VCM
VANCOUVER, COAST
& MOUNTAINS
TOURISM REGION

Photo Credit: Destination BC/Ian Harland

SUSTAINABILITY TOOLKIT

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Vancouver, Coast & Mountains tourism region acknowledges with gratitude the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam Indian Band), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation), and səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh Nation) on whose shared territories we operate our main office. We respectfully recognize that we carry out our work on the lands of the 54 Indigenous Nations throughout this region. We honour our ongoing and developing relationships with First Nations (status and non-status), Inuit, and Métis Peoples. We are on a path of learning and are committed to working together.

The Vancouver, Coast & Mountains Sustainability Toolkit

Created for tourism businesses and destinations, the Vancouver, Coast & Mountains (VCM) Sustainability Toolkit includes checklists, templates, step-by-step instructions, and other essential resources to support implementation of the VCM Sustainability Playbook and improve sustainability performance over time.

FOR THE BEST RESULTS:

1. Follow the guidance outlined in the playbook to first create your action plan together with your team.
2. Use this toolkit for detailed guidance on how to implement your action plan.

The VCM Sustainability Toolkit is split into two parts

PART 1: CATALOGUE

The catalogue lists each exercise, by complexity, into four sections that follow the order of the playbook. Each exercise includes a link to the corresponding section in the second part of the toolkit.

Pro Tip:
If you do not have an action plan tracker, download the VCM Playbook Sustainability Action Plan Tracker 2.0 template to fill in as you browse the catalogue for potential actions.

Exercise Complexity Explained		
●	■	◆
Green Circle	**Blue Square**	**Black Diamond**
• No cost • Little to no planning or research required • Limited expertise/data required	• Low or no cost • Some planning or research required • Some expertise/data required	• Low or no cost • Significant planning or research required • Extensive expertise/data required

PART 2: INSTRUCTIONS & RESOURCES

Detailed instructions, checklists, and templates for each exercise have been included in the second part of the toolkit to support you in taking action. When available, additional external resources have also been provided such as blog posts, online tools, third party audits or certification opportunities, and best-practice examples.

Use the **BACK TO EXERCISE CATALOGUE** button found at the bottom of each exercise's instructions to return to the previous section of the catalogue to easily browse through the full list of exercises again.

Pro Tip:
After your business has finalized and prioritized its action plan, direct action leaders to the guidance included in this section of the toolkit.

Photo Credit: Tourism Chilliwack

Catalogue

SECTION 1: ENGAGE YOUR TEAM

The exercises linked in this section of the toolkit will help you to improve engagement with your team as it relates to your sustainability efforts. You may wish to complete one or more of these exercises before continuing to Step 2: Measure Baselines in the VCM Playbook.

Complexity	Exercises	Page
●	Create a Sustainability Committee	8
■	Host Your First Sustainability Committee Meeting	10
◆	Assess the Resilience of your Business	13

SECTION 2: MEASURE YOUR BASELINE

The exercises in this section of the toolkit provide guidance to measure baseline performance. You may wish to complete one or more of these exercises before continuing to Step 3: Plan for Action in the VCM Playbook, and/or include one or more of these exercises in your action plan. It is recommended that you select exercises related to your sustainability goals, as well as where your business has the capacity to take action.

Complexity	Exercises	Page
●	Right Size Your Waste Bins	16
●	Single-Use Plastic Assessment	18
●	Transportation Inventory	20
●	Accessibility Self-Assessment	22

SECTION 3: PLAN FOR ACTION

The resources in this section of the toolkit provide guidance on best practices and exercises to create an action plan. You may wish to complete one or more of these exercises in tandem with Step 3: Plan for Action in the VCM Playbook.

SECTION 4: SHARE YOUR SUSTAINABILITY STORY

The resources in this section of the toolkit provide additional guidance on best practices and exercise for sharing your sustainability story. You may wish to complete one or more of these exercises after following the guidance included in the VCM Playbook.

Part 1: Engage Your Team

CREATE A SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Follow the steps below to create your sustainability committee, review roles and responsibilities of committee members, as well as general guidance of who should be on your committee.

> **Pro Tip:**
> Once you have created an action plan, you may need to enhance your committee for implementation.

STEPS TO CREATE YOUR SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

- [ ] Meet with management to discuss working through the VCM Sustainability Playbook
- [ ] Announce the sustainability initiative to employees and/or senior management
- [ ] Request willing "champions", or dedicated individuals; at least 1 manager and 1 or 2 staff members per department to join your sustainability committee
- [ ] Name your Sustainability Committee. Work with your team and come up with a name or slogan that resonates with your culture
- [ ] Assign roles and responsibilities among sustainability committee members
- [ ] Schedule a regularly recurring sustainability committee meeting
- [ ] Review the VCM Playbook Steps
- [ ] Announce your new or refreshed sustainability committee and next steps through your internal communications channels, and publicly if you feel ready

> **Pro Tip:**
> Once your sustainability committee has created a sustainability action plan, integrate the plan into regular management and/or team meetings to share progress, delegate tasks, and report back. Eventually, sustainability should become a part of "how you do things," similar to health & safety.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Committee members are responsible for gathering information, providing feedback to colleagues, and leading specific actions included in the sustainability action plan tracker. Additionally, each committee will assign one or more members to serve in the following roles:

- Notetaker: responsible for taking and distributing detailed meeting notes
- Facilitator: responsible for facilitating the meeting discussion, keeping the agenda on track, and ensuring everyone has the opportunity to contribute

Depending on the size and capacity of your business, you may wish to make involvement in the sustainability committee an official component of a job description to further enhance ownership of the action plan.

> Note — While an action leader may not be responsible for directly implementing the action, they are responsible for ensuring that the action is seen through.

TIME COMMITMENTS

Approximately 1 hour per week should be dedicated to committee related tasks per committee member. Additionally, sustainability committees are recommended to meet for 1 hour, once per month to share progress updates and feedback, as well as request support when needed. Your committee may also decide to host a quarterly or bi-annually all-staff event to engage the broader team around your efforts and progress.

RECOMMENDED COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

- CEO / Senior Management
- Accounting / Human Resources
- Operations / Maintenance / Custodial
- Office / Community Coordinator
- Marketing / Sales
- Front Line Staff Members
- Passionate Advocates / Willing Champions

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Examples

- Meet the Zip Trek Giants

Blogs & News Stories

- The Why and How of Building a Green Team

BACK TO EXERCISE CATALOGUE

HOST YOUR FIRST SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE MEETING

Review this meeting outline to ensure that your first sustainability committee meetings are well-organized, productive, and focused on covering the essential information to get started on creating an action plan.

AGENDA FOR YOUR FIRST SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE MEETING

PRE-MEETING

- [ ] Review the toolkit guidance under Create a Sustainability Committee
- [ ] Ensure at least 1 senior manager and a representative from each department can attend
- [ ] Choose a team member responsible for taking and distributing meeting notes
- [ ] Appoint a team member to lead the playbook exercises, facilitate the meeting discussion, keep the agenda on track, and ensure everyone has the opportunity to contribute

FIRST MEETING (60 MINUTES)

Part 1: Review the Playbook Steps

- [ ] Begin the meeting by sharing why your team will be working through the playbook
- [ ] Have the team facilitator collectively review the steps in the VCM Sustainability Playbook
- [ ] Discuss any questions or concerns that team members may have

Part 2: Set a Recurring Meeting Schedule

- [ ] Decide on a suitable frequency for a recurring sustainability team meeting (Recommended: 1 hour once per month)
- [ ] Establish a regular meeting date and time that works for all team members

Part 3: Choose a Team Name

- [ ] Discuss potential sustainability team names that resonate with your business culture
- [ ] If time allows, circle back to this discussion at the end or in later meetings for finalizing the name

Part 4: Review Existing Data and Assessments

- [ ] Review the list of suggested baseline assessments provided in the playbook
- [ ] Have each team member share information about what data is already being collected related to sustainability
- [ ] Discuss any ongoing or completed sustainability-related assessments, audits, or certifications

Part 5: Assign Homework

- [ ] Assign each team member a task to uncover what baseline data is already being collected within their respective departments
- [ ] Request that each team member prepares to present their collected data in the next meeting

SECOND MEETING (60 MINUTES)

Part 1: Sharing Findings

- [ ] Each team member presents the baseline data they gathered from their departments
- [ ] Allow time for questions, clarification, and discussion about the presented data

Part 2: Additional Information Required

- [ ] Address any information gaps identified in the presentations
- [ ] Discuss assessments or data that are still needed to gain a comprehensive understanding of sustainability efforts and current performance; refer to the assessments in the 'Measure Baselines' section of the playbook

Part 3: Meeting Summary & Next Steps

- [ ] Have the assigned note taker summarize key points discussed during the meeting
- [ ] Appoint team members responsible for collecting any additional information
- [ ] If proceeding to the action planning steps in the playbook, lengthen the duration of the next sustainability team meetings (recommended 90-120 minutes)
- [ ] Finalize the sustainability team's name if the discussion was postponed from the first meeting

Part 4: Evaluation and Feedback

- [ ] Take a moment to gather feedback from team members about the meeting structure, content, and overall effectiveness

