



GSTC Accreditation Glossary

version 2.0

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Document History

Version	Date of Approval	Description of Amendment	Affected Section/Page
1.0	1 October 2024	New Document	N/A
2.0	13 February 2026	New concepts/definitions added (28): 1. Accreditation Decision-Making Committee (ADMC); 2. Assessor; 3. Contractor; 4. Destination; 5. (Destination) Candidacy; 6. (Destination) GSTC SMS-verified; 7. (Destination) GSTC-certified; 8. Event/Exhibition; 9. Event Organizer; 10. Green transport; 11. GSTC Certification; 12. GSTC Oversight; 13. Local Products; 14. MICE; 15. Normative Reference; 16. Recognition Decision-Making Committee (RDMC); 17. Remote Assessment; 18. Remote Audit; 19. Risk Analysis; 20. Staff; 21. Supplier; 22. Sustainable Supplier and Product; 23. Tourism Amenities; 24. Venue; 25. Water Risk; 26. Harmful Substances; 27. Hybrid Assessment; 28. Hybrid Audit. Main changes: 1. Double certification; Controller deleted from the previous version; 2. GSTC Assurance Panel was replaced by Accreditation Decision-Making Committee (ADMC) and the Recognition Decision-Making Committee (RDMC); 3. GSTC Standard replaced GSTC Criteria; 4. Witness Assessment replaced Witnessing; 5. Central Function replaced Central Office; 6. Accreditation Decision, Accreditation Decision Fee, Appeal, Surveillance Assessment, and Witness Assessment were updated; 7. Audit, Certification, Certification Scheme, Conflict of Interest, Conformity Assessment, Corrective Action, GSTC Accreditation, GSTC-accredited Reference standard Requirement, Surveillance audit, Tour Operator, Validation, Verification, Witness Assessment were reformulated.	Entire document

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Document Controls

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1. Purpose and Scope

- 1.1. The purpose of this glossary is to provide clear, concise, and standardized definitions of terms used within the GSTC accreditation program.
- 1.2. While generic definitions from other sources have been considered, the focus is on providing clear and specific definitions relevant to the GSTC accreditation context.

2. Normative Reference and Associated Documents

- 2.1. The following accreditation documents and international standards have guided this Glossary:
 - 2.1.1. GSTC Accreditation Manual for Certification Bodies - Industry: Hotel/Accommodation & Tour Operator, in its latest version
 - 2.1.2. GSTC Accreditation Manual for Certification Bodies - Destinations in its latest version
 - 2.1.3. GSTC Accreditation Procedure in its latest version
 - 2.1.4. GSTC Attraction Standard in its latest version
 - 2.1.5. GSTC MICE Standard in its latest version
 - 2.1.6. ISO 9000:2015 Quality management systems — Fundamentals and vocabulary
 - 2.1.7. ISO/IEC 17000:2020 Conformity Assessment - Vocabulary and general principles
 - 2.1.8. ISO/IEC 17011:2017 Conformity Assessment - Requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies
 - 2.1.9. ISO 19011:2018 Guidelines for auditing management systems
 - 2.1.10. ISO 31000:2018 Risk Management - Guidelines
 - 2.1.11. ISO 37009:2025 Conflict of interest in organizations — Guidance
 - 2.1.12. ISO 18238:2015 Space systems - closed loop problem solving management
 - 2.1.13. ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004 Standardization and related activities - General vocabulary
 - 2.1.14. ISO/IEC TS 17012:2024 Conformity assessment - Guidelines for the use of

remote auditing methods in auditing management systems

- 2.1.15. ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 Conformity assessment - Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems
- 2.1.16. IAF MD1:2023 Audit and Certification of a Management System Operated by a Multi-Site Organization
- 2.1.17. IAF MD4:2025 Use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for Conformity Assessment Purposes
- 2.1.18. IAF MD 17:2023 Witnessing Activities for the Accreditation of Management Systems Certification Bodies
- 2.1.19. Regulation on Certification and Qualifications of Tourism Facilities, dated 21.06.2005 and numbered 25852

3. Terms and definitions

AB: Acronym for the Accreditation Body. See “Accreditation Body”.

