



# Benchmarking Methodology 2025

## About the GDS-Index

The GDS-Index is a trusted performance improvement programme to assess and accelerate the progress of a destination’s regenerative journey. It measures, benchmarks, and enhances the sustainability strategies, action plans, and initiatives of more than 100 destination management organisations, municipal authorities, and their tourism supply chains.

**Scope:** Unlike other destination standards and rankings, the GDS-Index was originally created for the events and meetings industry. However, since 2020, it integrated leisure tourism into the criteria, making it a unique and holistic programme to evaluate and drive performance across the visitor economy in urban destinations.

**Origins:** Co-founded in 2016 by the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA), City Destinations Alliance (CityDNA), IMEX Group, and MCI, the GDS-Index offers an unparalleled resource for visitors, DMOs, municipalities, and event planners looking for destinations that offer vetted and verified sustainability performance.

## Governance and Criteria Development

The criteria are reviewed annually to ensure relevance and continuous improvement. The GDS-Index team assesses the need for revisions based on emerging challenges and stakeholder feedback gathered from past and present participating destinations and external experts through workshops, surveys, and direct input during the GDS-Index season.

The draft criteria undergo an in-depth review by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) through four meetings where key focus areas are defined, and proposed changes are evaluated. The GDS-Index team integrates all approved updates and releases the criteria for the upcoming assessment cycle.



## The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

The TAC is a team of sustainable destination management [experts](#) from diverse sectors, and areas of city, tourism, events, and not-for-profit organisations. Its role is to provide constructive criticism and new ideas on the development of the GDS-Index benchmarking criteria, reporting indicators, research, academy, and technical platform development. The committee consists of 18 members serving a 3-year term. New members need to apply.

## Alignment with International Standards

To ensure the continued quality and relevance of the GDS-Index, we work to align the criteria with the following internationally-recognised standards and initiatives:

**UN SDGs:** The GDS-Index is committed to the United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda, and we strive to mainstream the integration of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into the management of destinations globally.

**GSTC Destination Criteria:** We use the [GSTC-D v2](#) criteria to inform the development of the GDS-Index criteria, ensuring that we remain relevant to business and leisure tourism.

**UNWTO:** We are an official partner of the UN One Planet Sustainable Tourism Programme and integrate key components of the [One Planet Vision](#) into the criteria.



**ISEAL Code of Good Practice:** The process was guided through its internationally-recognised guidelines.

## Benchmarking Categories and Methodology

### Criteria

The 2025 GDS-Index comprises 76 indicators that evaluate destinations across four key areas.

## Environmental Performance

19 questions – includes a city’s performance about its policies and infrastructure, such as climate change commitment and action, carbon emissions, renewable energies, resource and water management, circular economy, public transport, air pollution levels, and biodiversity. For 2025, five environmental criteria (renewable energy, air quality (2), bike paths, and green area) will be provided by [Murmuration](#).

## Social Performance

12 questions – indicates the performance of the city against indicators of SDG integration, corruption, safety, access to information and communications, health, inclusivity, accessibility, and funding mechanisms, using external sources such as the [Social Progress Imperative Index](#), and [Corruption Perceptions Index](#).

## Supplier Performance

16 questions – addresses the sustainability commitment and performance of the local meetings and tourism industry supply chain, including NGOs, airports, events agencies, hotels, venues, attractions, and restaurants. For 2025 the number of certified hotels will be provided by [BeCause](#).

## Destination Management Performance

29 questions – indicates the sustainability commitment of the Convention Bureau or Destination Management Organisation, including questions about the maturity of a destination’s sustainability and regeneration strategy, visitor management, climate action, DEI, leadership, communication of sustainability initiatives (to support clients), and accurate reporting on sustainability operations.



## Data Collection and Verification

Once signed up as a member of the GDS-Index, the Municipality or Destination Management Organisation gathers data from interested parties and completes an online questionnaire using our Omni data portal. It answers the questions using locally-available data alongside supporting evidence.

After submission, GDS-Index consultants review the data, checking for errors and verifying its accuracy. Each destination is assigned an independent assessor who conducts two rounds of assessments, allowing the destination to address queries or provide additional information. A rigorous quality-control process follows, ensuring consistency and reliability through cross-checks and validations. Assessors undergo comprehensive annual training on GDS-Index criteria and assessment procedures to maintain high evaluation standards. Only after this assessment can the benchmarking results be released to the destination and made available online.