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Worksheets & Templates

- Meeting Agenda Template

BACK TO EXERCISE CATALOGUE

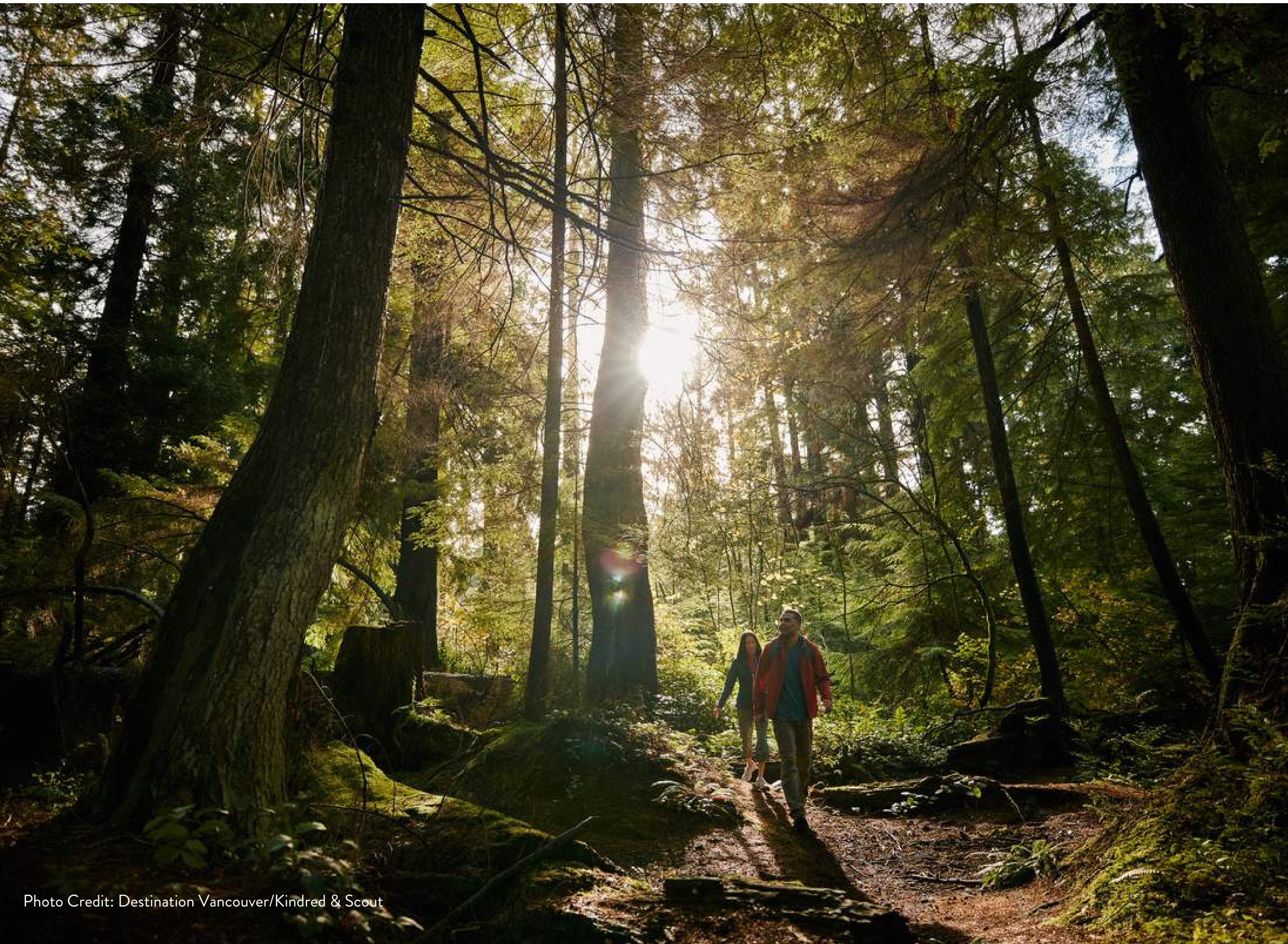

Photo Credit: Destination Vancouver/Kindred & Scout

ASSESS THE RESILIENCE OF YOUR BUSINESS

In this exercise, your sustainability team will follow step-by-step instructions to evaluate your business's exposure to local and global threats as well as its readiness in handling challenging situations. Throughout this process, your team may also gain insight into the positive impact it creates to support recovery and sustainable development. This exercise can take 60 - 120 minutes to complete.

RESILIENCE ASSESSMENT: CONTEXT MAPPING EXERCISE INSTRUCTIONS

For each part of the exercise, suggested timing has been recommended to complete the exercise in 90 minutes. How much time is spent on each part may vary from business to business depending on the size of your committee and baseline understanding of sustainability performance. If there is good conversation, we recommend extending the length of your committee meeting or scheduling an additional meeting to provide ample time for discussion.

EXERCISE PREPARATION

Complete the Create a Sustainability Committee and Host Your First Committee Meeting exercises prior to proceeding.

1. Assemble your Sustainability Committee
2. Gather Sustainability Data and Tracked KPIs

PART 1: EXERCISE INTRODUCTION AND GOAL (10 MINUTES)

Begin this exercise by reviewing the Context Mapping Exercise instructions with your team and identifying any specific sustainability needs for your business or destination.

The goal of context mapping is to identify how well your business or destination adapts to challenging situations. As your team works through this exercise, they will evaluate the resilience of your business to environmental, social-cultural, and economic challenges. When completing this exercise, it is important to distinguish between local and global threats as well as shock and stressors threats (one-time vs. ongoing).* Additionally, through context mapping your team may uncover areas where your business creates broad positive impact and adds value from a systematic perspective.+

**See the table below for examples of shock and stressor threats.*

+See the Examples and Case Studies under the Additional Resources section to learn more about how businesses are actively contributing to enhancing community and industry resilience.

PART 2: RISK ASSESSMENT (20 MINUTES)

Divide your sustainability team into two groups, ensuring that each group has diverse representation of roles and responsibilities. Each group will be assigned a type of threat: shocks or stressors. The groups will then have 20 minutes to brainstorm all of the potential threats your business may be exposed to or vulnerable to.

Example Shocks (One Time)	Example Stressors (On-going)
• Loss of Power • Extreme weather events • Earthquakes • Protests • Cyber attack • Infrastructure failure • Pandemic outbreak • Medical emergencies	• Staffing shortages • Climate change • Racism • Aging infrastructure • Rising prices • Increasing competition • Employee burnout • Drought

PART 3: IMPACT EVALUATION (20 MINUTES)

Based on the list of potential threats, identify 3 to 5 that are the most likely to occur or would have the greatest impact. Identify key stakeholders in your community or departments of your business that would be affected by or have an influence on the company's operations in response to each threat. These stakeholders may include frontline employees, management, customers, local communities, suppliers and regulatory bodies.

If the identified stakeholders are outside of your business, such as suppliers, encourage the sustainability team to brainstorm engagement opportunities with the identified stakeholders to gain insights into their perceptions, concerns, and expectations regarding their resilience to the identified threats. This engagement can be done through emails, supplier surveys, or by phone.

Lastly, guide the sustainability team to distinguish between threats that are specific to your destination/business (local threats) and those that affect the business on a broader scale (global threats).

PART 4: MAPPING SUSTAINABILITY CONTEXT (20 MINUTES)

Using tools such as a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) and PESTLE analysis (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, Legal) identify internal and external factors affecting your ability to respond to threats as well as maintain form and function throughout its duration.

If your sustainability team collected metrics in preparation for the exercise, evaluate how each threat would impact them against key factors such as the frequency of the threat (how often it occurs) or its severity.

PART 5: IDENTIFYING AREAS OF IMPACT AND VALUE ADDED (20 MINUTES)

Based on the team's assessment from the previous steps, identify strategies and opportunities to improve resilience. Also encourage the team to identify areas where the business creates positive impact supporting others throughout exposure to each threat, and adds value from a systematic perspective. This can include sustainable product development, responsible sourcing, community development programs, or environmental conservation efforts. See the 'Examples and Case Studies' in the additional resources above for more information.

CONCLUSION

Remind the team that context mapping is an ongoing process, and as the business or destination evolves, its sustainability needs may change. Encourage continuous learning and improvement, and emphasize the importance of embedding sustainable practices throughout the company's operations. The context mapping exercise serves as a strong foundation for a successful sustainability journey.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Examples

- B.C. Brewers and Distillers Pivot to Produce Hand Sanitizer to Support COVID-19 Response
- BC Hotels Accommodate Wildfire Evacuees
- B.C. Tour Operators Clean Up Marine Debris during Pandemic
- Vancouver Resilience Assessment

Online Tools & Resources

- Strategic Framework for Tourism
- Emergency Preparedness - Destination BC

Additional Guidance

- Understanding Risk
- Embedded Strategies for the Sustainability Transition

BACK TO EXERCISE CATALOGUE

Part 2: Measure Your Baseline

RIGHT SIZE YOUR WASTE BINS

Follow step-by-step instructions to assess if your business can reduce the frequencies of its waste pickups or the size of its waste bin to save costs and reduce Scope 3 GHG emissions.

INSTRUCTIONS

It is recommended that this exercise is performed during both busier and slower tourism seasons to account for variance in the average amount of waste generated in each. After completing this assessment, ensure that your waste pick-ups are optimized with attention to the season (or corresponding events, holidays, etc.). We recommend completing this assessment with the Bin Size Adjustment Worksheet.

STEP 1: PREPARATION

- [ ] Identify the number and location of waste bins that are serviced by your waste hauler; record this information in the worksheet.
- [ ] For each waste bin, find out the frequency and dates that each bin type is picked up; record this information in the worksheet.
- [ ] Schedule a time to check each bin as close to the pick-up time as possible. For example, if the recycling is picked up every Thursday morning at 9 am, look in the bin on Thursday at 8 am or on Wednesday afternoon.

STEP 2: GATHER DATA

- [ ] Check each bin for four consecutive periods (before pick-up) in accordance with your schedule.
- [ ] Record how full the bins are before they are picked up on your spreadsheet, as a percentage.
- [ ] Note if any waste has piled up outside of the bin.

STEP 3: ANALYZE THE RESULTS

- [ ] Analyze the result and adjust your pick up frequency:
    - If the bins are typically 100% or nearly full, you have the correct bin size and collection frequency.
    - If the bins are less than 75% full on average before pick-up, consider reducing your bin size or pick-up frequency.
    - If the bins are overfilled (cannot close the lid or material is piled beside the bin), look for ways to reduce the amount of waste generated through an audit. Try not to increase the bin size!

Repeat this process annually or bi-annually and compare the results against your Year 1 benchmark data.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Certification Opportunity

- Zero Waste Event Certification

Worksheets & Templates

- Bin Size Adjustment Worksheet

BACK TO EXERCISE CATALOGUE

Photo Credit: Tourism Whistler/Justa Jeskova

SINGLE-USE PLASTIC ASSESSMENT

The single-use plastic assessment is a desktop assessment that uses your receipts, purchasing history, or billing data to quickly identify where single-use plastics exist in your business and the volume of single-use plastics purchased annually.

INSTRUCTIONS

It is recommended that this exercise is completed using the Single-use Plastic Assessment Template.

STEP 1: PREPARATION

- [ ] Gather billing data and purchasing history for each department or division of your business
- [ ] Identify the single-use plastics purchased throughout the billing data

STEP 2: FILL-IN THE ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

- [ ] Add/remove single-use plastics to the template based on your company's purchasing history (Column A)
- [ ] Enter the yearly volume of each item purchased (Column B)
- [ ] Enter the yearly cost for each item purchased (Column C)

STEP 3: CREATE A REDUCTION PLAN

- [ ] Brainstorm actions to eliminate, reduce, or replace each single-use plastic item (Column D)
- [ ] Prioritize focus areas to reduce or eliminate single-use plastics (Column E)

Repeat on an annual basis to track reduction efforts and cost savings. Compare progress to Year 1 Benchmark results.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Examples

- Fairmont Pacific Rim Eliminates Single-use Plastic from Guest Journey
- How Our Clients (and Our Team!) Reduce Single-use Plastics

Online Tools & Resources

- Canada Plastics Pact
- Global Tourism Plastics Initiative

Additional Guidance

- Government of Canada Single-use Plastic Prohibition Regulations

Certification Opportunity

- GreenStep Single-Use Plastic Free Certification
- Canada Green Building Council TRUE Certification

Worksheets & Templates

- Single-use Plastic Assessment Template

BACK TO EXERCISE CATALOGUE

Photo Credit: Tourism Chilliwack/Jennifer Kleingeltink

TRANSPORTATION INVENTORY

A transportation inventory allows you to better understand how guests and staff travel to your business, as well as the availability of transportation amenities. Insight into available transportation options can be used in guest communication to encourage more sustainable travel, as well as help with planning infrastructure development.

We recommend completing this action as an initial step towards the more advanced Parking Audit exercise.