Accommodation: Service facilities that regularly provide overnight lodging for travelers in the form of a room or other type of unit and may provide limited or full services such as food and beverage, housekeeping, recreational, and/or fitness activities, amongst others. The accommodation categories involve many types and forms that are recurrently evolving and vary according to the cultural and socio-economic context. For the purpose of certification, accommodation comprises a wide range of categories, including but not limited to hotels, hostels, motels, roadside inns, beach hotels, apartment hotels, tourist residences, bed and breakfast establishments, farmhouses, holiday dwellings, glamping sites, and similar accommodations appropriately equipped to offer at least an overnight stay and/or additional services.

Accreditation: Third-party attestation related to a conformity assessment body conveying formal demonstration of its competence, impartiality and consistent operation in performing specific conformity assessment activities. [SOURCE: ISO/IEC 17000:2020].

GSTC Accreditation is GSTC’s attestation of a certification body's competence to carry out GSTC Certification.

Accreditation Body: Authoritative body that performs *accreditation*” [SOURCE: ISO/IEC 17000:2020].

GSTC defines it as an independent entity that operates in conformity with the standard ISO/IEC 17011 and that is technically competent to accredit certification bodies meeting the

GSTC requirements for them at or after the date of the decision for granting the initial accreditation or decision after reassessment.

Accreditation Cycle: A defined period of allowing accredited status no longer than five years begun at or after the date of the decision for granting the initial accreditation or after reassessment. [SOURCE: adapted from ISO/IEC 17011:2017].

Accreditation Decision: Decision made by the ADMC on granting, maintaining, extending, reducing, suspending, and withdrawing the accreditation.

Accreditation Decision Fee: Fees for the Audit conclusion or the GSTC ADMC's decision on granting, maintaining, extending, reducing, suspending, and withdrawing the accreditation.

Accreditation Decision-Making Committee (ADMC): An accreditation decision-making body composed of independent and external professionals to ensure objectivity and impartiality in the accreditation decision-making process, including granting, pausing, and withdrawing accreditation status of certification bodies.

Accreditation Fees: Costs for acquiring and maintaining GSTC Accreditation. The fees are divided into Application Fee, Assessment Fee, Accreditation Decision Fee, and Annual Maintenance Fee.

Annual Maintenance Fee: Fees for GSTC's annual accreditation services to the accredited certification body covering regular surveillance assessments scheduled in the accreditation cycle.

Appeal: Request by a certification body or a standard owner to GSTC for reconsideration of a decision related to GSTC-Accredited or GSTC-Recognized status made by the GSTC Accreditation Decision-Making Committee, the Recognition Decision-Making Committee, or the Chief Assurance Officer.

Appeal Committee: A committee appointed by the GSTC Secretariat responsible for investigating, reviewing, and assessing an Appeal.

Appellant: A certification body or standard owner initiating an appeal against a decision made by the ADMC, the RDMC, or the CAO.

Application Fee: A non-refundable charge paid by an applicant to initiate the accreditation process, covering a desk assessment.

Assessment Fee: Fees to cover GSTC accreditation assessment services that are not covered by the Application Fee (see 3.14) or Annual Maintenance Fee (see 3.10).

Assessor: A qualified and competent person assigned by the GSTC to perform, alone or as part of an assessment team, an assessment of a certification body. Depending on their

experience and qualifications, assessors are classified as trainee, assessor, lead assessor, or senior assessor. GSTC assessors are either staff members or external individuals.

Assurance: Demonstrable evidence that specified requirements relating to a product, process, system, person, or body are fulfilled (adapted from ISO 17000:2020).

Attraction: A place of interest owned and/or managed by an identifiable entity for the purposes of attracting visitors, operating, and delivering services and/or experiences, including, but not limited to, recreation, leisure, natural, historical, cultural, educational, or religious experiences.

[SOURCE: GSTC Attraction Standard Version 1.0]

Audit: Process for obtaining relevant information about an object of conformity assessment and evaluating it objectively to determine the extent to which specified requirements are fulfilled.

Note 1 to entry: The specified requirements are defined prior to performing an audit so that the relevant information can be obtained.

Note 2 to entry: Examples of objects for an audit are management systems, processes, products, and services.

Note 3 to entry: For accreditation purposes, the audit process is called “assessment.”

[SOURCE: ISO 17000:2020]

Auditor: A person with the demonstrated personal attributes and competence to conduct an audit.

Note 1 to entry: The relevant personal attributes for an auditor are described in ISO 19011.

[SOURCE: ISO 9000:2015]

Audit Conclusion: Outcome of an audit, after consideration of the audit objectives and all audit findings.

[SOURCE: ISO 19011:2018].