After benchmarking, each destination receives a Performance Improvement Report (PIR). This report details their GDS-Index score and ranking, benchmarks them against averages and other destinations, provides recommendations to improve their strategy and implementation, and offers relevant best practices from other destinations.

## Data Sources

The index criteria evaluate quantitative data points such as recycling/landfilling rates or percentages of third-party-certified hotel rooms, and qualitative concepts such as the destination's commitment to sustainability and regeneration, the existence of a destination sustainability strategy, or the maturity of reporting practices.

The quantitative data submitted by the destinations should originate from official sources, such as the city or the country's statistics office or from publicly-available data from credible sources such as The World Bank's DataBank or Eurostat. Where there is no comparable city-level data, a regional or national value is taken. Qualitative indicator data is usually collected by the Destination Management Organisation, Convention Bureau, or city, with the help of their partners (city departments, hotel associations, etc.).

## Scoring

Each performance indicator is assigned a maximum number of points, and according to how well the destination fulfils each indicator, it obtains some of these points, no points, or all points (a full score). All the indicators' points for each category are then aggregated to get the category score and calculated as follows, where  $i$  = indicator and  $c$  = category.


$$\text{Formula 1: } \text{Category Score}_c = \sum \left( \frac{\text{achieved points}_i}{\text{maximum points}_i} \right)$$


To get the total score of the index, all category scores are aggregated.



Destinations are then ranked by performance and the website is updated to reflect the ranking of the top forty.

The following pages detail the GDS-Index categories, criteria, and scoring, showing alignment with the UN SDGs.






## Environmental Performance

Sub-category	Criteria Number	Indicator	Scoring
Climate, Energy, & Emissions 	EN-1	<b>Does the city have a climate change mitigation and adaptation strategy?</b>	
		1.1. The city has a publicly-available climate change mitigation strategy	0.5 points
		1.2. The city has a publicly-available climate change adaptation strategy	0.5 points
		1.3. The strategy is periodically reviewed	0.5 points
		1.4. The strategy includes a roadmap to net zero greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs)	0.5 points
		1.5. The strategy includes commitments/actions to support a just transition and/or environmental justice	0.5 points
		1.6. The strategy explicitly indicates actions for tourism	0.5 points
		1.7. The strategy explicitly indicates actions for events	0.5 points
	EN-2	<b>Has the city signed up to an international declaration to measure and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in line with the Paris Agreement?</b>	
		2.1. Yes	1 point
		2.2. No	0 points
	EN-3	<b>Please state the city's 2030 carbon reduction target.</b>	>81% - 4 points 61 - 80% reduction - 3 points 41 - 60% reduction - 2 points 20 - 40% reduction - 1 point <20% reduction - 0 points
	EN-4	<b>Please state how much the city has already reduced its emissions against its 2030 target.</b>	>81% - 4 points 61 - 80% reduction - 3 points 41 - 60% reduction - 2 points 20 - 40% reduction - 1 point <20% reduction - 0 points
	EN-5	<b>What are the city's greenhouse gas emissions per capita, measured in tonnes of equivalent carbon dioxide? Please explain how this figure is calculated in your destination.</b>	< 3 tCO <sub>2</sub> e - 4 points 3 - 4.9 tCO <sub>2</sub> e - 3 points 5 - 7.9 tCO <sub>2</sub> e - 2 points 8 - 11.9 tCO <sub>2</sub> e - 1 point >12 tCO <sub>2</sub> e - 0 points
	EN-6	<b>What climate action has been taken by the city/DMO at the sector level to address the impact of the tourism and events sectors?</b>	
		6.1. The city or DMO has signed up to an international tourism or events commitment (e.g., the Glasgow Declaration)	0.5 points
		6.2. The city or DMO has committed to achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions for tourism and events at the latest by 2050, with an interim target of a 50% reduction by 2030	0.5 points
		6.3. The city or DMO has a published climate action plan for tourism and events	0.5 points
		6.4. The city or DMO has conducted a study to assess the risks of a changing climate to tourism and events	0.5 points
		6.5. The city or DMO measures and reports on the carbon footprint of tourism and events	0.5 points
	EN-7	<b>What percentage of the city's total electricity consumption is supplied by renewable sources? Please input electricity consumed (not produced) from renewable sources, divided by total electricity consumed from all sources.</b>	> 40% - 4 points 30% - 39.9% - 3 points 20% - 29.9% - 2 points 10% - 19.9% - 1 point < 10% - 0 points