OVERVIEW

We recommend using the Transportation Inventory Worksheet to capture the following information:

1) Number of parking spaces available for your business/attraction by type

- [ ] Designated accessibility parking
- [ ] Electric vehicle charging stations
- [ ] Carpool-only parking
- [ ] Oversized vehicle parking
- [ ] Standard private vehicle parking
- [ ] Employee only parking
- [ ] Tertiary street parking
- [ ] Taxi / Ride app service

2) Bike infrastructure

- [ ] Storage and lock-up stations
- [ ] E-bike charging stations
- [ ] Tool and repair stations
- [ ] Access routes with designated bike lanes

3) Pedestrian pathways & amenities

- [ ] Walkable amenities (parks, plazas, promenades, etc.)
- [ ] Public drinking fountains
- [ ] Public washrooms
- [ ] Public waste bins (identify by waste stream if possible)
- [ ] Distance to other attractions

4) Public Transit Access

- [ ] Types of transit (Bus, Train, Tram, Ferry)
- [ ] Proximity to transit stops

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Examples

- YVR Airport Transportation Inventory

Online Tools & Resources

- WalkScore

Worksheets & Templates

- Transportation Inventory Worksheet

BACK TO EXERCISE CATALOGUE

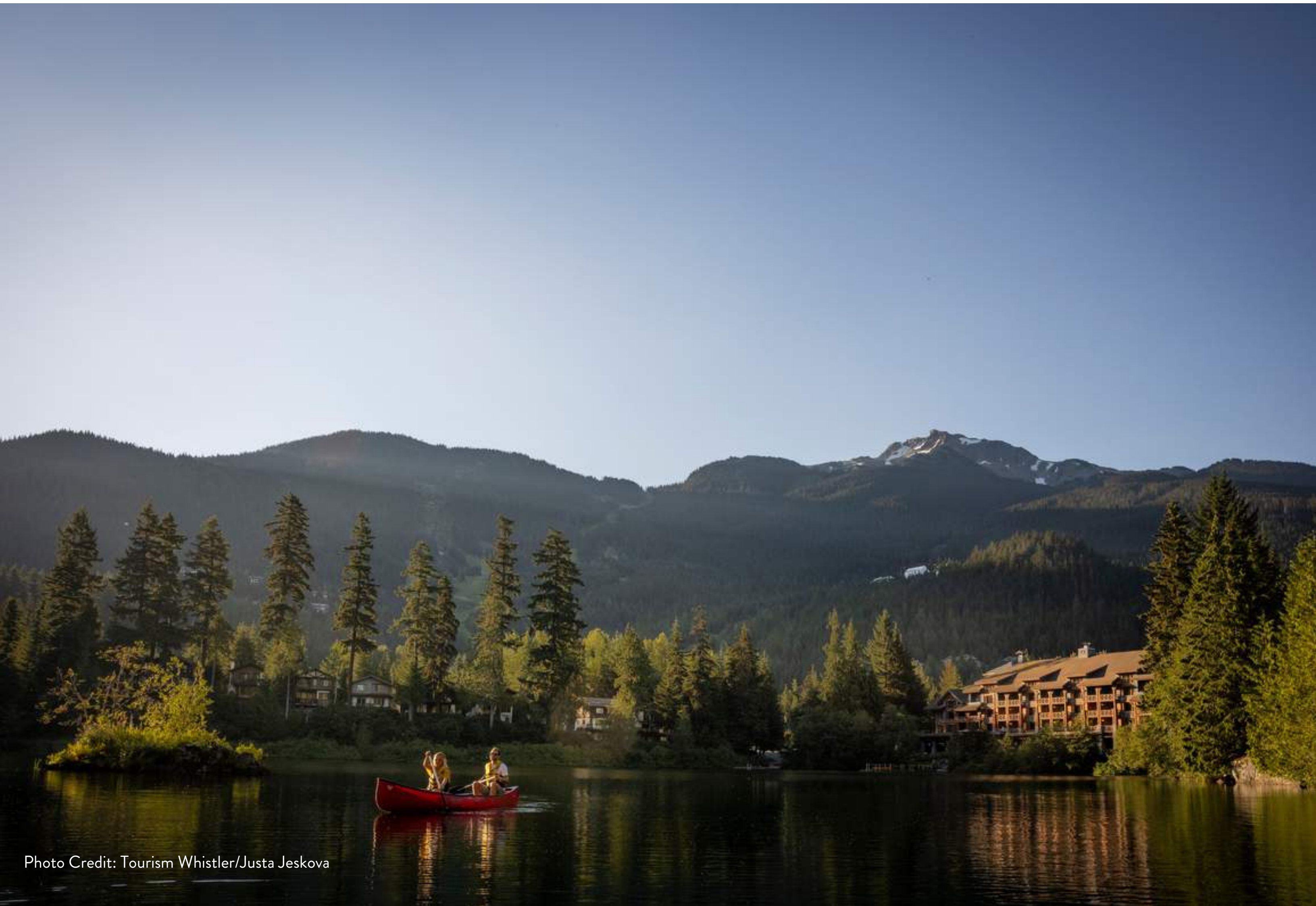

Photo Credit: Tourism Whistler/Justa Jeskova

ACCESSIBILITY SELF-ASSESSMENT

Physically inspect your property and operations for accessibility attributes for people with mobility needs, visual and/or hearing requirements, or for people with diverse cognitive or sensory abilities using a Destination British Columbia best practice checklist.

OVERVIEW OF COMMON TYPES OF ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility refers to the design and implementation of products, services, environments, and digital platforms in a way that ensures they can be used and enjoyed by everyone.

There are various types of accessibility, including:

PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY:

Ensuring that physical spaces, facilities, and transportation are designed for mobility, such as ramps, elevators, and accessible parking.

- Recommended resource to get started: Destination BC Accessible Attributes Checklist (pages 1-3)
- Take it to the next level: BC Building Accessibility Handbook

SENSORY ACCESSIBILITY:

Ensuring access for individuals with diverse sensory abilities through sign language interpreters, captioning, audio descriptions, or braille materials, etc.

- Recommended resource to get started: Destination BC Accessible Attributes Checklist (pages 4-6)
- Take it to the next level: Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification

COGNITIVE ACCESSIBILITY:

Making information understandable and navigable for all cognitive abilities, such as using simple language, clear layouts, and consistent navigation.

- Recommended resource to get started: Government of BC Plain Language Checklist
- Take it to the next level: Government of BC Accessibility and Inclusion Toolkit

DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY:

Ensuring that websites, apps, and online content can be used by everyone. This includes features like screen readers, keyboard navigation, and alternative text for images.

- Recommended resource to get started: BC Public Service Digital Accessibility 101
- Take it to the next level: Canadian Standard on Web Accessibility

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Online Tools & Resources

- Destination BC Accessible Attributes Checklist
- Destination BC Think Accessibility: Accommodations General Tip Sheet
- Government of BC Accessibility and Inclusion Toolkit
- Webinar: BC Public Service Digital Accessibility 101

Additional Guidance

- Canadian Standard on Web Accessibility
- Introduction to Canadian Digital Accessibility Laws
- BC Building Accessibility Handbook

Certification Opportunity

- Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification

BACK TO EXERCISE CATALOGUE

Photo Credit: Tourism Chilliwack/Jennifer Kleingeltink

ASSESS THE INCLUSIVITY OF YOUR BUSINESS

The 50-30 Challenge is a Canadian government initiative that aims to promote diversity and inclusion. The challenge encourages businesses to achieve gender parity (50%) and representation of other underrepresented groups, such as racial and ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ individuals, and persons with disabilities, representing 30% of leadership positions on their boards and senior management teams. The goal is to create more inclusive and equitable opportunities for all Canadians within these sectors.

Sign up for the 50-30 Challenge through the Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada webpage: https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/ised/en/50-30-challenge-your-diversity-advantage

Once registered, explore the WhatWorksToolkit which contains more information about the challenge, tips for taking action and starting conversations, tools for implementing inclusive practices, and more.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Online Tools & Resources

- WhatWorksToolkit
- UBC Activating Inclusion Toolkit
- Harvard Implicit Bias Tests
- DBC Best Practices for Inclusive Visuals

Additional Guidance

- LGBT+ Diversity and Inclusion Workshops

Certification Opportunity

- Rainbow Registered

BACK TO EXERCISE CATALOGUE

NATURAL & CULTURAL HERITAGE RESOURCES

Natural and cultural heritage are broad terms that encompass both historical and living systems within a destination. Common examples include knowledge, traditions, museums, architecture, music, art displays, events, and natural or cultural heritage sites. This resource list offers suggestions to help you improve your natural and cultural sustainability, focusing on building knowledge and awareness, promoting educational offerings, and sharing interpretive information where appropriate. We recommend using this list as a first step to getting started.

PRACTICE RECONCILIATION

- [ ] Learn about the Indigenous history of the land on which you live and work
    - Visit a public Indigenous cultural centre or museum exhibition
    - Take part in a tourism experience from an Indigenous owned business
    - Purchase books or read public resources authored by Indigenous Peoples in your area
- [ ] Learn how to pronounce the name of the Nation where you live, and use traditional names for places as you learn them (e.g. Fraser River → Sto:lo; Black Tusk → Landing Place of the Thunderbird)
- [ ] Learn about the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- [ ] Learn about the BC Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act
- [ ] Learn about the Truth & Reconciliation Commission of Canada 94 Calls to Action and incorporate into work plans
- [ ] Attend Indigenous speaker series webinars and events
- [ ] Familiarize yourself with best practices for working effectively with Indigenous Peoples
- [ ] Familiarize yourself with local Indigenous political and governance structures
- [ ] Explore Indigenous learning opportunities with organizations such as Indigenous Corporate Training Inc.
- [ ] Learn the meaning of common terminology used in a land acknowledgement (University of British Columbia: What is a land acknowledgement?)
- [ ] Follow best practice recommendations from the Native Land Digital, and the University of British Columbia to develop and share a meaningful land acknowledgement
- [ ] Practice 'Two-Eyed Seeing' when strategic planning and making key decisions
- [ ] Incorporate Indigenous suppliers, subcontractors, and partners into purchasing decisions; see the Purchasing Analysis exercise for more guidance
- [ ] Connect guests/visitors to Indigenous tourism operators to provide authentic local Indigenous cultural experiences (e.g. ITBC Authentic Indigenous, ITAC Original Original Accredited or CCAB Certified Aboriginal Businesses)

ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT & OUTREACH

- [ ] Provide monetary and in-kind support to culturally significant sites, events, and communities in your local community (e.g. Pow-wow sponsorship and volunteering - Pow Wow Calendar)
- [ ] Provide monetary and in-kind support for conservation of wildlife, protected natural areas, and areas with high biodiversity value (e.g. Divers for Cleaner Lakes and Oceans, Howe Sound Biosphere Fund)
- [ ] Participate in volunteer opportunities that positively impact the environment (e.g. Destination Vancouver Neighbourhood Cleanup Party)
- [ ] Collaborate with local heritage societies or cultural conservation NGOs (e.g. Howe Sound Biosphere, Canadian Chinese Society for the Arts)
- [ ] Collaborate with local natural conservation NGOs (e.g. Invasive Species Council of BC)
- [ ] Avoid promoting activities that have potential to disturb or negatively impact ecosystems and landscapes