Audit Criteria: Set of requirements used as a reference against which objective evidence is compared.

Note 1 to entry: If the audit criteria are legal (including statutory or regulatory) requirements, the words “compliance” or “non-compliance” are often used in an audit finding; and

Note 2 to entry: Requirements may include policies, procedures, work instructions, legal requirements, contractual obligations, etc.

[SOURCE: ISO 19011:2018].

Audit Evidence: Records, statements of fact, or other information which are relevant to the audit criteria and verifiable.

[SOURCE: ISO 19011:2018].

Audit Findings: Results of the evaluation of the collected audit evidence against audit criteria.

Note 1 to entry: Audit findings indicate conformity and nonconformity;

Note 2 to entry: Audit findings can lead to the identification of risks, opportunities for improvement or recording good practices; and

Note 3 to entry: In English, if the audit criteria are selected from statutory requirements or regulatory requirements, the audit finding is termed compliance or non-compliance.

[SOURCE: ISO 19011:2018]

Audit Plan: Description of the activities and arrangements for an audit.

[SOURCE: ISO 19011:2018]

Audit Program: Description of the arrangements for a set of one or more audits planned for a specific time frame and directed towards a specific purpose. [SOURCE: ISO 19011:2018]

Audit Scope: Extent and boundaries of an audit.

Note 1 to entry: The audit scope generally includes a description of the physical and virtual locations, functions, organizational units, activities, and processes, as well as the period covered; and

Note 2 to entry: A virtual location is where an organization performs work or provides a service using an online environment allowing individuals irrespective of physical locations to execute processes.

[SOURCE: ISO 19011:2018]

Audit Team: One or more persons conducting an audit, supported if needed by technical experts.

Note 1 to entry: One auditor of the audit team is appointed as the audit team leader; and

Note 2 to entry: The audit team can include auditors-in-training."

[SOURCE: ISO 19011:2018]

CB: Acronym for the "Certification Body".

Central Function: The function that is responsible for and centrally controls the management system.

[SOURCE: IAF MD 1:2023]

Certificate Holder (CH): A tourism enterprise, product, or destination that has been certified by a GSTC-accredited certification body.

Certification: Third-party attestation related to an object of conformity assessment, with the exception of accreditation.

[SOURCE: ISO 17000:2020]

Certification Body (CB): Body that performs conformity assessment activities and that can be the object of accreditation. [Source: ISO 17011:2017] In current usage, it is often referred to as "Conformity Assessment Body" or CAB.

Certification Program: GSTC prefers to use the term "Certification Body (CB)" in place of "Certification program".

Certification Scheme: Conformity assessment scheme that includes selection, determination, review, decision and finally certification as the attestation activity.

[SOURCE: ISO 17000:2020]

Certification Scheme Owner: A person or other legal entity who owns the intellectual property associated with a sustainable tourism certification scheme.

Client: A tourism enterprise or destination that purchases a certification service from a CB.

Closed Hotel: A hotel that is closed for seasonal reasons or is undergoing renovations.

Complainant: Person or organization filing a complaint.

Complaint: Expression of dissatisfaction, other than *appeal*, by any person or organization to a conformity assessment body or an *accreditation body*, relating to the activities of that body, where a response is expected.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 17000:2020]

Compliance: Procedures that must be followed to ensure full compliance with the law.

[SOURCE: [Oxford Learner's Dictionary](#)]

Compliance Assessment: GSTC evaluates the CB's compliance with the GSTC accreditation and relevant ISO requirements by reviewing audit evidence, reports, and decision-making processes. The compliance assessment aims to assess the effectiveness of the certification decision-making process by comparing audit reports with actual conditions at the client's

site. It's conducted through the review of documentation, audit reports, certified business site visits, and stakeholder feedback.

Concern: An expression of dissatisfaction or interest by any person or organization regarding any aspect of the GSTC which is not sufficiently substantiated to be classified as a complaint and where a response is expected.

Conflict of Interest: Situation in which an interested party has personal interest or organizational interest, directly or indirectly, that can compromise or interfere with the ability to act impartially in carrying out their duties in the best interest of the organization.

Note 1 to entry: There can be different types of personal interests: business, financial, family, professional, religious or political.

Note 2 to entry: Organizational interest relates to the interests of an organization or part of an organization (e.g. team or department) rather than an individual.