Resources	EN-8	<b>Does the city have a publicly-available circular economy strategy? Please select all that apply.</b>	
		8.1. The city has an advanced circular economy strategy that focuses on designing out waste and pollution, increasing material and product reuse, and regenerating natural systems	0.5 points
		8.2. The city has a basic circular economy strategy focusing on recycling and waste management	0.5 points
		8.3. The strategy explicitly indicates actions for tourism	0.5 points
		8.4. The strategy explicitly indicates actions for events	0.5 points
	8.5. A performance report was produced in the last 3 years	0.5 points	
	EN-9	<b>What percentage of the city's municipal solid waste has been disposed of in a landfill?</b>	> 50% - 0 points 35% - 50% - 1 point 20% - 35% - 2 points 10% - 20% - 3 points 0% to 10% - 4 points
	EN-10	<b>What percentage of city's solid municipal waste is recycled? Please include composting but not incineration.</b>	> 71% - 4 points 51% - 70% - 3 points 31% - 50% - 2 points 15% - 30% - 1 point < 15% - 0 points
	EN-11	<b>What is the total annual collected municipal solid waste per capita (kg/capita)?</b>	Very low < 199 kg/yr. - 4 points Low 200 - 350 kg/yr. - 3 points Moderate 350 - 499 kg/yr. - 2 points High 500 - 649 kg/yr. - 1 point Very High > 650 kg/yr. - 0 points
Air Quality	EN-12	<b>What is the city's annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentration?</b>	Very Low (<5) - 4 points Low (6 - 15) - 3 points Moderate (16 - 25) - 2 points High (26 - 59) - 1 point Very High (>60) - 0 points
	EN-13	<b>What is the city's annual PM<sub>10</sub> concentration?</b>	Very Low (<15) - 4 points Low (16-50) - 3 points Moderate (51-75) - 2 points High (76-100) - 1 point Very High (>101) - 0 points
Water	EN-14	<b>What percentage of city wastewater receives centralised treatment?</b>	>80% - 4 points 60% - 79% - 3 points 40% - 59% - 2 points 20% - 39% - 1 point 0% to 19% - 0 points
	EN-15	<b>Does the city have a publicly-available water management programme? Please select all that apply.</b>	
		15.1. The programme measures and monitors water usage	1 point
		15.2. The programme monitors and reports on water quality	1 point
		15.3. The programme provides guidance for monitoring and reducing commercial water usage	1 point
15.4. The programme includes a system to respond to water quality issues	1 point		


Transport 	EN-16	How many kilometres of dedicated cycle paths and lanes are there per 100,000 people in the destination?	>101 - 2.5 points 76 - 100 - 2 points 51 - 75 km - 1.5 points 25 - 50 km - 0.5 points 0 - 25 km - 0 points
	EN-17	Does the city have an integrated mobility plan to improve citizen health and reduce city pollution caused by transport? Please select all that apply.	
		17.1. The plan has targets to enhance sustainable mobility and reduce pollution/congestion	1 point
		17.2. The plan includes baseline mobility data that is used to measure progress regularly	1 point
		17.3. The plan monitors soft mobility improvements (i.e. walking, pedestrianisation, cycling strategies), alternatives, and the facilitation of soft mobility connections	1 point
		17.4. The plan demonstrates investment in low-carbon public transport	1 point
Bio-Diversity 	EN-18	Does the city have a biodiversity strategy, and what does it include?	
		18.1. Yes, the city has a biodiversity strategy aligned to local needs, international laws, standards or frameworks, to reverse biodiversity loss	1 point
		18.2. The strategy includes specific targets, and is time-bound with regular monitoring and a scheduled review process	1 point
		18.3. The strategy includes programmes and participatory approaches, encouraging community-led initiatives, and empowering residents to take ownership of green spaces and biodiversity conservation projects	1 point
		18.4. The strategy maps critical habitats and ecological areas impacted by visitors, and defines actions to mitigate those impacts	1 point
	18.5. Strategy development involved a wide range of stakeholders, including directly-affected and indirectly-affected stakeholders	1 point	
EN-20	What is the size of the city's green and blue area (hectares) per 100,000 population?	> 1000 ha - 2 points 500 - 999 ha - 1.5 points 201-499 ha - 1 point 101-200 ha - 0.5 points <100 ha - 0 points	