STAFF ENGAGEMENT

- [ ] Update company policies, standard operating procedures, and practices to incorporate inclusivity
- [ ] Facilitate discussions with staff about reconciliation and biases
- [ ] Add and incorporate equal opportunity statements and practices into onboarding trainings and materials
- [ ] Track workforce diversity and inclusivity (LinkedIn: Top Ways Companies Are Measuring Their Diversity and Inclusion Progress)
    - Team composition
    - Promotion and advancement
    - Employee satisfaction
    - Recruitment and new hires
- [ ] Provide training and support on diversity, equity and inclusion to employees


Photo Credit: Destination BC/Andrew Strain

GUEST & VISITOR ENGAGEMENT

- [ ] Develop and share a visitor code of conduct or pledge with staff and customers to protect and enhance natural and cultural experiences
- [ ] Connect guests with local interpreters or experiences that can present the heritage and culture in an authentic and traditional manner
- [ ] Feature local arts and crafts and/or cuisine in gift shops and visitor centres
- [ ] Where permission has been provided, share information about the local culture, history, and cultural events/festivals on websites, brochures, etc.
- [ ] Provide information and interpretation for guests on the local environment (e.g. how to identify local wildlife species, plants, or unique geological features, etc.)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Examples

- Don't Love It to Death
- Klahoose Wilderness Resort
- Tourism Chilliwack Protecting this Gift
- Truth and Reconciliation: Moving Beyond the Land Acknowledgement

Additional Guidance

- BC AdventureSmart
- Leave No Trace

Online Tool / Resource

- Heritage BC Cultural Maps
- First Peoples' Map of BC
- Native Land Map
- Find a Historic Place
- Indigenous Cultural Competency Self-Assessment Checklist
- Become a Friend of ITBC
- ITAC News
- Building Bridges with Indigenous Tourism eBook

BACK TO EXERCISE CATALOGUE


Photo Credit: Tourism Whistler/Justa Jeskova

FREE ONLINE SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENTS

A simple way to assess the sustainability performance of your business is by taking an online sustainability assessment. Most assessments can take between 1-2 hours, depending on how quickly you work through each question. Once the online assessment is completed and submitted, you will receive a score indicating your current level of sustainability performance.

TIPS FOR COMPLETING ONLINE SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENTS

- Complete the online sustainability assessment with a few members of your sustainability committee
- Delegate sections of the online assessment for faster completion, or work through them as a team to promote knowledge sharing and collaboration.
- Use the results of the assessments to identify where you are performing well and where there is room for improvement, and apply these learnings to your sustainability action plan.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Examples & Case Studies

- Sunshine Coast Tourism Visitor Centres
- Shades of Jade Inn & Spa
- Persephone Brewing

Online Tools & Resources

- B Impact Assessment
- GreenStep Sustainable Tourism Score
- SDG Compass

Additional Guidance

- GSTC Criteria - Best Practices for Businesses & Destinations
- BC Tourism Sustainability Network

BACK TO EXERCISE CATALOGUE

LIVING WAGE ASSESSMENT

A living wage is the hourly wage a worker needs to earn to cover their basic expenses and participate in their community. Living wages differ from region to region, and can be calculated using an online tool, hourly pay, benefits provided, and paid leave.

To calculate living wages for BC gather the following information and enter it into the BC Living Wage Calculator:

- Hourly wage of the lowest paid employee
- The percentage of extended health premiums covered by the employer
- The value of the employer's annual Health Benefits Account:
- Number of days offered of paid vacation, sick leave, personal days etc., beyond the statutory minimum
- Value of any other taxable benefits

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Online Tool / Resource
- BC Living Wage Calculator

Additional Guidance
- Canadian Living Wage Rates

Certification Opportunity
- Living Wage for Families BC

BACK TO EXERCISE CATALOGUE

Photo Credit: Destination Vancouver/Kindred & Scout

MEASURE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

Your carbon footprint is the summation of all your Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and is reported in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents (tCO_2e). Just as you track finances according to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), you can also track your carbon emissions following the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Accounting Protocol. The GHG Protocol provides a standardized framework to measure and mitigate public and private sector emissions.

The difficulty of measuring a carbon footprint will vary from business to business. Measurement can be made easier by using an online calculator or subscription, but may be more difficult if doing the calculations internally or for certification purposes.

To streamline the carbon accounting process, there are many softwares and online calculators designed to easily calculate your carbon footprint, including Scopes 1, 2 and 3 emissions. While it is recommended that you use an online carbon footprint calculator or software to efficiently measure your emissions, there are also resources available to identify and calculate your emissions manually.

Download the Greenhouse Gas Corporate Accounting Standard for full guidance on how to complete the following steps:

STEPS TO CALCULATE A CARBON FOOTPRINT

1. Set an organizational boundary
2. Set an operational boundary
3. Select a baseline year as a performance standard to measure against
4. Determine Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions sources within your boundaries
    a. Scope 1: Direct emissions from sources you own or control
    b. Scope 2: Indirect emissions from the offsite generation of electricity
    c. Scope 3: Indirect emissions that occur at sources owned or controlled by another company
5. Collect data for each emissions source
6. Calculate carbon emissions for each emissions source
7. Determine total carbon footprint
8. Set a reduction target (science based reduction targets are generally considered to be 50% by 2030 and 90-95% by 2050)
9. Identify actions for reductions in emissions
10. Report - internally and publicly
11. Implement reduction plan and/or purchase offsets

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Examples & Case Studies

- Four Seasons Whistler
- Watermark Beach Resort: Energy Savings Spotlight

Online Tools & Resources

- SME Emissions Calculator
- US EPA Simplified GHG Calculator
- EcoBase Carbon Footprint Measurement Software
- GHG Protocol Emissions Tools and Guidance

Additional Guidance

- Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol

BACK TO EXERCISE CATALOGUE


Photo Credit: Destination BC/Michael Bednar

RETROFIT FIXTURES

Inspect the energy and water fixtures on your property to ensure they are high-efficiency and properly maintained using the provided checklist below. To maximize the effectiveness of this exercise, it is recommended that inspection areas are prioritized based on the results of your Desktop Energy or Water Assessment, or based on the guidance of resource tracking softwares such as the Energy Star Portfolio Manager.

ENERGY

LIGHTING

- [ ] Install lighting controls, such as occupancy sensors, to automatically turn off lights in unoccupied areas such as offices and conference rooms at night
- [ ] Replace older incandescent or fluorescent exit signs with LED versions, which use a fraction of the energy
- [ ] Replace T12 fluorescent lamps with high-performance T8 or LED lighting
- [ ] Replace metal halide and mercury vapour high-bay lighting with LED lighting

HEATING & COOLING / HVAC

- [ ] Service HVAC equipment yearly - ensure cooling towers are serviced regularly since they are subject to scale deposits, clogged nozzles, poor airflow and poor pump performance
- [ ] Check and change your air filter regularly, a dirty filter will slow down air flow and make the system work harder to keep you warm or cool - wasting energy
- [ ] Insulate and draft proof doors, windows, and openings to save costs by reducing strain on heating and cooling systems

WATER HEATING

- [ ] Install water-efficient showerheads and faucet aerators to save on hot water consumption
- [ ] Install water-efficient showerheads in change rooms, and consider installing drain water heat recovery systems to capture heat from hot water and help save energy on water heating
- [ ] Install water-efficient faucets with motion sensors in washrooms to prevent them from being left on and wasting water
- [ ] Wrap hot water pipes located in unheated areas with foam or rubber pipe insulation - the insulation will help protect pipes during cold snaps and may reduce the energy needed for heating water
- [ ] If your hot water heater is warm to the touch, purchase an insulating blanket for it to reduce heat loss

FOOD SERVICE EQUIPMENT

- [ ] Replace older, inefficient pre-rinse spray valves with new, high-efficiency ones - they are easy to install and could help you reduce water used for dishwashing by 50% and save on water heating costs
- [ ] Check and replace torn wash curtains in conveyor washers to improve energy efficiency
- [ ] Upgrade vending machines to ENERGY STAR® certified models, which are up to 50 percent more efficient than conventional ones, or install vending controllers on existing ones, which use an occupancy sensor to power down its lighting and compressors when the surrounding area is unoccupied

WATER

- [ ] Install low flow shower heads
- [ ] Install faucet aerators
- [ ] Install low flush toilets
- [ ] Install low flow spray valves for food and beverage service
- [ ] Retrofit washing machines with WaterSense or high efficiency certified products
- [ ] Retrofit dishwashers with WaterSense or high efficiency certified products
- [ ] Install pool covers to reduce evaporation
- [ ] Add a liquid solar film (chemical additive) to pool water to reduce evaporation
- [ ] Install drip irrigation for exterior watering
- [ ] Xeriscape property grounds with native drought-resistant plants to reduce irrigation needs and slope erosion
- [ ] Invest in grey-water management systems to reuse cleaned water for flushing toilets or irrigation

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Examples & Case Studies

- Four Seasons Whistler
- Watermark Beach Resort: Energy Savings Spotlight

Online Tools & Resources

- WaterSense Product Registry
- Energy Star Product Finder
- Government of Canada Energy Rebates & Grants
- BC Hydro Energy Studies & Audits
- Fortis Rebates & Energy Savings
- BCHA GoGreen Program (members only)
- EcoFund

BACK TO EXERCISE CATALOGUE

DESKTOP ENERGY/FUEL ASSESSMENT & WALKTHROUGH AUDIT

The Desktop Energy Assessment & Walkthrough Audit will provide your business with an understanding of energy use and expenses. The desktop energy assessment involves a review of billing data, followed by a walkthrough audit and physical inspection of areas of concern. The results of these energy assessments will provide insight into opportunities for energy conservation as well as set a benchmark to track monthly or yearly improvements.

Tools such as the Energy Star Portfolio Manager can be used to collect data for energy, water, and waste in one central location.

ENERGY/FUEL DESKTOP ASSESSMENT

It is recommended that this exercise is completed using the Desktop Energy Assessment Template or a similar online resource (Energy Star Portfolio Manager, Fortis My Energy Usage, BC Hydro MyHydro).

The Energy/Fuel Desktop Assessment uses invoices and billing data to better understand the financial impact of energy consumption and opportunities for reduction.

STEP 1

- [ ] Download the Desktop Energy Assessment template or set up an account with an online platform
- [ ] Gather energy and fuel bills from at least 1 year (electricity, propane, natural gas, gasoline, diesel, etc.)
    - Check with your utility providers to see if you can access this data online for downloading
- [ ] If data is available, sort energy bills by category or department (e.g. operations, heating, etc.) If not, simply use total annual consumption

STEP 2

- [ ] Fill in the energy tracker template, listing energy categories or departments as rows in the spreadsheets and bill frequency as columns
- [ ] Populate the spreadsheet and begin looking for trends such as areas of operation with year-round high energy rates or energy use increases
- [ ] Analyze your energy consumption compared to contributing factors such as holidays & events, weather conditions, occupancy rates, transport services available, etc.

STEP 3

- [ ] Track annual consumption and chart progress towards reduction goals
- [ ] Conduct an annual review of this data with your Sustainability Committee to see how your data is trending and if you are reducing consumption

WALKTHROUGH ENERGY AUDIT

The Walkthrough Energy Audit examines the energy efficiency of fixtures and behavioural practices. It is recommended that efforts are focused on hotspots identified in the Desktop Energy Assessment.

