitors, protects, and when necessary rehabilitates or restores local community access to natural and cultural sites.**	a. Establish programs to monitor, protect, and rehabilitate or restore public access by locals and domestic visitors to natural and cultural sites.	Medium	
B4 Tourism awareness and education **The destination provides regular programs to enhance understanding of the opportunities and challenges of tourism, and the importance of sustainability.**	a. Program to raise awareness of tourism's role and potential contribution held in communities, schools, and higher education institutions.	Medium	SRDI can assist with materials.
B5 Support for community **The destination has a system to enable and encourage enterprises, visitors, and the public to contribute to community and sustainability initiatives either with donations or volunteer work.**	a. Programs for enterprises, visitors, and the public to contribute donations to community and biodiversity conservation initiatives and/or infrastructure development	Short	Donations do not necessarily include funding but can be in-kind or other contributions. SRDI can support the achievement of this criteria and the Program can promote contributions on the web portal.
SECTION C: Maximize benefits to communities, visitors, and culture; minimize negative impacts			
C1 Attraction protection **The destination has a policy and system to evaluate,**	a. Management system developed to protect natural and cultural sites, including heritage and rural and urban scenic views	Medium	Policies to protect local attractions should be established with all destinations within the community playing a role.

rehabilitate, and conserve natural and cultural sites, including built heritage (historic and archaeological) and rural and urban scenic views.	b. Management system to monitor, measure, and mitigate tourism impacts on sites and attractions		
C2 Visitor management **The destination has a visitor management system for attraction sites that includes measures to preserve, protect, and enhance natural and cultural assets.**	a. Administrative mechanism responsible for implementing visitor management plans and operations is in place	Short	
C3 Visitor behaviour **The destination has published and provided guidelines for proper visitor behaviour at sensitive sites. Such guidelines are designed to minimize adverse impacts on sensitive sites and strengthen positive visitor behaviours.**	a. Cultural and environmental guidelines for visitor behaviour in sensitive sites developed and available for distribution. b. Code of practice for tour guides and tour operators published and disseminated	Short	SRDI can assist with the development of guidelines and code of practice.
C4 Cultural heritage protection **The destination has laws, rules and regulations governing the proper sale, trade, display, or gifting of**	a. Rules and regulations to protect historical and archaeological artefacts including those located under water have been established and enforced. b. Program has been developed to protect and celebrate intangible	Long	Every effort should be made to work with local and national authorities for regulations to protect historical and cultural heritage.

historical and archaeological artefacts.	cultural heritage (e.g., includes song, music, drama, skills and crafts).		
C5 Site interpretation **Accurate interpretive information is provided at natural and cultural sites. The information is culturally appropriate, developed with community collaboration, and communicated in languages pertinent to visitors.**	a. Interpretive information is available to visitors in tourist offices and at natural and cultural sites b. Interpretive information is developed with community collaboration c. Interpretive information is available in languages pertinent to visitors d. Tour guide training has been implemented in the use of interpretive information.	Short	Publications must be in at least one other language, preferably English. SRDI can help by providing review of translations although it cannot directly initiate the translation.

SECTION D: Maximize benefits to the environment and minimize negative impacts

D1 Environmental risks **The destination has identified environmental risks and has a system in place to address them.**	a. Sustainability assessment of the destination within the last five years, identifying environmental risks b. System in place to address identified risks.	Short	
D2 Protection of sensitive environments **The destination has a system to monitor the impact of tourism on the environment, conserve habitats, species, and ecosystems, and prevent**	a. Maintained and updated inventory of sensitive and threatened wildlife and habitats b. Management system to monitor impacts and to protect ecosystems, sensitive environments, and species	Medium	The system should be developed as soon as possible with the help of SRDI.

introduction of invasive species.	c. System in place to prevent the introduction of invasive species.		
D3 Wildlife protection **The destination has a system to ensure compliance with local, national, and international laws and standards for the harvest or capture, display, and sale of wildlife (plants and animals).**	a. Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) followed b. Regulations and standards for controlling harvesting or capture, display, sale, of plants and animals.	Medium	SRDI can assist in creating standards for community compliance.
D4 Greenhouse gas emissions **The destination has a system to encourage enterprises to minimize and mitigate their greenhouse gas emissions from all aspects of their operation (including emissions from service providers).**	a. Program to assist enterprises to minimize greenhouse gas emissions	Long	SRDI will work with communities to assist in development of a system and ideas for mitigation
D5 Energy conservation **The destination has a system to encourage enterprises to reduce energy consumption, and reliance on fossil fuels.**	a. Policies and incentives to promote energy conservation and reduce reliance on fossil fuels, improve energy efficiency, and encourage the adoption and use of renewable energy technologies.	Long	
D6 Solid waste reduction **The destination has a system to encourage enterprises to reduce, reuse, and recycle**	a. Solid waste management plan that is implemented, has quantitative goals to minimize, and ensure safe sustainable disposal of waste that is not reused or recycled		

solid waste, particularly the use of single use plastics. Any solid waste not reused or recycled is disposed of safely and sustainably.	b. Program to reduce single use plastic, particularly bottled water by enterprises and visitors		
D7 Light and noise pollution **The destination has guidelines to minimize light and noise pollution. The destination encourages enterprises to follow these guidelines and regulations.**	a. Guidelines to minimize noise and light pollution b. Program to encourage enterprises to follow guidelines and regulations to minimize noise and light pollution	Long	
D8 Low-impact transport **The destination has a system to increase the use of low impact transportation, including public transportation and active transportation (e.g., walking and cycling).**	a. Program to increase the use of low-impact transportation b. Program to make sites of visitor interest more accessible to active transportation (e.g., walking and cycling)	Long	