Annex to the TourCert Certification Guideline

Implementation Rules for the Certification of Other Tourism Businesses

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1 Principles

1.1 **Scope of application:** The TourCert Implementing Rules for Tourism Businesses are an applicable annex of the TourCert Certification Guideline and the TourCert Set of Criteria. They define the general conditions of the sustainability process and the certification and apply to all other Tourism Businesses. **The implementing provisions as well as the catalogue of criteria can be supplemented depending on the sector and core business of the company.**

1.2 **Deviations:** Deviations from the provisions defined in this document are only possible with the approval of the TourCert Certification Office.

1.3 **Other Tourism Businesses**: For the purposes of TourCert, tourism businesses are those commercial companies with their own legal form that fulfil the following criteria

a. The services offered are directed towards tourists as the main target group or end consumers. Companies that offer advisory services to address tourists (e.g. marketing services, strategic services) are also accepted.
b. The services offered must be part of the overall product "travel/tourism".
c. The tourism services offered must account for the main part of total sales.
d. In the case of combined types of business, the main service is considered to be the differentiated tourism service (e.g. hotel with restaurant).

Tour operators, accommodation providers and destinations are excluded (here the respective sector-specific TourCert certification systems apply).

The following types of tourism businesses are eligible for certification:

Types of business	Examples
Information/advice/mediation	Travel agencies, associations such as travel agency cooperatives, tourism consulting and press agencies
Transport/mobility	Transport companies, mountain railways
Gastronomy	Restaurants, Event centres
Attractions	Castles, palaces, museums
Activities	Provider of city tours, bicycle rental, Segway rental
Purchasing	Direct marketers from destinations

2 Core Indicators

The core indicators of the company are presented in the audit report and benchmarked against comparable companies.

1. Return on sales
2. Employee satisfaction index
3. Satisfaction Index Business Partners
4. CO2 emissions at the office per employee
5. CSR-Index Suppliers

Depending on the industry and core business of the company, further core indicators can be defined.

3 Data Collection

Tourism businesses seeking TourCert certification must meet basic requirements of data collection in order to apply for certification. Depending on the industry and core business of the company, further requirements can be defined.

Minimum Requirements for Data Collection

The creation of a mission statement, sustainability report and improvement programme are basic requirements for certification.

(1) Survey of suppliers	Representative selection of relevant suppliers
(2) Survey of the business partners	Representative selection of relevant business partners
(3) Survey of the employees	All employees of the company

4 Requirements for Certification

4.1 **Reporting Year:** The data collected must relate to the last closed financial year. The reference date is the date on which data collection started.

4.2 **Sustainability Manager:** To implement and maintain the TourCert certification system, sustainability managers are required to have a sustainability qualification. This rule also applies if there is a change in assignment and another person takes on the sustainability management. Changes of responsibilities for the sustainability management must be communicated to TourCert.

It must be ensured that the knowledge about the TourCert certification process remains within the company. Interns are therefore not permitted as sustainability managers.

4.3 **Recognition of Compensation:** Flight compensations are 100% recognized if

a. their calculation is based on an RFI[1] of at least 2,7

[1] RFI stands for Radiative Forcing Index or the global warming potential of certain emission sources. This factor is used to calculate the total climate impact of flight emissions. The CO2 emissions are multiplied by the RFI to measure not only CO_2 but also other climate-relevant gases.

b. The compensation project/s is/are certified according to CDM Gold Standard[2] (CER or VER)

If no RFI is used or if another voluntary standard is applied, the compensation will not be recognized. Reforestation projects will not be recognized[3].

5 Deadlines and Periods

The TourCert certification promotes the continuous improvement of the certified tourism business' sustainability performance. This requires the timely submission of relevant documents and information in order to be able to monitor improvement and development in a timely manner.

5.1 Validity Period of the Certification: Tourism businesses are considered certified as soon as they have received a confirmation letter from the TourCert Certification Office. The certification period begins in the respective month.