[SOURCE: ISO 37009:2025]

In both accreditation and certification, decisions must be guided solely by the interests of the system, ensuring fairness, objectivity, and credibility. Any actual or perceived conflict of interest must not only be avoided but also formally declared when it occurs, in order to safeguard transparency and maintain trust in the accreditation and certification processes.

Conformity: Fulfillment of a requirement.

[SOURCE: ISO 19011:2018]

Conformity Assessment: Demonstration that specified requirements are fulfilled.

Note 1 to entry: The process of conformity assessment as described in the functional approach in Annex A can have a negative outcome, i.e. demonstrating that the specified requirements are not fulfilled.

Note 2 to entry: Conformity assessment includes activities defined elsewhere in this document, such as but not limited to testing, inspection, validation, verification, certification, and accreditation.

Note 3 to entry: Conformity assessment is explained in Annex A as a series of functions. Activities contributing to any of these functions can be described as conformity assessment activities.

Note 4 to entry: This document does not include a definition of "conformity". "Conformity" does not feature in the definition of "conformity assessment". Nor does this document address the concept of compliance.

[SOURCE: ISO 17000:2020]

For the GSTC, conformity assessment is the demonstration that a tourism enterprise (such as a hotel/accommodation, tour operator, MICE organization, or attraction) or a destination fulfills specified requirements, through a systematic process of evaluation and verification against the GSTC Standards, carried out by a GSTC-accredited certification body.

Consultancy: The services provided by a consultancy or a consultant [SOURCE: [Merriam-Webster Dictionary](#)]. In the case of tourism, it may involve services to a tourism enterprise or CB on the design, management, and operation of their services.

Continual Improvement: Recurring activity to enhance performance.

Note 1 to entry: The process of establishing objectives and finding opportunities for improvement is a continual process through the use of audit findings and audit conclusions, analysis of data, management reviews or other means and generally leads to corrective action or preventive action.

[SOURCE: ISO 9000:2015]

Contractor: A person or company that has a contract to do work or provide goods or services for another company

[[Oxford Learner's dictionaries](#)].

Correction: Action to eliminate a detected nonconformity.

Note 1 to entry: A correction can be made in advance of, in conjunction with or after a corrective action

Note 2 to entry: A correction can be, for example, rework or regrade.

[SOURCE: ISO 9000:2015]

Corrective Action: Action to eliminate the cause of a nonconformity and to prevent recurrence.

Note 1 to entry: There can be more than one cause for a nonconformity.

Note 2 to entry: Corrective action is taken to prevent recurrence whereas preventive action is taken to prevent occurrence.

[SOURCE: ISO 9000:2015]

Days: Refers to calendar days in the context of timeframes and deadlines.

Destination: A geographic region that involves multiple businesses and a resident community. Tourists visit a destination for a range of experiences and amenities, such as

hotels/accommodations, dining, tours, venues, sightseeing, and attractions.

(Destination) Candidacy: This is the status to be eligible for applying for GSTC-SMS-verified or GSTC-certified status by meeting the requirements described in the Destination Accreditation Manual.

(Destination) GSTC SMS-verified: This status signifies that a destination has met all the requirements of the Pillar A (Sustainable management) of the GSTC Destination Standard.

(Destination) GSTC-certified: This status indicates that a destination has met the requirements described in the GSTC Destination Standard and the Destination Accreditation Manual.

Equivalent Standard: A standard whose requirements have a direct correspondence with the requirements of the GSTC standard. The standard may present or address the subject differently, e.g., by guiding how to meet the requirements. Equivalency for purposes of GSTC Recognition includes harmonized, unified, identical, unilaterally aligned, and comparable standards.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.8, and 6.9]

Event/Exhibition: A specific occasion for which people are convened for a limited duration (usually days or weeks) for a specific purpose. The Event/Exhibition is owned by a person, business, organization, committee, institution, or government entity, which is ultimately responsible for its management. This term encompasses all events in the MICE sector: meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions.

[SOURCE: GSTC MICE Standard Version 1.0]

Event Organizer: An individual, team, business, or organization that organizes an event on behalf of an event owner or other clients. Job titles for event organizers vary greatly throughout the MICE industry and may include event planners, meeting planners, incentive planners, professional conference organizers, and others. They may or may not be the same entity as the event owner.

[SOURCE: GSTC MICE Standard Version 1.0]

Feedback: Expression, suggestion, or input by any person or organization regarding the GSTC Standards or Manuals.