STEP 1

- [ ] Create a list of high priority areas to inspect (guided by the results of the desktop energy assessment)
- [ ] Within the priority areas, establish a second list of potential energy uses (such as lighting, heating/insulation, equipment, machinery, etc.) to inspect for conservation and efficiency opportunities during walkthroughs

STEP 2

- [ ] Perform a physical inspection during and after operating hours
    - Determine if established energy-saving procedures are followed
    - Technology is consistent with current retrofits (e.g. LED light bulbs or Energy Star appliances)
    - Infrastructure and equipment is properly maintained (e.g. caulking and weatherstripping around windows and exterior doors)

STEP 3

- [ ] Make a note of efficiency and conservation measures identified during the audit and add them to your action plan

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Online Tool/Resource

- Energy Star Portfolio Manager
- BC Hydro MyHydro
- Fortis My Energy Use
- Fortis Home Energy Calculator
- Fortis Electricity Calculator

Examples & Case Studies

- Four Seasons Whistler

Worksheets & Templates

- Desktop Energy Assessment Template

BACK TO EXERCISE CATALOGUE

DESKTOP WATER ASSESSMENT & WALKTHROUGH AUDIT

The Desktop Water Assessment & Walkthrough Audit will provide your business with an understanding of water use and expenses. The desktop water assessment involves a review of billing data, followed by a walkthrough audit and physical inspection. The results of the water assessments will provide insight into opportunities for water conservation as well as set a benchmark to track monthly or yearly improvements.

Tools such as the Energy Star Portfolio Manager can be used to collect data for energy, water, and waste in one central location.

DESKTOP WATER ASSESSMENT

It is recommended that this exercise is completed using the Desktop Water Assessment Template or a similar online resource (Energy Star Portfolio Manager)

The desktop water assessment uses invoices and billing data to better understand the financial impact of water consumption and opportunities for reduction.

STEP 1

- [ ] Download the Desktop Water Assessment template
- [ ] Gather water bills from at least 1 year (check with your utility providers to see if you can access this data online)
    - If available, sign up for an online account with your water utility provider
    - If using reservoir water, install a wireless water meter to monitor usage
- [ ] Enter your historical data into the spreadsheet
- [ ] Track your monthly, quarterly, and/or annual water costs and/or consumption, if metered

STEP 2

- [ ] Analyze water consumption compared to contributing factors such as occupancy rate, time of year, etc.
- [ ] Compare annual consumption rates, and chart progress towards your reduction goals

STEP 3

- [ ] Identify hotspots to evaluate in the walkthrough water audit
- [ ] Conduct an annual review of this data with your Sustainability Committee to see how your data is trending, and if you are reducing water consumption

WALKTHROUGH WATER AUDIT

The Walkthrough Water Audit examines the flow rates and water efficiency of water fixtures. It is recommended that efforts are focused on hotspots identified in the Desktop Water Assessment.

STEP 1: TAKE INVENTORY

- [ ] Locate your main water meters
- [ ] Locate all sub water meters*
- [ ] Create a list of all water fixtures

STEP 2: AUDIT WATER FIXTURES

For each fixture:

- [ ] Identify and record water-savings fixtures (e.g. flow restrictor, faucet aerator)
- [ ] Fixture flow rates
    - Most equipment will have labels or manuals that provide flow rates
    - If flow rate data is not provided, calculate the flow rate**
- [ ] Fixture specific requirements and efficiencies
    - Requires hot or cold water
    - Requires treated, filtered, or recycled water
    - Used for single-pass cooling or specialized equipment (e.g. evaporative cooling towers, boilers)
    - The number of heads on the irrigation system, and the flow rates of each fixture connected to the system

STEP 3:

- [ ] Make a note of efficiency and conservation measures identified during the audit and add them to your action plan

** Sub water meters are typically installed for all specialized equipment, such as cooling towers, boilers, irrigation systems, and refrigeration units. Submetering has risen in popularity over the last decade for the purpose of significantly improving water and energy efficiency, as well as detecting leaks and equipment issues. We recommend installing sub meters if you have not already done so. The Canada Utility Solutions Submetering is a great place to start.*

*** If a flow rate is not provided, take a timer and a bucket with a known volume (e.g. 1 liter), to test and calculate liters per minute. To calculate flow rate in cubic meters per hour, first multiply the liters per minute by 60 to find your liters per hour. Then estimate the number of hours water-consuming equipment is in use and multiply the hours of operation by liters per hour. Lastly, divide by 1,000 to get cubic meters per hour.*

$$\text{Cubic meters per hour} = \frac{\text{Hours of operation} \times \text{Liter per minute} \times 60}{1000}$$

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Examples & Case Studies

- Sunshine Coast Tourism Water Saving Tips

Online Tool / Resource

- Energy Star Portfolio Manager

- WWF Water Risk Assessment

Additional Guidance

- Canada Utility Solutions Submetering

Worksheets & Templates

- Desktop Water Assessment Template

BACK TO EXERCISE CATALOGUE

Photo Credit: Destination Vancouver/Kindred & Scout

DESKTOP WASTE ASSESSMENT & WASTE AUDIT

A baseline measurement of waste production can be established by reviewing invoice data from contracted waste haulers and disposal services on a month-to-month or annual basis. Invoice data from these providers can be used to populate the Waste Tracker Template and be used as a guide for the waste audit. A waste audit is a physical inspection of the effectiveness of your waste diversion efforts.

Tools such as the Energy Star Portfolio Manager can be used to collect data for energy, water, and waste in one central location.

DESKTOP WASTE ASSESSMENT

It is recommended that the desktop assessment exercise is completed using the Desktop Waste Assessment Template or an online platform (Energy Star Portfolio Manager).

The desktop waste assessment uses invoices and billing data to better understand the financial impact of waste generation and opportunities for reduction or diversion.

STEP 1

- [ ] Download the Desktop Waste Assessment Template
- [ ] Gather waste hauling bills from at least 1 year (trash, recycling, compost, hazardous waste, etc.)
    - Check with your hauling providers to see if you can access this data online for downloading
    - If data is available, sort waste bills by category or department (e.g. operations, kitchen etc.) If not, simply use total annual consumption

STEP 2

- [ ] Populate the waste assessment spreadsheet using billing data
- [ ] Look for trends such as areas of operation with year-round high waste disposal costs or high rates of non-diverted waste (to landfill or incinerator)
- [ ] Analyze your waste production compared to contributing factors such as weather conditions, occupancy rates, waste diversion services available, etc.

STEP 3

- [ ] Track annual waste production and chart progress towards reduction goals
- [ ] Conduct an annual review of this data with your Sustainability Committee to see how your data is trending and if you are reducing waste production

PHYSICAL WASTE AUDIT

The Physical Waste Audit examines the effectiveness of waste disposal streams to ensure that waste generated is properly sorted and disposed of. It is recommended that the physical waste audit is completed using the Waste Audit Data Collection Sheet.

IMPORTANT FIRST STEPS

- [ ] Brainstorm how information from the audit will be used
- [ ] Coordinate a time and area to perform the waste audit
- [ ] Check with your local government or waste hauler to find information on your waste and recycling bylaws
- [ ] Recruit employees as waste audit volunteers
- [ ] Notify custodial staff
- [ ] Determine how waste will be disposed of/diverted at the end of the audit
- [ ] Define waste streams: garbage, recycling, composting, etc.
- [ ] Print Waste Audit Data Collection Sheets

Pro Tip:
Use clear bags for garbage disposal leading up to the audit so bag contents can be identified before opening

RECOMMENDED GEAR & EQUIPMENT

- [ ] Protective coveralls and clothing for each participant
- [ ] Latex/nitrile gloves for each participant
- [ ] Puncture proof gloves
- [ ] Clear goggles or safety glasses
- [ ] First aid kit and attendant
- [ ] Signed bins for each sorting category
- [ ] Recycling bags, clear bags, garbage bags for sorting (note volume of each)
- [ ] Tarp(s)
- [ ] Weigh Scale
- [ ] Clipboards/pen
- [ ] Waste audit data sheets and sorting list
- [ ] Waste type criteria and a list of examples for each type
- [ ] Brooms/mops for cleanup
- [ ] Camera to document the audit process

WASTE AUDIT SET-UP

- [ ] Lay out tarp(s) and set up bins with sorting category signs
- [ ] Note the bin volumes or line bins with clear bags (with known volume)
    - Set up any additional signage for bins
- [ ] Set up area signs to identify waste streams for each tarp
- [ ] Move garbage to respective areas on the tarps
- [ ] Collect data on waste before auditing: number of bags, origin (if applicable) and each waste stream that will be sorted for
- [ ] Record the empty weights of each bin
    - You will subtract the empty bin weight from your total weights at the end of your audit

PERFORMING THE WASTE AUDIT

- [ ] All participants arrive and put on protective gear
- [ ] Explain purpose and procedure to all participants
- [ ] Have volunteers sort waste into categories using one of the following methods
    - Empty bags onto a designated tarp and have all volunteers sort waste
    - Or, separate volunteers into small teams and each team sorts through one bag, or waste stream, at a time
- [ ] Separate waste by category and place it in the corresponding bin
    - Identify if mistakes have been made (items in the wrong bin)
- [ ] Weigh each bin and estimate volume
- [ ] Record results on your waste audit data collection sheet
- [ ] Take photos of each category
- [ ] Repeat the audit process for each waste stream (i.e. garbage, recycling, compost, etc.)
- [ ] Take photos of complete audit results

Safety Tip

Tell participants not to blindly reach their hands into garbage bags. Make sure you can see what you are reaching for.

CLEAN UP

- [ ] Dispose or divert sorted waste as appropriate
- [ ] Dispose of all used coveralls, shoe covers, and gloves
    - Collect aprons in a bag for laundry (if applicable)
- [ ] Dispose of any un-audited bags of garbage
- [ ] Clean tarps and surrounding area

For a downloadable or printable version of these instructions see: How to Conduct A Waste Audit.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Examples & Case Studies

- University of the Fraser Valley Waste Audit
- How to Reduce Waste at Work

Online Tools & Resources

- How to Conduct a Waste Audit
- Better Table - Food Waste Reduction Program
- Commercial Composter Directory

Certification Opportunity

- Zero Waste Canada

Worksheets & Templates

- Desktop Waste Assessment Template
- Waste Audit Data Collection Sheet

BACK TO EXERCISE CATALOGUE

Photo Credit: Destination BC/Andrew Strain

PARKING AUDIT

A parking audit provides valuable insight into the amount of parking available in an area, how that parking is being utilized, and if demand is being exceeded. This audit can also be useful to identify how much parking space your business needs and if illegal parking is occurring. The results can be used to better understand development needs, advocate for targeted improvements, and highlight opportunities for alternative transportation methods. If you have not already completed a transportation inventory, review the guidance included in the Beginner - Transportation Inventory exercise.

PARKING AUDIT INSTRUCTIONS & GUIDANCE

It is recommended that this exercise is completed using the Parking Audit Data Collection Sheet. For more detailed instructions, refer to the How to Do a Parking Study and Sample Project: Arlington, MA resource.