The certification period for the initial certifications is two years (based on the respective month) and three years after every recertification.

Every year (in the respective month) between (re)certifications, the certified tourism businesses must submit an updated improvement program to the TourCert Certification Office.

5.2 Responsibility of Companies to Meet Deadlines: The sustainability reports and the updated improvement programs must be submitted to the TourCert Certification Office in time and unsolicited. It is the responsibility of the companies to meet the relevant deadlines.

5.3 Request for Extension of Deadlines: If the deadlines for submission of the sustainability report or the updated improvement programs cannot be met for understandable

[2] The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) describes a mechanism under the Kyoto Protocol for offsetting greenhouse gas emissions not where they were emitted but in developing and emerging countries. The Gold Standard defines special quality requirements. A CDM Gold Standard is therefore a kind of quality label for compensation projects. The savings achieved by compensation projects are labelled as CERs (Certified Emission Reduction) if they have been verified by the UN climate protection agency and they are VERs (Verified Emission Reduction) if they have been verified by an authority other than the UN.

[3] More information: https://www.atmosfair.de/en/standards/forest_projects/

reasons, the Certification Office must be informed in time and a request must be made for an extension of the relevant deadline. The extension of deadlines will not change on the validity period of the certification. The date of the initial certification will always be the reference for future deadlines and periods.

5.4 **Failure to Comply with Deadlines:** Failure to comply with deadlines for the submission of the sustainability report or updated imporvement program and failure to apply for an extension may seult in the withdrawal of the TourCert label.

The sustainability report for recertification and the updated improvement program must not be submitted later than three months after the deadline.

6 Rules for Certification

6.1 **Audit**: Audits take place on site in the offices of the tourism business. In justified cases (for companies with up to 10 full-time equivalent employees), the Certification Office may make exceptions.

6.2 **Recommendations**: The auditor's recommendations in the audit report should be included as measures in the improvement program.

6.3 **Conditions**: Once the audit has been carried out, the auditor or the Certification Council can impose conditions, which may be either

- prerequisites for the current (re-)certification or
- must be implemented in the coming certification period.

The auditor's conditions from the audit report must be included into the improvement program as measures and implemented within the agreed period. If individual conditions cannot be implemented, this must be justified.

6.4 **Use of Label**: The label must be placed prominently on the corporate website and linked to the TourCert website.

- The label may only be published in the formats published by TourCert and only in the colours red or black.
- The label shall be placed on corporate publications.
- TourCert is a company certification, not a product certification. References to the certification may only refer to the company itself, not to the products and services offered by the company.

If the certification is not renewed, the company must remove all references to certification from its media and publications.

6.5 **External Communication After Initial Certification:** Certified tourism businesses must publish the current sustainability report on the company website and display the certification label in a prominent position on the website.

The TourCert certification must be explained at a suitable place. Further information and templates can be found in the TourCert Toolbox. The company receives the access data with the certificate.

6.6 **Suspension of Certification**: If a company is not interested in recertification or if the resources necessary for recertification are not available to the company, the certification ends at the end of the certification period.

When the process is restarted and the audit is carried out again, the companies are audited according to the main focal points of the recertification audit (see Certification Guideline).

6.7 **Re-application for Initial Certification**: If a tourism business is not recommended for certification by the auditor or if the Certification Council rejects a certification, the company can apply for a new audit.

At least three months must lay between the first and second audit. A new data collection is not necessarily required. Which reporting year will be audited will be decided on a case-by-case basis by the auditor or the Certification Office.

6.8 **Re-application for Recertification**: If a tourism business is not recommended for recertification by the auditor; if the Certification Council rejects certification; if a company loses the TourCert label due to non-compliance with deadlines or in circumstances that do not allow an audit; then the company had the opportunity to be audited within six months without re-collection of data.

After six months, data collection must be renewed, and renewed participation in the introduction workshop is recommended.

When the process is restarted and the audit is carried out again, the companies are audited according to the main focal points of the recertification audit (see Certification Guideline).