Feedback Meeting: A meeting organized to present work in progress in order to gain feedback.

[SOURCE: [The Data Quality Glossary](#)]

In the case of the GSTC Accreditation process, it is a meeting held between GSTC and the

certification holder at the end of a compliance assessment.

Green Transport: Energy-efficient, cost-effective, and sustainable transportation solutions encompass a range of options, including mass public transport, electric and alternative-fuel vehicles, as well as non-motorized transport. These solutions apply across all modes of transportation—aviation, maritime, rail, and road.

Grievance: Any form of discontentment, excluding appeals, nonconformity challenges, or incident reports, expressed by an individual or organization to GSTC regarding the actions of GSTC, an accredited Certification Body, or a certificate holder, which anticipates a response.

GSTC: Global Sustainable Tourism Council.

GSTC Accreditation: GSTC's attestation of a certification body's competence to carry out GSTC Certification.

GSTC-accredited: A certification body's status that has been assessed by the GSTC and found to conform to all requirements of the GSTC reference standards, accreditation manual, accreditation procedure, and normative references. GSTC-accredited certification bodies are approved to perform certification against the relevant GSTC Standard or GSTC Recognized Standard for the sustainable tourism industry or destinations. The accreditation can be granted directly by GSTC or an endorsed accreditation body.

GSTC Accreditation Requirements: The requirements that a certification body shall meet in terms of its structure, management, and operational policies, procedures, and implementation to be accredited or maintain the accredited status.

GSTC Certification: GSTC-accredited Certification Body's attestation that a tourism business/destination meets the GSTC sustainability requirements.

GSTC Oversight: The activities that GSTC conducts as the scheme owner, to ensure that GSTC-accredited certification bodies operate their certification activities in accordance with accreditation requirements. This oversight ensures certification processes are consistent, credible, and conducted with integrity.

GSTC Standard: A common understanding of sustainable tourism that any tourism business or destination should aspire to reach.

GSTC-Recognized standard: A sustainable tourism standard that has been evaluated by the GSTC as being equivalent to the relevant GSTC Standard and has a GSTC-Recognized status.

Harmful Substances: Chemical substances that could pose a threat to the environment and/or human health.

Hotel: Term treated generically to refer to accommodation.

Hybrid Assessment: The facilitation of assessment of a Certification Body through a combination of traditional on-site techniques and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) from a location other than that being physically present to develop the conformity assessment. ICT, including software and hardware, is employed for gathering, storing, retrieving, processing, analyzing, and transmitting information.

[Adapted from ISO/IEC TS 17012:2024 and IAF MD4:2025]

Hybrid Audit: The facilitation of audit of a client through a combination of traditional on-site techniques and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) from a location other than that being physically present to develop the conformity assessment. ICT, including software and hardware, is employed for gathering, storing, retrieving, processing, analyzing, and transmitting information.

[Adapted from ISO/IEC TS 17012:2024 and IAF MD4:2025]

Living Wage: The remuneration received for a standard work week by a worker in a particular place sufficient to afford a decent standard of living for the worker and their family. Elements of a decent standard of living include food, water, housing, education, healthcare, transport, clothing, and other essential needs, including provision for unexpected events.

[SOURCE: [Global Living Wage Coalition](#)]

Impartiality: Presence of objectivity

Note 1 to entry: Objectivity means that conflicts of interest do not exist or are resolved so as not to adversely influence subsequent activities of the accreditation body (3.2).

Note 2 to entry: Other terms that are useful in conveying the element of impartiality include “independence”, “freedom from conflict of interests”, “freedom from bias”, “lack of prejudice”, “neutrality”, “fairness”, “open-mindedness”, “even-handedness”, “detachment”, “balance”.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 17011:2017]

Information and Communication Technology (ICT): The use of technology for gathering, storing, retrieving, processing, analyzing, and transmitting information. It includes software and hardware such as smartphones, handheld devices, laptop computers, desktop computers, drones, video cameras, wearable technology, artificial intelligence, and others. The use of ICT may be appropriate for auditing/assessment both locally and remotely.

(SOURCE: IAF MD 4:2025)

Initial Certification Audit: Audit carried out by an auditing organization independent of the client and the parties that rely on certification, for the purpose of certifying the client's sustainability management processes and sustainability performance.

Note 1 to entry: Certification audits include initial, surveillance, and re-certification audits and can also include special audits.