Social Performance			
Sub-category	Criteria Number	Indicator	Scoring
SDGs 	SO-1	<b>How well is the city's sustainability strategy aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?</b>	
		- The strategy mentions the SDGs	1 point
		- The strategy aligns its goals with all or specific SDGs	2 points
		- The strategy aligns its goals with the SDGs, and includes specific targets and indicators	3 points
Corruption 	SO-2	<b>What is the country's score on the Corruption Perception Index?</b>	90 -100 - 4 points 75-89 - 3 points 50-74 - 2 points 30-49 - 1 point 0-26 - 0 points
Personal Safety 	SO-3	<b>What is the country's score for "Safety" on the Social Progress Index?</b>	100-85 (Very High) = 4 points 75-84 (High) = 3 points 65-74 (Upper Middle) = 2 points 55-64 (Lower Middle) = 1 point 45-54 (Low) = 0 points
Access to Information & Communication 	SO-4	<b>What is the country's score for "Information and Communications" on the Social Progress Index?</b>	100-85 (Very High) = 4 points 75-84 (High) = 3 points 65-74 (Upper Middle) = 2 points 55-64 (Lower Middle) = 1 point 45-54 (Low) = 0 points
Health and Wellness 	SO-5	<b>What is the country's score for "Health" on the Social Progress Index?</b>	100-85 (Very High) = 4 points 75-84 (High) = 3 points 65-74 (Upper Middle) = 2 points 55-64 (Lower Middle) = 1 point 45-54 (Low) = 0 points
	SO-6	<b>Does the city's crisis management plan (CMP) include tourism and events?</b>	
		6.1. Specifically addresses tourism	1 point
	6.2. Specifically addresses events	1 point	







<p>Inclusive- ness</p> 	SO-7	<b>What is the country's score for "Inclusive Society" on the Social Progress Index?</b>	<p>100-85 (Very High) = 4 points</p> <p>75-84 (High) = 3 points</p> <p>65-74 (Upper Middle) = 2 points</p> <p>55-64 (Lower Middle) = 1 point</p> <p>45-54 (Low) = 0 points</p>
	SO-8	<b>How does the city ensure accessibility in public transport for individuals with visible or invisible disabilities and other accessibility needs?</b>	
		8.1. The city or the transport authority collaborates with disability advocacy groups/specialised organisations to co-create inclusive public transport solutions	1 point
		8.2. The city or the transport authority has an accessibility action plan to ensure that public transportation is inclusive and accessible to people with diverse needs	1 point
	SO-9	<b>How does the city ensure accessible public spaces for individuals with visible or invisible disabilities and other accessibility needs?</b>	
		9.1. The city collaborates with disability advocacy groups/specialised organisations to co-create inclusive public spaces solutions	1 point
		9.2. The city has an accessibility action plan to ensure that public spaces are inclusive and accessible to people with diverse needs	1 point
	SO-10	9.3. The city provides accessibility training for service providers	1 point
		<b>How does the city council or DMO engage, consult, and manage local residents in and on important tourism topics? Please select all that apply.</b>	
		10.1. The destination has a system to measure and monitor resident sentiment	1 point
		10.2. The destination facilitates public participation in co-creating the destination's tourism strategy and policies	1 point
	SO-11	10.3. The destination has a mechanism for continuous dialogue with the community to improve the implementation of its strategy	1 point
		10.4. The destination manages a specific participatory budget where projects or initiatives that impact visitors can be proposed and prioritised by local residents	1 point
		<b>How does the city manage short-term tourism rentals?</b>	
		11.1. The city or relevant government authority collaborates with short-term tourism rentals platforms to collect data to monitor and manage them	1 point
		11.2. The city or relevant government authority has specific regulations for short-term tourism rentals to prevent oversaturation and loss of affordable housing	1 point
		11.3. The city or relevant government authority has developed a registration system for short-term tourism rentals	1 point
	11.4. The city does not regulate short-term tourism rentals	0 points	


<p>Funding Mechanisms</p> 	<p>SO-12</p>	<p><b>How does the city manage tourism funding mechanisms (public and/or private) to contribute to the sustainable and regenerative development of the destination?</b></p>	<p>Unmarked</p>
		<p>12.1. The city has a funding mechanism that generates funding from tourism for environmental protection initiatives</p>	
		<p>12.2. The city has a funding mechanism that generates funding from tourism for the preservation and promotion of local cultural heritage</p>	
		<p>12.3. The city has a funding mechanism that generates funding from tourism to regenerate local communities through social or economic development projects</p>	
		<p>12.4. The funds generated are ringfenced and must be reinvested into community regeneration, environmental initiatives, and/or cultural preservation</p>	
		<p>12.5. The city has a funding mechanism and the revenue is integrated into the broader public finance system</p>	
		<p>12.6. The city provides annual reports on the use of tourism-derived funds that are available to the public</p>	

