

## Sustainable Tourism Certification Programs in the Americas

### **Certification for Sustainable Tourism (CST), Costa Rica**

CST seeks to categorize and certify tourism companies according to the degree to which they comply with specific indicators of sustainability. CST was launched in 1997 and it currently provides certification services to hotels and tour operators.

### **Green Deal, Guatemala**

The Green Deal Certification of Sustainable Tourism program provides an independent and objective system of evaluation to all local tourism operations based on guidelines for responsible practices.

### **Green Globe 21, the Caribbean**

Green Globe 21 is the global benchmarking, certification and improvement system for sustainable travel and tourism. It is based on Agenda 21 and principles for sustainable development endorsed by 182 heads of state at the United Nations Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The system, which provides companies, communities and consumers with a path to sustainable travel and tourism, was developed in 1993 by the World Travel and Tourism Council. Companies and communities are certified in accordance with four global standards: company, community, international ecotourism, and design & construct.

<http://www.sustainabletravelinternational.org/>

### **Green Seal, USA**

Green Seal is an independent, non-profit organization that strives to achieve a healthier and cleaner environment by identifying and promoting products and services that cause less toxic pollution and waste, conserve resources and habitats, and minimize global warming and ozone depletion.

### **Programa Nacional de Auditoría Ambiental, Mexico**

The PNAA, which is part of the Procuraduría Federal de Protección al Ambiente, promotes the adoption and implantation of prevention measures, reduction and mitigation of risks and environmental impacts, in the human activities that, by their nature, have an impact on the environment.

### **SmartVoyager, Ecuador**

The SmartVoyager program is managed by Conservación y Desarrollo, an Ecuadorian citizens' group that carries out both research and integrated conservation and development projects in a number of rural communities. SmartVoyager awards its green seal of approval to boats operating in the

Galapagos Islands that meet a set of strict conservation standards.

### **Programs in Development in the Americas**

#### **Certificación de la Sostenibilidad Turística del Perú (CSTP), Peru**

The CSTP brings together institutions dedicated to the conservation of natural resources, protected areas, environment and culture.

#### **Programa de Certificação em Turismo Sustentável (PCTS), Brazil**

The PCTS works with entrepreneurs, NGOs and governments in selected destinations to actively implement sustainability standards by training a corps of local consultants to provide long-term technical assistance and prepare enterprises for certification. In order to lower barriers for entry, this technical assistance is subsidized.

#### **Programa de Certificación de Turismo Rural Sostenible de la Sociedad Uruguaya de Turismo Rural, Uruguay**

The Programa de Certificación de Turismo Rural Sostenible de la Sociedad Uruguaya de Turismo Rural wants to give significative and differential excellence in image and the operator tourism service offer in rural environment.

#### **Quality Tourism for the Caribbean (QTC), Barbados, the Bahamas, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and the nine countries of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States**

QTC is a joint venture of the Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism, the environmental regional subsidiary of the Caribbean Hotel Association and the Caribbean Epidemiology Centre intended to address the health, hygiene and resource management issues facing the Caribbean tourism industry.

#### **Sustainable Tourism Eco-Certification Program (STEP), USA**

STEP is a voluntary certification program that is being designed to assist tourism providers in measuring and managing their environmental, socio-cultural and economic impacts.

#### **The Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism, CAST, San Juan, Puerto Rico.**

This program offers technical services such as walk-throughs, environmental assessments, lists of products and services, as well as videos and publications.

#### **Sustainable Tourism Certification Network of the Americas**

A recently developed network designed to connect other certification programs and agree upon universal baseline criteria for all certification systems.