Note 2 to entry: Certification audits are typically conducted by audit teams of those bodies providing certification of conformity to the requirements of the Reference Standard.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015]

Interested Party: Person or organization with a direct or indirect interest in *accreditation*.

Note 1 to entry: Direct interest refers to the interest of those who undergo accreditation; indirect interest refers to the interests of those who use or rely on accredited conformity assessment bodies.

Note 2 to entry: Interested parties can include the *accreditation body*, conformity assessment bodies, their associations and their clients, industry services, trade associations, scheme owners, governmental regulatory bodies or other governmental services, or non-governmental organizations, including consumer organizations.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 17011:2017]

Local Office: An office of a Tour Operator that is directly dependent on and holds a lower hierarchical position than the head or central office. It is responsible for executing and overseeing key administrative and operational processes/activities and delivering some services to clients. It does not include the facility for simply selling tours or being used as a meeting point for customers joining tours.

Local Products: Products that are defined as local according to relevant authorities in the event destination, such as local governments or associations focused on promoting local procurement. If no definition exists in the event destination, define local products as those produced within a radius of 50 km (31 miles) to 400 km (250 miles) from the business operation, depending on the geographical characteristics and business rationale.

Major Nonconformity: Nonconformity that affects the capability of the management system to achieve the intended results.

Note 1 to entry: Non-conformities could be classified as major in the following circumstances:

If there is a significant doubt that effective process control is in place, or that products or services will meet specified requirements;

A number of minor non-conformities associated with the same requirement or issue could

demonstrate a systemic failure and thus constitute a major nonconformity.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015]

MICE: Meetings, Incentives, Conferences/Conventions, and Events/Exhibitions.

Minor Nonconformity: Nonconformity that does not affect the capability of the management system to achieve the intended results.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015]

Multi-site Organization: An organization covered by a single management system comprising an identified central function (not necessarily the headquarters of the organization) at which certain processes/activities are planned and controlled, and a number of sites (permanent, temporary or virtual) at which such processes/activities are fully or partially carried out.

[SOURCE: IAF MD 1:2023]

New Hotel/Newly Opened Hotel: A hotel is either being newly constructed, substantially refurbished, or rebuilt, or it has already undergone one of these processes.

Nonconformity (NC): Non-fulfillment of a requirement.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015]

Normative Reference: Specific documents, or specific sections within documents, that contain provisions which, when cited in the Accreditation Manuals, are regarded as mandatory requirements.

Objective Evidence: Data supporting the existence or variety of something.

Note 1 to entry: Objective evidence can be obtained through observation, measurement, test or by other means; and

Note 2 to entry: Objective evidence for the purpose of the audit generally consists of records, statements of fact, or other information which are relevant to the audit criteria and verifiable.

[SOURCE: ISO 19011:2018]

Opportunity for Improvement (OFI): GSTC findings indicate that the requirement has been met, but the GSTC Assessment team's professional experience and knowledge suggest that there may be opportunities for improved performance and/or implementation.

Performance: Measurable result.

Note 1 to entry: Performance can relate either to quantitative or qualitative findings; and

Note 2 to entry: Performance can relate to the management of activities, processes, products, services, systems or organizations.

[SOURCE: ISO 19011:2018]

Persistent Nonconformity: GSTC raised a nonconformity with the same normative reference and subject matter as previous nonconformities, and the status is still open.

Personal Data: "Personal data" means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person ('data subject'); an identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person

[SOURCE: <https://ico.org.uk/>].

Preventive Action: Action to eliminate the cause of a potential nonconformity or other undesirable potential situation.

Note 1 to entry: There can be more than one cause for a potential nonconformity.

Note 2 to entry: Preventive action is taken to prevent occurrence whereas corrective action is taken to prevent recurrence.

[SOURCE: ISO 9000:2015]

Preventing Recurrence: The ultimate goal is to implement corrective actions that eliminate the root cause and prevent similar nonconformities from happening again.

[Based on: ISO 9000:2015]

Process: A set of interrelated or interacting activities that use inputs to deliver an intended result".

[SOURCE: ISO 19011:2018].

Pseudonymization: The processing of personal data in such a manner that the personal data can no longer be attributed to a specific data subject without the use of additional information, provided that such additional information is kept separately and is subject to technical and organizational measures to ensure that the personal data are not attributed to an identified or identifiable natural person.