STEP 1: PREPARATION

- [ ] Determine your audit area boundary. This may include public and/or private parking, on or off-street parking, spillover parking, etc.
    - Note the official documented vehicle capacity of your audit area
    - Note no-parking zones in the audit area such as fire lanes, trash receptacles, snow disposal sites, and drop off lanes
- [ ] Decide an appropriate date and time to perform the audit
    - Note whether the audit date is a weekday, weekend, or corresponds with an event or holiday
- [ ] Create, print, and distribute data collection sheets to parking audit volunteers
    - List information for surveyors to record such as vehicle counts, province/state of private vehicles, illegally parked vehicles, double parking, etc.
- [ ] Create a route that all surveyors will follow while performing the audit
- [ ] Communicate parking audit instructions and any additional information to the survey team
    - If multiple people are performing the audit, ensure that they begin and end in the same location
    - Note any additional information relevant to the audit prior to each counting (e.g. inclement weather, events, accidents)

Photo Credit: Destination Vancouver/Sea to Sky Gondola/Paul Bride

STEP 2: PERFORM THE AUDIT

- [ ] Clearly mark the date and time as well as the audit route on the data collection sheet before each round of surveying
    - Once marked, have surveyors begin counting vehicles and recording their findings on the data collection sheet
    - Repeat every hour or two, walking in the same direction each time
    - Optionally, note the license plate of the first several vehicles and record the number of hours, or audit laps, they remained parked
    - Create a spreadsheet and input the data from the parking audit data collection sheets

STEP 3: ANALYZE THE DATA

- [ ] Analyze the results compared to contributing factors such as events, holidays, accidents or weather conditions
    - If the parking area was full, compare the number of vehicles counted to the documented lot capacity
- [ ] Conduct an annual review of the parking audit results with your Sustainability Committee to discuss data trends and opportunities for private vehicle reduction

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Examples & Case Studies

- How to Do a Parking Study and Sample Project: Arlington, MA
- Sample Boundary Map - Fergies

Blogs & News Stories

- Parking Challenges during the Holiday Season

Worksheets & Templates

- Parking Audit Data Collection Sheet

BACK TO EXERCISE CATALOGUE

PURCHASING ANALYSIS

Evaluate the sustainability of your suppliers and vendors by assessing sustainability indicators, location, and social value.

Given the nature of the tourism industry's large and wide supply chain, sourcing both more sustainable and local products has the potential to mitigate negative environmental impacts. For more detailed guidance, see the Buy Social Canada: Guide to Social Procurement.

OVERVIEW

When conducting a purchasing analysis, there are three key factors to consider for each supplier:

1. Location
2. Community Groups
3. Sustainability Indicators (certifications, awards, etc.)

While each business will prioritize these factors differently, it's typically better to prioritize locally sourced goods over those that are sustainably certified, but come from farther away. Purchasing locally reduces carbon footprint and keeps dollars within the local economy. Whenever possible, source from locally owned, AND sustainable businesses!

ASSESS YOUR VENDORS

The vendor assessment is the first exercise performed to analyze purchasing decisions on a per department or service offering basis. The results of this exercise can be used to prioritize purchasing more locally and sustainably within each department.

STEP 1: GATHER INTERNAL DATA

- [ ] Ask your financial administrator to collate a spreadsheet of your suppliers/vendors, including how much you spend with them annually
- [ ] Sort the spreadsheet by amount spent with each supplier
- [ ] Identify and highlight the suppliers that account for 80% of your total annual spending
- [ ] Create a shortlist of primary suppliers

STEP 2: ASSESS YOUR VENDORS

For each shortlisted supplier, label each with the following:

- [ ] Distance (km) or relation (local, provincial, national, international) to your place of business
- [ ] Community groups (Certified Aboriginal Business, Women Entrepreneurs BC, Minority Business Enterprises, etc.)
- [ ] Sustainability awards or achievements
- [ ] Third party certifications

Common Sustainability Certifications, Achievements & Community Groups

- EnergyStar - Energy efficient equipment and appliances
- WaterSense - Water conserving fixtures and appliances
- Certified Organic and Fair Trade - Primarily food and/or textiles
- Ocean Wise - Seafood sellers and harvesters
- Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) - Paper and forest products
- LEED Certified - Buildings/venues
- Carbon Neutral - Businesses and products can be Carbon Neutral certified through a range of carbon offset providers. Look for Gold Standard offsets.
- GreenStep Sustainable Tourism Certified - Tourism businesses that you may wish to partner with can become Sustainable Tourism Certified
- B Corp Certified - Most businesses can become Certified B Corporations
- Certified Aboriginal Businesses - 51% or more Aboriginal ownership and control
- The Original Original Accreditation - Authentic Indigenous businesses
- CAMSC Certification - Aboriginal and minority owned businesses
- Rainbow Registered - Nationally accredited for 2SLGBTQI+ friendly businesses and organizations
- WBE - Women owned and led businesses

STEP 3: LEARN MORE

If information about a supplier's location or sustainability performance is not provided, send a procurement email asking five simple questions:

- [ ] Where is your business headquartered?
- [ ] Do you have any green or sustainable certifications?
- [ ] How will you help my company reduce waste, energy, carbon, or water?
- [ ] Do you have any other environmental, social, or cultural practices that you want us to know about?

AUDIT YOUR PURCHASING

After completing the Assess Your Vendors exercise, use the completed spreadsheet to evaluate your company's purchasing practices.

STEP 4: ANALYZE PURCHASING PRACTICES

Looking at your list of top vendors, and with your Sustainability Committee if possible, consider these questions:

- [ ] Do you buy a lot of disposables or make an effort to stay away from single-use products?
- [ ] Do you look for gently used products before buying new when practical?
- [ ] Do you buy quality items that last longer and can be repaired or donated instead of throwing in the trash?
- [ ] Do you purchase products that can be recycled at the end of their useful life?

STEP 5: PLAN FOR IMPROVEMENT

With your Sustainability Committee, think about what percentage of your purchasing meets one or more of the considerations above. How realistic is it for you to improve this metric by 10%, 20%, 30% in the next 1-3 years? Unless you're in a long-term contract with these suppliers and vendors, identify what options are available that are:

- More local - For example, if you're purchasing office supplies from a big box supplier, is there a locally or provincially owned option that will give you similar service and selection?
- Sustainability certified - For example, are you purchasing coffee for your staff or guests? Check with your supplier to find out if they offer a Fair Trade option. If not, check with their competition.
- Reducing waste - For example, do you offer your employees or guests polystyrene or paper cups? If so, ban these and swap for reusable water bottles and coffee mugs. Also, try setting up a bin or area for a local non-profit to pick up used goods that still have some life in them.

Do it now. Write a to-do list of five things you are going to change about your purchasing, who will be responsible, and when it is to be done. Add these to your action plan and set a reminder in 1 month to check-in. Have these changes been made? Keep them on the agenda until they are done.

STEP 6: CREATE A SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING POLICY

Your policy can be one page, or multiple pages, but should have these sections at a minimum:

- Title
- Brief statement of why this is important to your business
- Purchasing criteria to consider, in order of importance to your business. If the five R's (refuse, reuse, reduce, repurpose, recycle) are the most important to you, put these first. If you want to reduce your carbon footprint, looking for local or carbon neutral products should be the first criteria
- List of preferred vendors for your most commonly purchased products/services

NEXT STEPS

Plan to complete a purchasing analysis each year, and continue to set new goals and identify new actions to improve your sustainable purchasing activities and performance over time. Be sure to keep your sustainability action plan updated!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Examples & Case Studies

- Ecologyst
- Marriott International Serve 360 Report: 'Responsible Sourcing'

Online Tools & Resources

- How Are We Local Impact Assessment
- Join the BC Buy Local Campaign

Additional Guidance

- Sustainable Purchasing Demystified
- Buy Social Canada: A Guide to Social Procurement

Certification Opportunity

- Buy Social Canada: Certified Social Enterprises

BACK TO EXERCISE CATALOGUE


Photo Credit: Tourism Whistler/Justa Jeskova

ECOSYSTEM MAPPING

Follow the guidance included below in a checklist of best-practice actions to reduce environmental impact to trails and become more aware of how recreation areas are managed.

For trail developers, collect important early stage environmental information for new trail projects using the Shuswap Trail Environment Screening Tool (TEST). TEST is a fillable report form designed to collect important early stage environmental information about new trail projects, including building several key maps and endangered species lists.

While many businesses may not be responsible for the implementation or development of new trail projects, there are many ways they can get involved to help measure and monitor their impact.

ACTION YOU CAN TAKE RIGHT NOW:

- Monitor and report any invasive species (BC Report Invasives mobile app)
- Collect and log trash and litter
- Track and report trail maintenance/volunteer hours
- Abide by wildlife viewing best practices (Be Bear Aware; Wild Safe BC, Be Whale Wise)
- Practice Leave No Trace and avoid illegally built trails
- Follow best practices for outdoor recreation safety (BC Adventure Smart)

BECOME MORE INFORMED

(Please note that this is not a complete or exhaustive list)

WHAT TYPE OF LAND AM I RECREATING ON?

- Private Land: Owned by individuals, corporations, or organizations, and is subject to private property rights and regulations.
- Crown Land: Also known as public land, it is owned by the government (federal or provincial) and managed for various purposes, including conservation, resource extraction, and public use.
- Crown Leases: Land leased from the government for specific purposes such as tourism, agriculture, forestry, mining, or commercial development.
- Indigenous Land: Lands owned and managed by Indigenous peoples, often with special legal and cultural considerations, including reserves, treaty lands, and traditional territories.
- National Parks: Protected areas managed by Parks Canada to conserve natural landscapes and provide recreational opportunities while maintaining ecological integrity.
- Provincial Parks: Similar to national parks but managed by provincial or territorial governments, focusing on preserving local natural and cultural heritage.

- Municipal Land: Land owned and managed by local governments, used for public infrastructure, parks, recreation, and other community purposes.
- Conservation Easements: Private lands where landowners have voluntarily restricted development rights to protect the land's natural or cultural values, often in partnership with conservation organizations.

WHO ARE THE DESIGNATED LAND MANAGERS AND SUPPORTING PARTNERS FOR THE RECREATION AREA?

- Private Ownership Groups: Individuals, families, or corporations who own and manage land for recreational activities. Private ownership of recreational land can include resorts, lodges, private campsites, and recreational facilities.
- Joint Volunteer Group Committee: Collaborative efforts involving volunteers who form committees to manage and oversee recreational areas. These groups might coordinate maintenance, events, and community engagement. They can be involved in managing trails, parks, and community centers.
- Associations, Alliances, and Clubs: Non-profit organizations formed to advocate for specific recreational interests and manage related areas. Examples include hiking clubs, ATV associations, birdwatching alliances, and snowmobile clubs. These groups often work in partnership with government agencies to maintain and promote recreational sites.
- Municipal Recreation Departments: Local government bodies responsible for managing recreational facilities, parks, and public spaces within a municipality. They organize events, maintain facilities, and provide recreational opportunities for residents.
- Provincial or Territorial Recreation Agencies: Government agencies at the provincial or territorial level that manage and oversee recreational activities and facilities on a broader scale. They may operate parks, trails, and camping sites and promote outdoor activities.
- National Park Authorities: Government agencies, such as Parks Canada, responsible for managing and protecting national parks for both recreational and conservation purposes. They offer visitor services, maintain trails, and regulate park activities.
- Conservation Organizations: Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) focused on conservation and recreation, often managing land for both purposes. They might own and operate nature reserves, wildlife sanctuaries, and natural areas open for recreation.
- Indigenous Land Managers: Indigenous communities and organizations that manage their traditional territories for both cultural and recreational purposes. Indigenous land management often integrates traditional knowledge and practices.
- Public-Private Partnerships (P3s): Collaborations between government entities and private companies to manage and develop recreational facilities. P3s can result in the construction and management of resorts, golf courses, and other recreational complexes.
- Land Trusts: Non-profit organizations that acquire, protect, and manage land for various conservation and recreational purposes. Land trusts often work to ensure public access to and sustainable use of the land.