## Supplier Performance



Sub-category	Criteria Number	Indicator	Scoring
Hotels 	SU-1	What percentage of the destination's hotel room inventory has an active third-party sustainability certification? See the guiding notes for the relevant hotel room numbers based on population size.	> 80% - 4 points 50% - 79% - 3 points 25% - 49% - 2 points 10% - 24% - 1 point < 10% - 0 points
	SU-2	Are there destination-wide initiatives or programmes in place that target hotels to create a more circular economy? Please select all that apply.	
		2.1. Food-waste-reduction programme	0.5 points
		2.2. Single-use and plastic-elimination programme	0.5 points
		2.3. Composting programme	0.5 points
	SU-3	2.4. The DMO is promoting existing circular economy programmes to hotels	0.5 points
		Does the destination have a programme that promotes and supports hotels' commitment to sustainable food? Please select the areas that the programme addresses.	
		- Organic produce	0.5 points
		- Locally-grown and -made produce	0.5 points
		- Plant-based, healthy options	0.5 points
Airport 	SU-4	What percentage of the destination's key airport(s) have a current third-party certification (i.e. ISO 14001) for sustainability management? Please calculate an average if there is more than one airport.	> 80% - 2 points 50% - 79% - 1.5 points 25% - 49% - 1 point 10% - 24% - 0.5 points Less than 10% - 0 points
	SU-5	What percentage of the destination's key airport(s) are carbon neutral for direct emissions (excluding flights)? Please calculate an average if there is more than one airport.	> 80% - 2 points 50% - 79% - 1.5 points 25% - 49% - 1 point 10% - 24% - 0.5 points Less than 10% - 0 points
Event Agencies 	SU-6	What percentage of event agencies located in the destination have a formal, written sustainability policy?	> 80% - 2 points 50% - 79% - 1.5 points 25% - 49% - 1 point 10% - 24% - 0.5 points Less than 10% - 0 points
	SU-7	What percentage of event agencies located in the destination have an active, third-party sustainability certification?	> 80% - 4 points 50% - 79% - 3 points 25% - 49% - 2 points 10% - 24% - 1 point Less than 10% - 0 points
Attractions 	SU-8	What percentage of the top 15 attractions located in the destination have an active, third-party sustainability certification?	> 80% - 4 points 50% - 79% - 3 points 25% - 49% - 2 points 10% - 24% - 1 point Less than 10% - 0 points
	SU-9	Are there destination-wide initiatives or programmes in place that specifically target culturally- and naturally-sensitive sites to increase positive visitor impact? Please select all that apply.	
		9.1. Tools are provided to site managers to help measure and monitor visitor flows at culturally- and naturally-sensitive sites	0.5 points
		9.2. Support is provided to site managers to minimise visitors' negative impact on culturally- and naturally-sensitive sites	0.5 points
	9.3. Visitor information material and guidelines are provided for responsible visitor behaviour at culturally- and naturally-sensitive	0.5 points	

		sites	
		9.4. Visitor management training and support is provided to heritage operators of culturally- and naturally-sensitive sites	0.5 points
<b>Restaurants</b> 	SU-10	<b>Are there destination-wide initiatives or programmes in place that specifically target restaurants to create a more circular economy? Please select all that apply.</b>	
		10.1. Food-waste-reduction programme	0.5 points
		10.2. Single-use and plastic-elimination programme	0.5 points
		10.3. Composting programme	0.5 points
	10.4. The DMO is promoting existing circular economy programmes to restaurants	0.5 points	
	SU-11	<b>Does the destination have a programme that promotes and supports restaurants and caterers with a commitment to sustainable food? Please select the areas that the programme addresses.</b>	
		11.1. Organic produce	0.5 points
		11.2. Locally-grown and -made produce	0.5 points
	SU-12	11.3. Plant-based, healthy options	0.5 points
		<b>Does the destination promote and incentivise third-party certification for restaurants and caterers with a commitment to sustainable food?</b>	1 point
<b>Venues</b> 	SU-13	<b>What percentage of the destination's dedicated convention centres have an active third-party sustainability certification for their operations?</b>	> 80% - 4 points 50% - 79% - 3 points 25% - 49% - 2 points 10% - 24% - 1 point Less than 10% - 0 points
<b>Academia</b> 	SU-14	<b>What percentage of the destination's universities, colleges, and vocational schools have integrated sustainability into their tourism, events, hospitality management and curricula?</b>	> 80% - 3 points 50% - 79% - 2 points 25% - 49% - 1 point < 24% - 0 points
<b>Tourism and Events Businesses</b> 	SU-15	<b>Are there destination-wide initiatives or programmes in place that target tourism/events supply chain to take climate action? Please select all that apply.</b>	
		15.1. Carbon awareness/literacy training is provided to the tourism/events supply chain	0.5 points
		15.2. Tools and support to measure their carbon emissions and assist in the development of their climate action plans are provided to the tourism supply chain	0.5 points
		15.3. Tools and support are provided to measure events' carbon emissions	0.5 points
		15.4. Funding and incentives are provided to support the development of low-carbon products and experiences	0.5 points
	15.5. Carbon-reduction, -avoidance, and -elimination initiatives are promoted to the tourism/events supply chain	0.5 points	
	SU-16	<b>Does the destination encourage and support suppliers to offer quality jobs/decent work in tourism?</b>	
		16.1 The destination has programmes or initiatives to monitor working conditions	0.5 points
		16.2 The destination encourages suppliers to provide quality jobs (e.g., a living wage, limited use of zero-hour contracts)	0.5 points
	16.3 The destination encourages, educates, and supports suppliers, particularly accommodation providers, to take action against modern slavery	0.5 points	



