

VCM Sustainability Council Focus Areas & Action Plan

KEY FOCUS AREAS

The Vancouver, Coast & Mountains (VCM) Sustainability Council formed in April 2021 under the leadership of the VCM tourism region, to improve sustainability practices of the tourism industry and partners.

The work of the Council supports the Provincial Strategic Framework for Tourism as well as Destination BC's Corporate Strategy. The Vancouver, Coast & Mountains Sustainability Council, with guidance from GreenStep Solutions, identified non-sustainable practices in the region as well as areas

of alignment, gaps and opportunities through a destination sustainability diagnosis process. The result of this process has been the development of an action plan, with short-, medium-, and long-term actions to be implemented throughout the region under each key focus area:

KEY FOCUS #1

Enhance resident and community engagement and prosperity through tourism and the visitor economy.

KEY FOCUS #2

Improve industry adoption of sustainable and responsible tourism practices.

KEY FOCUS #3

Promote respectful and sustainable visitor practices within communities, natural spaces, and cultural sites.

VCM Sustainability Council
Key Focus #1

FOCUS GOAL

Enhance resident and community engagement and prosperity through tourism and the visitor economy.



Support the integration of Indigenous values and knowledge into tourism education opportunities, including high schools, university and colleges, and other educational programs.



Promote and support internships, capstone projects, and skills development opportunities to connect students with the tourism industry in high school and in local universities and colleges.



Add a sustainability-related section to the VCM newsletter to disseminate information to Community Destination Management Organizations (CDMOs), industry associations, businesses, and other partners.



Promote ambassador and value of tourism programs to help residents understand the sector's importance, and improve resident skills and employability in the tourism sector.



Promote and advocate for training employees in non-tourism-specific sectors that interface with visitors, to enhance the visitor experience during all stages of their journey.

VCM Sustainability Council
Key Focus #2

FOCUS GOAL

Improve industry adoption of sustainable and responsible tourism practices.



Work with tour operators and guides to educate and train staff on sustainability issues and to encourage positive visitor behaviour at tour sites.



Identify organizations and/or develop programs that support and incentivize tourism businesses to implement and adopt sustainability management systems that consider business adaptation to changing policies.



Promote existing training/courses/certifications on decolonization and diversity, equity, and inclusion.



Formally adopt greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets and goals as destinations.



Encourage increased sustainable purchasing behaviours amongst the industry, including locally owned, diverse-owned, social enterprises, and other certified products or services. Explore how to include these criteria in bidding processes.



Promote energy efficiency and fuel-switching incentive programs offered by utilities and CleanBC, as a means of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

VCM Sustainability Council
Key Focus #3

FOCUS GOAL

Promote respectful and sustainable visitor practices within communities, natural spaces, and cultural sites.



Work with local, regional, provincial, and national parks, local First Nations, and other partners to improve interpretive, natural, and cultural signage and education.



Improve marketing efforts to tell the story of the region through a natural and cultural lens.



Work together with local First Nations, CDMOs, Indigenous Tourism BC, and other key groups, to outline a framework and guide to advance traditional knowledge amongst businesses, organisations, and visitors.



Increase the number of sites and geographic areas where carrying capacity is monitored and measured.



Develop and share a visitor code of conduct with visitors and tourism businesses to enhance cultural heritage and natural experiences, and minimize negative impacts.