- Regional Recreation Commissions: Multi-municipal bodies responsible for coordinating recreational services and facilities across a region. They might oversee sports complexes, aquatic centers, and other community facilities.
- Educational Institutions: Schools, colleges, and universities that own and manage land for educational and recreational purposes. Campuses often provide opportunities for outdoor activities and sports.

WHAT ARE MY IMPACTS FROM RECREATING ON THE LAND?

- Habitat Damage: Trampling or disturbing sensitive ecosystems, which can harm plant and animal species in the area.
- Noise Pollution: Loud activities or machinery that disrupt the natural peace and quiet of the environment.
- Water Pollution: Contaminating water sources through activities like improper waste disposal or motorized watercraft.
- Invasive Species Spread: Unintentionally introducing non-native species that can outcompete or harm local flora and fauna.
- Overcrowding/Trail degradation: Excessive use of recreational areas, leading to congestion and strain on natural resources.
- Resource Depletion: Overharvesting or overusing natural resources, such as firewood or edible plants.
- Visual Impact: Altering the visual aesthetics of natural landscapes through stacked stones, infrastructure, graffiti, or other visual pollution.
- Trail Damage: Creating unofficial trails or shortcuts that erode the landscape and harm vegetation.
- Human-Wildlife Conflict: Interactions with wildlife that can lead to dangerous situations for both humans and animals.
- Cultural Site Disturbance: Disrupting or damaging culturally significant sites or artifacts.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Online Tools & Resources

- iMapBC (click add layers on the left hand sidebar)
- Parcel Map BC

TEST Examples & Case Studies

- Eagle Pass Mountain TEST Form
- Eagle Pass TEST Map

TEST Online Tools & Resources

- Trail Environmental Screening Tool
- TEST Short Form

TEST Additional Guidance

- Environmental Mitigation Matrix Table

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Part 3: Plan for Action

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR GOAL SETTING

This exercise is intended to be completed after Step 3 - Exercise Part 1: Envision a Sustainable Future in the VCM Sustainability Playbook to help brainstorm and further refine goal areas. The outcome of this exercise is to develop goal areas that focus the scope of the action plan and connect the outcomes of actions to their broader social, environmental and economic impacts.

In this exercise, your sustainability committee will use its strategic documents and the results of the visioning exercise to identify common sustainability themes. These themes will then be aligned to the baseline data already collected to create well defined goal areas for the sustainability action plan.

INSTRUCTIONS

Before beginning this exercise, ensure that you have the following items:

- Baseline data
- Vision exercise results (sticky notes, digital workboard, etc.)
- Strategic documents that include goals, targets, or actions related to sustainability

STEP 1: REVIEW AND DEFINE ALIGNMENT

Begin the goal setting exercise by reviewing the gathered strategic documents and the results from the vision exercise.

Compare the visions and the strategic documents looking for alignment between goals (broad areas of focus), targets (specific objectives), and actions (the steps, partnerships, and actions to achieve a goal or target). As you identify alignment, create themes or clusters of topics that include the details of each aligned item. If a vision or strategic document does not have alignment, create a new theme or cluster topic.

STEP 2: DEFINE COMMON GOALS

Once your committee has defined several themes or clusters of topics with aligned actions, initiatives, and objectives, identify the common goal that connects them. For example, if a vision included "no single-use plastic in the guest experience" and a strategic document included information about reducing your environmental footprint, the common goal may be Zero Waste.

Try to come up with a common goal for each theme or cluster of topics.

STEP 3: ALIGN WITH BASELINE DATA

After identifying the common goal of each cluster, compare these goals to the baseline data collected. Map out how the baseline data collected (or not collected) aligns with the goal area.

As you go through this exercise, you are likely to encounter 1 of 3 scenarios:

- Scenario 1: Sustainability goals for which you already collect baseline data
- Scenario 2: Sustainability goals for which you still need to collect baseline data
- Scenario 3: Baseline data that you already collect, but is not connected to a sustainability goal

As your sustainability committee works to identify alignment for each of these areas, take note of any goal areas identified to be used in your action plan tracker.

Example - Goal Setting Process

Scenario 1: Lead with the baseline measurement and look for strategic documents or policies that align

Measurement: We collect and track fuel consumption (by litres or cost)

↓

Vision: Our sustainability vision is to operate with minimal harm to the environment

↓

Goal Area: Net Zero Carbon

Scenario 2: Lead with strategic documents or policies, and look for aligned measurements that are desired or have been completed

Mission: We passionately preserve and share our region's cultural heritage

↓

Measurement: We do not have a measurement for cultural heritage but want to survey our residents about their understanding of the local culture

↓

Goal Area: Sustainability Education

Scenario 3: Lead with baseline measurements, and identify where your business wants to improve (based on the vision exercise)

Measurement: We monitor the savings from our bottle collection and recycling program

↓

Strategy: We do not have a strategy for waste diversion but understand we can continue to improve with programs for composting, reusing, reducing, and avoiding.

↓

Goal Area: Zero Waste

Note — This exercise can be easier said than done! One best practice is to select goal areas that correspond to each pillar of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council sustainability framework.

If your team gets stuck brainstorming goals, review your Sustainable Tourism Assessment results, visit the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) or try using the SDG Compass tool to understand how individual actions, achievements, and milestones contribute to broader sustainable development.

Once complete, compare your drafted goal areas to any strategic initiatives that already exist for your business. Finally, enter your goal areas into the first column of the Sustainability Action Plan template.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Examples & Case Studies

- Tourism Chilliwack Friends Working Together Plan
- Grouse Mountain
- Capilano Suspension Bridge Park

Online Tools & Resources

- SDG Compass

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Photo Credit: Destination Vancouver/Kindred & Scout

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR TARGET SETTING

SMART targets are part of the VCM Sustainability goal-setting framework. A SMART target is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timebound. SMART targets help to set clear and well-defined objectives that can be used for sustainability reporting as well as to combat greenwashing. For more information on setting SMART Targets, see Step 3 of the VCM Playbook.

When brainstorming targets for each goal area, ensure that each includes:

- Measurable Indicators
- Completion Dates
- Action Oriented Language

EXAMPLES OF SMART TARGETS

Targets become SMART when you can measure the impact of taking various actions:

Goal Area: Zero Waste
Target: Establish a waste diversion program by 2025.
SMART Target: Divert 90% of waste produced from the landfill by 2025.

Goal Area: Sustainability Management
Target: Implement a sustainable purchasing policy by 2030.
SMART Target: Purchase 75% of goods and services from local suppliers by 2030.

Goal Area: Equity and Inclusion
Target: Complete a sustainability assessment by 2027.
SMART Target: Improve the accessibility of our company's website and operating site achieving a score of 80% or higher on an accessibility audit by 2027.

Goal Area: Cultural Heritage
Target: Collaborate with First Nations to host an open to the public event.
SMART Target: 250 residents and/or visitors attended a local, open to the public First Nations ceremony by 2024.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Examples & Case Studies

- Wyndham Sustainability Goals & Targets (page 12)

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ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR ACTION PLANNING

This supplementary support is intended to be completed after the goal setting and visioning exercises in the VCM Sustainability Playbook. However, if your Sustainability Committee is struggling to brainstorm goals and targets, your team can also begin by identifying a few sustainability actions that align with interests or needs of your business.

KEY QUESTIONS TO SUPPORT BRAINSTORMING ACTIONS

When brainstorming actions to achieve your targets, each business will need to customize their action plan based on their previous experience, understanding of the current situation, and capacity to take action. The following questions and suggested areas of action are intended to help you think holistically about the steps needed to achieve your goals.

For each target, present the following questions to your Sustainability Committee.

> Note — The order of questions presented does not necessarily reflect the order in which actions should be implemented.

Do you know your starting point? Assess your baseline with:

- Inventories
- Audits
- Assessments

What are others doing? Perform best practice research to identify:

- Existing standards
- New technology / approaches
- Funding opportunities

How do we take action? Outline key steps to projects such as:

- Team engagement
- Implementation
- Responsible disposal

Did our action have the desired effect? Include monitoring and reporting actions such as:

- Re-assessing baselines
- Calculating cost savings
- Sharing progress with guests and staff

Pro Tip:
The language used to describe actions can vary depending on the experience and capacity of your sustainability committee. Some businesses may opt for a high-level description of their actions while others may prefer a more detailed approach. Both approaches are acceptable as long as every member of the committee understands the necessary tasks based on the action's description.

Once you have several actions under each goal, prioritize them based upon:

- How important is the action to achieving your goal?
- How simple is it to implement this action? Adding some quick wins that you can tackle right away will help to build momentum.
- How much will it cost and do you have it in the budget this year, or will it have to wait?

To help prioritize, we recommend identifying if the action is short (1-12 months), medium (1-2 years), or long term (3+ years), based on your responses to the above questions, and the reality/ability to achieve each action within these timeframes.

Remember, you can add more actions in the future if needed!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Examples & Case Studies

- VCM Action Plan Flat Sheet

Additional Guidance

- How to Create A Sustainability Action Plan

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Photo Credit: Destination BC/Andrew Strain

Part 4: Share Your Sustainability Story

SHARE WITH YOUR TEAM

As you build momentum in your sustainability journey, it is highly recommended that you share ongoing initiatives, achieved milestones, and progress updates, from your sustainability action plan with your team. There is mounting research about employees' desire to work with values-aligned employers, and how engaging and educating team members around your sustainability efforts can help to improve their satisfaction, retention, and even productivity. Creating buy-in at all levels of the business establishes transparency and trust allowing you to market initiatives without fear of greenwashing.

Review and implement the tips below to communicate your sustainability actions and initiatives, and lead as a values-aligned employer.