Recipient: A natural or legal person, public authority, agency, or another body, to which the personal data are disclosed, whether a third party or not. However, public authorities that may receive personal data in the framework of a particular inquiry in accordance with Union or Member State law shall not be regarded as recipients; the processing of that data by

those public authorities shall be in compliance with the applicable data protection rules according to the purposes of the processing.

Recognition Decision-Making Committee (RDMC): The RDMC is an assurance decision-making body composed of independent and external professionals. Its goal is to ensure objectivity and impartiality in the recognition decision-making process. The GSTC appoints the RDMC to declare standards as "GSTC-Recognized Standard".

Reference Standard: A standard used as the reference against which the audit is performed, according to the accreditation granted.

Note 1 to entry: The Reference Standard could be any of the GSTC Standards or a GSTC-Recognized Standard.

Remote Assessment: The facilitation of assessment of a Certification Body from a location other than that being physically present. The assessment relies primarily on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to optimize effectiveness and efficiency and to support and maintain the integrity of the assessment process. ICT, including software and hardware, is employed for gathering, storing, retrieving, processing, analyzing, and transmitting information.

Remote Audit: An audit of a client from a location without being physically present. The audit relies primarily on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to optimize effectiveness and efficiency and to support and maintain the integrity of the audit process. ICT, including software and hardware, is used to gather, store, retrieve, process, analyze, and transmit information.

Repeated Nonconformity: If the GSTC Assessor finds multiple instances of the same nonconformity within a single assessment, it may be considered 'Repeated' and raised as a Major Nonconformity.

Requirement: Need or expectation that is stated, generally implied or obligatory. Requirement is also an expression in the content of a document conveying criteria to be fulfilled if compliance with the document is to be claimed and from which no deviation is permitted.

Note 1 to entry: "Generally implied" means that it is custom or common practice for the organization and interested parties that the need or expectation under consideration is implied.

Note 2 to entry: A specified requirement is one that is stated, for example in a document.

Note 3 to entry: A qualifier can be used to denote a specific type of requirement, e.g.

product requirement, quality management requirement, customer requirement, quality requirement.

Note 4 to entry: Requirements can be generated by different interested parties or by the organization itself.

Note 5 to entry: It can be necessary for achieving high customer satisfaction to fulfil an expectation of a customer even if it is neither stated nor generally implied or obligatory.

[SOURCE: ISO 9000: 2015]

Risk: Effect of uncertainty.

[SOURCE: ISO 9000:2015]

Risk Analysis: A process of identifying and analyzing circumstances that may pose a hazard to the health and safety of people, the local environment, or the local community and economy.

Risk Management: Coordinated activities to direct and control an organization with regard to risk.

[SOURCE: ISO 31000:2018]

Risk Mitigation: Addressing a set of risks so as to reduce either the likelihood of their occurrence, the consequence of their occurrence, or both.

Root Cause Analysis (RCA): Process of identifying all root causes that have or may have resulted in an undesirable condition, situation, nonconformity or failure.

Note 1 to entry: RCA is used by certification bodies to determine the causes and extent of NCs and to assist in determining appropriate corrections and corrective actions. While other valid methods are available, RCA is the preferred suggestion.

[SOURCE: ISO 18238:2015]

Staff: Full-time and part-time staff, excluding volunteers and interns, employed or contracted by the attraction, also known as 'employees'.

[SOURCE: GSTC Attraction Standard Version 1.0]

Scheme Owner: Person or organization responsible for developing and maintaining a specific certification scheme.

Note 1 to entry: The scheme owner can be the certification body itself, a governmental authority, trade association, a group of Certification Bodies or others.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 17065:2012]

Supplier: Any entity (company, cooperative, or individual) that provides goods or services used to support the organization's operations, offerings, or facilities, but is not directly contracted to carry out work under the organization's operational control. Suppliers are part of the value chain and contribute indirectly to the guest or visitor experience. Suppliers may be local or international and provide materials, consumables, equipment, or general services that sustain day-to-day functioning.

Sustainable Supplier and Product: A supplier or product certified or verified by a credible third-party audited certification program that identifies suppliers or products with a reduced impact on the planet and humans based on factors such as practices, ingredients, methods of extraction, and production, or circular design.

Sustainable Tourism Standard Owner: A person or other legal entity who owns the intellectual property associated with a sustainable tourism standard.

Surveillance Assessment: Assessment performed as a basis for maintaining the accreditation. Surveillance assessments can be performed remotely, on-site, or a combination of both (hybrid): remote and on-site.