## Destination Management Performance



Sub-category	Criteria Number	Indicator	Scoring
Strategy 	DM-1	<b>Does the DMO have a sustainability or regenerative strategy for the visitor economy? Please select all that apply.</b>	
		1.1. Sustainability vision and action plan established for events	1 point
		1.2. Sustainability vision and action plan established for tourism	1 point
		1.3. Multi-year strategy (+3 years)	1 point
		1.4. Aligned with the city's overall development agenda (not just tourism and events)	1 point
	1.5. Integrates the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	1 point	
	DM-2	<b>Does the DMO strategy contain objectives, indicators, targets, and an action plan that aims to generate socially-positive outcomes? Please select all that apply</b>	
		2.1. Clearly defines 3 or more objectives for the change that is desired at the destination	0.5 points
		2.2. Contains a minimum of 3 indicators	0.5 points
		2.3. Contains a minimum of 3 targets	0.5 points
		2.4. Contains or links to an action plan to help achieve each objective through the DMO's events strategy	0.5 points
	2.5. Contains or links to an action plan to help achieve each objective through the DMO's tourism strategy	0.5 points	
	DM-3	<b>Does the DMO strategy contain objectives, indicators, targets, and an action plan that aim to generate environmentally-positive outcomes? Please select all that apply</b>	
		3.1. Clearly defines 3 or more objectives for the change that is desired within the destination	0.5 points
		3.2. Contains a minimum of 3 indicators	0.5 points
		3.4. Contains a minimum of 3 targets	0.5 points
		3.5. Contains or links to an action plan to help achieve each objective through the DMO's events strategy	0.5 points
	3.6. Contains or links to an action plan to help achieve each objective through the DMO's tourism strategy	0.5 points	
	DM-4	<b>Does the DMO strategy contain objectives, indicators, targets, and an action plan that aim to generate economically-positive outcomes? Please select all that apply.</b>	
		4.1. Clearly defines 3 or more objectives for the change that is desired at the destination	0.5 points
		4.2. Contains a minimum of 3 indicators	0.5 points
		4.3. Contains a minimum of 3 targets	0.5 points
		4.4. Contains or links to an action plan to help achieve each objective through the DMO's events strategy	0.5 points
	4.5. Contains or links to an action plan to help achieve each objective through the DMO's tourism strategy	0.5 points	
	DM-5	<b>Has the DMO's sustainability strategy been developed with wide-spread stakeholder consultation? Please select all that apply and explain how the stakeholder feedback is reflected in the strategy.</b>	
5.1. Involvement of key industry partners (hotels, venues, agencies)		0.5 points	
5.2. Involvement of visitors and event attendees		0.5 points	
5.3. Involvement of clients		0.5 points	
5.4. Involvement of key local government departments		0.5 points	
	5.5. Involvement of local community and citizens	0.5 points	

