



# GSTC Destination Assessment

How can we use the sustainability assessment as a 'health check' for continuous improvements?

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# Destination Assessment in Thailand

- 2017 : Sukhothai Historical Park
- 2018 : Pattaya City and the Vicinity Areas
- 2025 : Phuket Province

Managing destinations sustainably requires a process of continuous improvement. The GSTC Standards provides the framework and GSTC's network of expert partners and resources can be applied to simplify the process of making destination policies and management practices more sustainable. GSTC believes that sustainability is a journey. We offer this roadmap in that journey toward greater sustainability.

**The first steps include raising awareness** of sustainable tourism concepts by key leaders and stakeholders, and of the current situation at your destination. We recommend **training** and conducting some form of **evaluation or assessment** of the destination's current practices.

**To manage for continuous improvement** we strongly recommend compliance to Criterion A1 of the GSTC Destination Standard, the creation of a multi-sector group that ensures sustainability is inherent in all practices of the public and private sectors at the destination.



# Using Destination Assessment to Drive Improvements (DASTA, n=6)

A01	A07	A13	B05	C01	D01	D07
A02	A08	A14	B06	C02	D02	D08
A03	A09	B01	B07	C03	D03	D09
A04	A10	B02	B08	C04	D04	D10
A05	A11	B03	B09	C05	D05	D11
A06	A12	B04	2019	C06	D06	D12

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A06	A12	B04	2022	C06	D06	D12

# Lessons from the Assessment

- GSTC Destination Assessment focuses on the process and follows the PDCA cycle.
  - Lesson 1: Plans and one-off activities (especially trainings) are not sufficient. We need a system. GSTC looks for institutional memory.
- The assessment strictly adhere to the GSTC Destination Standard (previously 'Destination Criteria').
  - Lesson 2: Destination managers and stakeholders should prioritize long-term sustainability for tourism development.
- These criteria should be treated as universal and non-negotiable.
  - Lesson 3: While local conditions must be taken into account, they cannot be used as an excuse to override the requirements or make special exceptions.

# Phuket's Destination Assessment

- Scope: The first provincial-level assessment in Thailand
  - Administrative layers
  - Geographical representatives
  - Temporal limitation for the field work in November 2024
- How to interpret the assessment results:
  - **DO NOT** treat them as a seal of approval (certification)
  - Use them to chart **a sustainable trajectory** based on the strengths and monitor **identified risks**.



Source: GSTC

***The assessment is a diagnostic tool based on the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) cycle. We are not just looking for 'What are you doing?' but rather 'How are you ensuring this lasts forever?***

# Thank you for your attention!!!



*Bangsaen Beach (Source: BUUIC)*

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