ENGAGEMENT TIPS & INTERNAL COMMUNICATION ACTIONS

- [ ] Address community challenges in daily huddles and provide tips on how front-line staff can share that information with guests (e.g. how to communicate on water restrictions, a local park being shut down, or parking restrictions for an event)
- [ ] Regularly share support resources and how staff members can access them
- [ ] Ask staff members to share their observations from how guests respond to or adhere to sustainability initiatives
- [ ] Assign a person(s) responsible for collecting the data necessary to measure your progress towards your targets for each goal
- [ ] Post details of your action plan and opportunities for engagement in staff gathering areas (back of house, offices, lunchrooms, etc.) and to your intranet
- [ ] Host a team event or celebration
    - Engage in sustainability-related community events and volunteer opportunities to continue building support, awareness, and engagement around sustainability
    - Hold a sustainability-themed team event around Earth Day, Tourism Week, or any day that works for you and your team
    - Hold a fun “Green Department Challenge” and then host a celebration
    - Organize a volunteer day

MANAGEMENT TIPS & INTERNAL COMMUNICATION ACTIONS

- [ ] Provide training on sustainability policies and progress to all existing staff
- [ ] Add a "Sustainability Action Plan Status Update" to your weekly or monthly team meeting
- [ ] Add "Sustainability Action Plan Report" to your quarterly or annual reports and/or meeting agendas
- [ ] Host a monthly meeting to discuss quarterly or annual measurements and reporting of results
- [ ] Write a paragraph to include in job postings and identify elements related to sustainability that can be included in job descriptions
- [ ] Add a question or two related to a prospective employee's interest in sustainability to your job interviews
- [ ] Update your employee handbook and onboarding process to ensure that any policies or practices related to sustainability are included
- [ ] Publish an annual or quarterly sustainability report that includes the progress made towards your sustainability goals and any new initiatives

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Examples & Case Studies

- Pursuit Promise to Place
- Up the Creek Backpackers Lodge
- Black Rock Oceanfront Resort
- Ziptrek Ecotours

Blogs & News Stories

- Five Steps to Finding and Sharing Your Unique Sustainability Story

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SHARE WITH YOUR GUESTS

Sharing sustainability with guests is crucial as it empowers them to make environmentally and socially responsible choices, fostering a collective effort to preserve natural and cultural heritage for future generations. Stories of how your actions are positively impacting the environment, your community, your team, and guest experience also make for excellent marketing content.

Review and implement the tips below to transform your sustainability stories into marketing content that can help attract, retain, and educate guests.

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION ACTIONS

- [ ] Create a sustainability page on your website, detailing your sustainability related mission, goals, policies, and initiatives
- [ ] Educate guests on sustainability initiatives and how they can get involved
- [ ] Add signage to your property to inform visitors that your experience is accessible, or aligned to other sustainability best practices
- [ ] Publish an annual or quarterly sustainability report that includes the progress made towards your sustainability goals and any new initiatives
- [ ] Take a sustainability pledge (see Make a Public Commitment) and share this on social media and your webpage
- [ ] Integrate sustainability into outbound communications and regular marketing activities such as websites, newsletters, social media, advertising
- [ ] Post details of your sustainability journey and opportunities for engagement, such as a QR code to a guest survey, in guest areas (e.g. elevators, cafes, spa)
- [ ] Create opportunities to involve guests in your sustainability initiatives
- [ ] Pursue awards or certification to have your sustainability achievements formally recognized
- [ ] Host events that celebrate and recognize sustainability achievements and excellence
    - Engage in sustainability-related community events and volunteer opportunities to continue building support, awareness, and engagement around sustainability
    - Hold a sustainability-themed team event around Earth Day, Tourism Week, or any day that works for you and your team.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Examples & Case Studies

- Siwash Lake Resort Sustainability
- Huntington Manor Green Initiatives
- Whistler Changemakers Video Series

Blogs & News Stories

- Telling Your Green Story to Attract More Guests
- Values Based Marketing: How to Attract Guests Through Sustainability
- Vogue Magazine: How Victoria, B.C. Became a Sustainable Travel Hotspot

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MAKE A PUBLIC COMMITMENT

A public commitment is an important part of telling a sustainability story. Not only does making a public commitment serve as a clear starting point for marketing and sharing, but it also simultaneously establishes transparency, trust and accountability by aligning to a verified set of sustainability standards. Potential benefits include attracting and retaining sustainability-conscious customers as well as improving buy-in for sustainable action by employees.

Demonstrate your commitment to your sustainability goals by signing onto one of the suggested free sustainability commitments listed below.

GLASGOW DECLARATION

Glasgow Declaration
Climate Action in Tourism

The Glasgow Declaration is a commitment to a decade of sustainable tourism climate action facilitated by the One Planet network and United Nations Environment Programme.

The purpose of the Glasgow Declaration is to accelerate climate action in tourism and to secure strong actions and commitment to support the global goals to halve emissions over the next decade and reach Net Zero emissions as soon as possible before 2050.

To become a signatory of the Glasgow Declaration businesses must submit an application outlining their individual commitment to climate action and agreement with the Glasgow commitments.

Click here to see the community of businesses and destinations who are signatories to the Glasgow Declaration.

Photo Credit: Destination BC/Heath Moffatt

SME CLIMATE COMMITMENT

The SME Climate Commitment is a recognition for businesses that climate change poses a threat to the economy, nature and society at large. The first step to taking the commitment is to measure your company's carbon footprint using their free carbon footprint calculator. Once a baseline measurement has been made, businesses must publicly commit to the following:

- Halving emissions before 2030
- Cutting emissions to zero before 2050
- Sharing progress on a yearly basis

By signing the commitment, businesses and destinations can align with the United Nations Race to Zero campaign and join other governments, businesses, cities, regions, and universities around the world with the same mission.

Click here to see the community of businesses who are signatories to the SME Climate Commitment.

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM 2030 PLEDGE

The Sustainable Tourism 2030 Pledge is a commitment to improve the sustainability performance of your tourism business or destination between now and 2030. The purpose of the Sustainable Tourism 2030 Pledge is to help tourism businesses and destinations measure and improve their sustainability performance.

There are three steps to sign the Sustainable Tourism 2030 Pledge.

1. Make a public commitment to measure and improve your sustainability performance between now and 2030
2. Submit your published statement for verification to become a signatory
3. Take the GreenStep Sustainable Tourism assessment within 12 months

Click here to see the community of businesses and destinations who are signatories to the Sustainable Tourism 2030 Pledge.

TOURISM DECLARES

Tourism Declares exists to enable everyone in tourism to implement the Climate Action Plans needed to halve sector emissions by 2030.

To join Tourism Declares, businesses and destinations need to make a public declaration aligning to the Tourism Declares Climate Emergency Initiative on their website or blog - or sign the Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism.

Click here to see the community of businesses and destinations who have made the climate emergency declaration.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Examples & Case Studies

- Sunshine Coast Tourism Sustainability Commitment

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Photo Credit: Destination Vancouver/Kindred & Scout

REPORT ON PROGRESS

A sustainability report is a comprehensive document that outlines a company's environmental, social, and economic impacts, practices, and initiatives, demonstrating their commitment to sustainable and responsible business practices. The sustainability report template provided is suitable for both internal and external use. The sections provided in this template represent the minimum recommended reporting information, and extra sections or details should be added as needed.

For guidance on creating a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) or Carbon Footprint report, refer to the GHG Protocol Reporting Template.

TIPS FOR WRITING A SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

- [ ] Include a welcome statement with a brief history of your business
- [ ] Specify the date range for which the report applies
- [ ] Present your sustainability goals and targets
- [ ] Define key terminology
- [ ] Identify if goals and targets are specific to certain departments or branches of your business
- [ ] List the performance indicators your business is measuring to assess sustainability and provide information on the frequency they are assessed
- [ ] Include comparisons to baseline measurements to showcase progress
- [ ] Include stories of success and achievements
- [ ] Include stories of challenges or setbacks
- [ ] Highlight any omissions, assumptions, or changes from previous reports or standards
- [ ] Share a contact where readers can find more information

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Worksheets & Templates

- Sustainability Report Template
- GHG Protocol Reporting Template

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APPLY FOR AWARDS

Applying for awards is a great way for you and your team to take a step back and appreciate how far you've come. There are various awards out there that include sustainability-related categories. Look for local awards from the local Chamber of Commerce, DMOs, and Industry Associations as well as those listed in the additional resources.

TIPS FOR AWARD APPLICATIONS

- [ ] Keep records of your business's history and baseline performance
    - Understanding the roots of your business will help you in sharing your accomplishments and communicating your story
    - Baseline measurements for resource consumption serve as an important indicator of how far your business has progressed
- [ ] Maintain an active list of external businesses that you collaborate with and/or programs you participate in
- [ ] Track contributions to your community such as volunteer hours, monetary contributions, and in-kind donations
- [ ] Document all consulting services your business has leveraged including accessibility, risk mitigation, natural resource management, land planning, etc.
- [ ] Highlight both internal and external communication strategies that center on sustainability (sustainability reports, staff training programs, marketing materials, etc.)
- [ ] Document baseline measurements and track improvements towards your sustainability goals
    - Clearly communicate your goals for sustainability
    - Identify progress made towards targets
    - Record the actions taken to achieve your goals and their corresponding results such as reduced emissions or implementing a compost program and a percentage of waste diversion
    - Highlight initiatives and collaborative projects that your business is sponsoring or funding in relation to your sustainability goals
    - Address any missed targets or initiatives, and what your business is doing to improve

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Worksheets & Templates

- North Vancouver Chamber Business Excellence Awards - Sustainability: LifeSpace Gardens

Sustainability Awards

- BC Tourism Industry Awards
- BC Tourism & Hospitality Awards
- Canadian Tourism Awards
- Travel & Hospitality Awards
- BCEDA Community Project Award

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PURSUE CERTIFICATION

By following the guidance in the playbook and completing toolkit exercises, you have likely implemented important changes that align directly with several certification criteria. You may wish to explore having your business certified for a specific area of sustainability or holistically for the tourism industry. Prepare for sustainability certification by reviewing the provided tips to streamline the certification process before getting started.

TIPS FOR CERTIFICATION APPLICATIONS

- [ ] Begin compiling and organizing evidence for certification early as it can be a lengthy process
- [ ] Divide and conquer evidence collection and submission responsibilities
    - Delegate a person(s) responsible for collecting evidence for each criteria area based on team members' areas of expertise
    - Delegate a point person responsible for compiling all the information and presenting in a manner consistent with submission guidelines
- [ ] Ensure business practices (even as simple as 'no idling' or only purchasing recycled printing paper) are documented either in policies, signage, or online so they can be utilized as certification evidence
- [ ] Be aware of local, regional, provincial, or federal laws, policies, and regulations that may be applicable towards the certification
- [ ] Build a relationship with the certification agency for guidance on the certification process and to gain insight into the materials they are looking for
- [ ] If certified, create a marketing plan and formal press release to announce certification
- [ ] If certified, identify the requirements to maintain certification

Pro Tip:
Remember that as you compile evidence for a certification application, it's not done until it's documented.

Biosphere	BIOSPHERE
B Corp	Certified B Corporation

Buy Social Canada	buy social CANADA
GreenStep Sustainable Tourism	GreenStep Sustainable Tourism
ITAC	THE ORIGINAL ORIGINAL Accreditation Program
Living Wage Certified	living wage employer
Rick Hansen	Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification™
SBTi Net Zero	SCIENCE BASED TARGETS DRIVING AMBITIOUS CORPORATE CLIMATE ACTION
Single Use Plastic Free	GreenStep Single-Use Plastic Free CERTIFIED
Zero Waste	ZeroWaste INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE working towards a world without waste

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TOOLKIT

Please note that the list is arranged alphabetically and does not necessarily reflect the order of importance or sequence in which these activities should be carried out.

This Toolkit has been created with GreenStep Solutions. Founded in 2008, GreenStep has provided sustainability-related certification, guidance, and expertise to thousands of businesses and organizations across various industries including tourism and hospitality.