Strategy 	DM-6	<b>Has the DMO's sustainability strategy and its development process been reviewed and/or updated and publicly released to interested parties within the last three years? Please select all that apply.</b>	
		6.1. Reviewed and/or updated in the last three years	1 point
		6.2. Publicly released to key interested parties	0.5 points
		6.3. Strategy describes consultation and development process	0.5 points
Visitor Management 	DM-7	<b>Does the DMO implement initiatives to manage visitor flows within the destination?</b>	
		7.1. Conducts a social carrying-capacity study	0.5 points
		7.2. Conducts an environmental carrying-capacity study	0.5 points
		7.3. Takes proactive measures to manage visitor flows within the destination	0.5 points
Climate Action 	DM-8	<b>What climate action has the DMO taken at organisational level?</b>	
		8.1. Has a commitment to achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 at the latest, with an interim target of at least 50% reduction by 2030	0.5 points
		8.2. Published a climate action plan for the organisation	0.5 points
		8.3. Conducted annual update on the progress of the climate action plan	0.5 points
		8.4. Is measuring and reporting on the organisation's carbon footprint	0.5 points
		8.5. Provides climate action training to all staff	0.5 points
		8.6. Proactively communicates to visitors how they can reduce the carbon impact of their trips	0.5 points
8.7. Proactively communicates to event organisers how they can reduce carbon impact of their events	0.5 points		
DEI 	DM-9	<b>Does the DMO have a destination-level programme for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)? Please select all of the options this programme includes.</b>	
		9.1. Formal commitment to DEI	0.5 points
		9.2. Published a DEI action plan for the organisation and external engagement	0.5 points
		9.3. Conducted annual update on the progress of the DEI action plan	0.5 points
		9.4. Engages in DEI measurement and reporting	0.5 points
		9.5. All staff are provided with DEI training at least every two years	0.5 points
		9.6. Provides external DEI training sessions to the supply chain/industry	0.5 points
		9.7. Provides best practices guides and/or tools for the tourism supply chain	0.5 points
	9.8. Proactively communicates DEI offer to visitors through intentional and inclusive messaging	0.5 points	
DM-10	<b>Does the DMO supply a list of places of interest, transport lines, hotels/venues that support visitors with accessibility challenges in navigating the destination? Please explain your answer.</b>	Yes - 1 point No – 0 points	

Policy & Certification 	DM-11	Does the DMO have a documented sustainability policy signed by the senior-most executive support, available publicly and defining the organisation's vision, commitment, and key goals?	1 point
	DM-12	Does the DMO have a sustainable procurement policy that clearly defines procurement/purchasing practices, expectations, and requirements from suppliers?	1 point
	DM-13	Does the DMO hold a current third-party sustainability certification for its own event and/or office operations, or is it in the formal process of obtaining one?	
		13.1. DMO certification not achieved	0 points
		13.2. Formally applied for and in the process of DMO certification	1 point
	DM-14	13.3. Achieved a valid sustainability certification	3 points
		Does the destination hold a current third-party sustainable destination certification or is it in the formal process of obtaining one?	
		14.1. Destination-wide certification not achieved	0 points
	DM-15	14.2. Formally applied for and in the process of achieving destination certification	1 point
14.3. Achieved a valid sustainability certification for the destination		4 points	
How does the DMO manage the development and governance of its sustainable tourism and events programme? Please select all that apply.			
15.1. Has an internal sustainability team/committee		0.5 points	
DM-16	15.2. Has a dedicated sustainability manager	0.5 points	
	15.3. Has a committee with external industry stakeholders (e.g., venues, hotels)	0.5 points	
	15.4. Has a committee with external non-industry stakeholders (e.g., NGOs, authorities, citizens, or clients)	0.5 points	
	How does the DMO incorporate sustainability into its employee management processes and procedures? Please select all that apply.		
Capacity Building 	DM-16	16.1. Sustainability responsibilities are explicitly included in the job description of management positions	0.5 points
		16.2. Sustainability targets and achievement reviews are integrated into management's performance appraisals	0.5 points
	DM-17	Do new and existing staff in the DMO receive periodic guidance and training regarding the DMO's sustainability strategy, including their roles and responsibilities in its delivery? Please select all that apply.	
		17.1. All new staff are trained	0.5 points
		17.2. All existing staff have been trained, and are retrained/updated every two years	0.5 points
	DM-18	Has the DMO supported or organised sustainability training for the tourism and events value chain in the last year?	
		18.1. Supplied/supported training for tourism and event suppliers	1 point
		18.2. Supplied/supported training for tourism operators	1 point
	DM-19	18.3. Supplied/supported training for event agencies and meeting planners	1 point
Does the DMO provide support to the tourism and events supply chain to help increase suppliers' sustainability performance? Please specify			
19.1. Provides coaching or consulting support		1 point	
	19.2. Provides financial incentives	1 point	