Surveillance Audit: Audit conducted to maintain the validity of the certification. Surveillance audits can be performed remotely, on-site, or a combination of both (hybrid): remote and on-site format.

Sustainable Tourism Standard: A set of rules and guidelines that define the requirements for tourism enterprises or destinations to deliver sustainable tourism.

Technical Review: An independent process conducted by the CBs and ABs, respectively, that involves reviewing the quality of audit/assessment reports, findings and conclusions, supporting evidence, and ensuring that the audit/assessment procedure and results were followed. The technical review may require the auditors/assessors to make adjustments to the reports. Upon completion of the review, the report is ready to move on to the next stage.

Third-party Audits: Third-party audits are conducted by independent auditing organizations, such as those providing certification/registration of conformity or governmental agencies.

[SOURCE: ISO 19011:2018]

Tour Operator: Businesses/organizations that plan, operate, and deliver a complete package tour to a traveler. The term Tour Operator involves a large diversity of types of packages, transport operators, and sellers of travel that can be combined amongst them and vary according to the set of products/services offerings, ownership structure and/or geographical location of their operations.

Tour Product: Tour operator's products of traveling around from place to place that are organized and offered by a Tour Operator with a broad range of services in the tourism industry, marked by a high degree of packaging product and service components of transport, places, activities, or accommodation.

Tourism Amenities: Encompass the full range of services, facilities, infrastructure, and supporting resources that enable, sustain, and enhance the visitor experience in a destination. They provide comfort, safety, accessibility, and convenience to tourists and complement the destination's attractions. Tourism amenities can be tourism-specific or part of the general public infrastructure that tourists use during their visit. Together, they form a critical component of a destination's overall tourism system, influencing visitor satisfaction, competitiveness, service quality, and sustainability. Amenities typically include accommodations, food and beverage services, transportation and mobility systems, organized tours, business and events facilities and venues, recreation and leisure facilities, retail and commercial services, public utilities, health and safety resources, information and support services, financial systems, and environmental and cultural features.

Tourism Enterprise: An entity providing one or more services to tourists.

Unannounced Compliance Assessment: Assessment conducted without prior notice of the assessment date and time to the Certificate Holder, neither by GSTC nor the certification body.

Under-investment Hotel: The hotel that holds the Tourism Investment Certificate issued by the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism to tourism facilities at the investment stage.

(Reference: Regulation on Certification and Qualifications of Tourism Facilities, dated 21.06.2005 and numbered 25852)

Unilaterally Aligned Standard: A standard that is equivalent or comparable to the relevant GSTC Standard but contains further requirements not contained in the GSTC Standard.

Validation: Confirmation, through the provision of objective evidence, that the requirements for a specific intended use or application have been fulfilled

Note 1 to entry: The objective evidence needed for a validation is the result of a test or other form of determination such as performing alternative calculations or reviewing documents.

Note 2 to entry: The word "validated" is used to designate the corresponding status.

Note 3 to entry: The use conditions for validation can be real or simulated.

[SOURCE: ISO 9000:2015]

Venue: A closed or open place, operated or owned by a person or institution, which is

designated or has the ability to host events and exhibitions.

[SOURCE: GSTC MICE Standard Version 1.0]

Verification: Confirmation, through the provision of objective evidence, that specified requirements have been fulfilled.

Note 1 to entry: The objective evidence needed for a verification can be the result of an inspection or of other forms of determination such as performing alternative calculations or reviewing documents.

Note 2 to entry: The activities carried out for verification are sometimes called a qualification process.

Note 3 to entry: The term “verified” is used to designate the corresponding status.

[SOURCE: ISO 9000:2015]

Water Risk: The probability and severity of an entity experiencing a deleterious water-related event, including water scarcity, water stress, water quality, seasonal variability, pollution, access to water, floods, droughts, and water-borne diseases.

[SOURCE: GSTC MICE Standard Version 1.0]

Witness Assessment: Observation of the CB carrying out conformity assessment activities within its scope of accreditation [adapted from ISO/IEC 17011:2017]. Witnessing of an audit is an activity performed by an AB whereby it observes, without interfering and influencing, an audit performed by a CB audit team. Depending upon the objectives of the witness assessment, the complete audit may be observed or just relevant parts of the audit. The witness assessment is done on-site at the CB client premises or observing remote auditing via electronic means.

[SOURCE: IAF MD 17:2023].