		19.3. Provides marketing support	1 point
		19.4. Provides tools to help them improve performance and/or drive innovation	1 point
Measurement & Reporting 	DM-20	<b>Does the DMO have a system to measure and monitor the environmental, economic, and social impact and performance of tourism? Please indicate which issues this data has been collected for by selecting from the options below.</b>	
		20.1. Has a system to collect data on how tourism impacts economic issues	1 point
		20.2. Has a system to collect data on how tourism impacts social issues	1 point
		20.3. Has a system to collect data on how tourism impacts environmental issues	1 point
	DM-21	<b>Does the DMO have a system to measure and monitor the environmental, economic, and social impact and performance of events? Please indicate which issues this data has been collected for by selecting from the options below.</b>	
		21.1. Has a system to collect data on how events impact economic issues	1 point
		21.2. Has a system to collect data on how events impact social issues	1 point
		21.3. Has a system to collect data on how events impact environmental issues	1 point
	DM-22	<b>How does the DMO publicly communicate and report on progress towards its sustainability objectives?</b>	
		22.1. Presents performance data via a visual dashboard	1 point
		22.2. Publishes performance data on the DMO's website	1 point
		22.3. Presents performance data in the annual DMO or sustainability report	1 point
	DM-23	<b>Does the DMO use official reporting frameworks to improve its disclosure on sustainable destination strategy and performance? Please select all that apply.</b>	
		23.1. The sustainability reporting employs the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and/or targets	1 point
		23.2. The sustainability reporting employs a national or internationally-recognised framework	1 point
23.3. The sustainability report is audited by a third party		1 point	
Marketing & Communications 	DM-24	<b>Does the DMO's tourism and events website(s) provide information about the destination's sustainable events and tourism strategy and initiatives? Please select all that apply.</b>	
		24.1. Provides information about its sustainable events strategy	0.5 points
		24.2. Provides information about its sustainable tourism strategy	0.5 points
		24.3. Provides information about its sustainability tools and manuals for suppliers, clients, and visitors (e.g., a sustainable event guide)	0.5 points
		24.4. Provides information about the cities' sustainability programme and ambitions	0.5 points
		24.5. Provides sustainability information about key suppliers (i.e. hotels, venues, agencies, restaurants) including any sustainability certificates and credentials	0.5 points
		24.6. Provides best practice examples and stories	0.5 points
	DM-25	<b>Does the DMO provide information about the destination's sustainability strategy and performance in its RFP responses and sales information?</b>	
		25.1. Does not share this information	0 points
		25.2. Sometimes shares this information	1 point

		25.3. Always shares this information	2 points	
Mobility 	DM-26	<b>Does the DMO actively promote the use of soft mobility to visitors and event participants?</b>		
		26.1. Promotes soft mobility to visitors	1 point	
		26.2. Promotes soft mobility to event participants	1 point	
	DM-27	<b>How does the DMO financially incentivise visitors and event participants to use public transport?</b>		
		27.1. Provides free or discounted public transport for leisure visitors	1 point	
		27.2. Provides free or discounted public transport for all convention and congresses	1 point	
		27.3. Provides free or discounted public transport for some conventions and congresses	1 point	
		27.4. Not relevant for our destination because the congress and convention centre is within 30 minutes' walking distance of any accommodation within the destination's defined municipal boundary	Exclude from total	
Impact and Regeneration 	DM-28	<b>Does the DMO provide clients with ideas and resources to support local social, environmental, or economic causes and projects? Please select all that apply and explain your answer</b>		
		28.1. Provides a donation programme for food	0.5 points	
		28.2. Provides a donation programme for surplus event materials	0.5 points	
		28.3. Provides a list of organisations that offer social support programmes and volunteering opportunities for event participants and visitors	0.5 points	
			28.4. Shares a carbon-offsetting programme	0.5 points
	DM-29	<b>Does the DMO have a social impact and legacy programme for events?</b>		
		29.1. Provides event clients with an impact or legacy framework and tools	0.5 points	
		29.2. Provides event clients with training on impact and legacy management	0.5 points	
		29.3. Trains the DMO team on impact and legacy management for events	0.5 points	
		29.4. Provides incentives to clients to help increase the social, environmental, and economic impact of events on the destination	0.5 points	
			29.5. Facilitates formal, non-industry partnerships to help clients generate a long-term, positive impact and legacy at the destination	0.5 points

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