

Project: Swiss Tourism for Sustainable Development (ST4SD)

TORs Upgrading Quang Nam Green Tourism Standards for GSTC Recognition and Implementation July – December 2025

1. Background

The Swiss Tourism for Sustainable Development (ST4SD) project is funded by The Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) for a duration of four years, from April 2023 to March 2027, with implementation led by HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation in Vietnam (Helvetas Vietnam) as the Lead Implementing Agency, and CRED Tourism & Agriculture Solution Consulting Company Limited (CRED TAC) as the Consortium Partner.

The main objective of the ST4SD project is to contribute to a more sustainable and inclusive tourism sector in Vietnam. In the long term, the project aims to support the creation of new livelihoods and promote sustainable economic development in the country. This **overarching** objective will be achieved by focusing on three key outcomes:

- Outcome 1 (macro level): Enhancing sustainable tourism development by ensuring that national and subnational action plans, master plans, and relevant policies include necessary actions. This includes facilitating the decision-making and implementation processes.
- Outcome 2 (meso level): Strengthening Vietnamese training institutions to provide quality training and develop skills and expertise in sustainable tourism. The project will assist in the selection and enhancement of these institutions.
- **Outcome 3 (meso and micro level): Encouraging tourism destinations and companies to adopt more sustainable practices in their operations and investments. This outcome aims to make both the destinations and the companies more environmentally and socially responsible.**

Under Component 3 of the ST4SD project, Clickable was contracted to conduct a comprehensive review of the current Quang Nam Green Tourism Standards, including associated assessment tools and implementation procedures. Based on this analysis and extensive consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, it was recommended that Quang Nam Province revise its Green Tourism Standards to enhance alignment with the local context, support tourism enterprises in adopting sustainable practices, and work toward achieving international recognition (see report link:).

In line with ST4SD's objective of sharing Swiss expertise, the proposed revision draws inspiration from the Swisstainable Model. This model features a tiered certification system designed to accommodate tourism businesses at different stages of their sustainability journey, thereby encouraging continuous improvement and broader industry participation:

- **Level 1 – Committed:** For businesses starting their sustainability efforts, requiring a commitment to sustainable principles and initial steps toward implementation (e.g., signing a sustainability pledge or charter).
- **Level 2 – Engaged:** For businesses with recognition from an approved certification system covering at least one dimension of sustainability (economic, environmental and social) or those demonstrating significant progress in sustainability practices.
- **Level 3 – Leading:** For businesses with advanced sustainability strategies, typically holding top-tier certifications and showcasing exemplary sustainable practices.

This tiered approach ensures inclusivity and encourages continuous improvement.

For more information about Swisstainable: <https://www.myswitzerland.com/en-us/about-switzerland/sustainability/swisstainable/>

ST4SD seeks a service provider to upgrade the Quang Nam Green Tourism Standards, aligning them with the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) criteria, and to establish a robust management framework to foster sustainable tourism practices.

1. Objective(s)

1. Revise and enhance the Quang Nam Green Tourism Standards to achieve GSTC-Recognized status, ensuring alignment with international benchmarks and suitability for local tourism businesses.
2. Support the application process for GSTC recognition of the upgraded standards.

3. Develop a management framework to promote commitment, accountability, and continuous improvement in sustainable tourism practices.

2. Scope of work and key tasks

Objective 1: Revise and upgrade Quang Nam Green Tourism Standards

- **Benchmark against GSTC criteria:**
 - Compare current standards with GSTC criteria to identify gaps and areas for improvement.
 - Assess alignment with the Swisstainable Model's tiered structure to ensure inclusivity for businesses at different sustainability levels.
- **Develop upgraded standards:**
 - Revise the standards to incorporate GSTC criteria, ensuring clear, actionable, and measurable guidelines for environmental, social, and economic sustainability.
 - Adapt standards to the local context, considering Quang Nam's cultural, environmental, and economic conditions.
 - Design a tiered certification structure inspired by Swisstainable (e.g., Committed, Engaged, Leading) and adapted to Quang Nam context to support businesses at various stages.
 - Engage stakeholders (e.g., tourism businesses, local communities, government) through consultations to incorporate their inputs and ensure buy-in.
- **Present upgraded standards:**
 - Organize and lead a final workshop/meeting to present the revised standards to stakeholders, addressing feedback and finalizing the framework.
 - Deliver a comprehensive report documenting the revised standards, including a roadmap for implementation.

Objective 2: Support GSTC recognition application

- **Prepare application package:**
 - Compile the upgraded standards into a formal submission package that meets GSTC requirements for recognized status.
 - Ensure all documentation (e.g., standards, assessment criteria, stakeholder consultation records) is complete and aligned with GSTC guidelines.
- **Coordinate application process:**
 - Liaise with GSTC representatives to facilitate the application process, addressing queries and providing additional information as needed.
 - Support Quang Nam authorities in navigating GSTC's review and approval procedures.

- **Follow-Up and support:**
 - Monitor application progress and provide ongoing support until GSTC recognition is achieved.
 - Advise on post-recognition steps to maintain compliance and promote the recognized standards.

Objective 3: Establish management framework for sustainable practices

- **Stakeholder engagement:**
 - Organize consultations, workshops, and dialogues with stakeholders (e.g., tourism businesses, local communities, government agencies, etc.) to raise awareness of the Green Tourism Standards and clarify their roles and responsibilities.
 - Foster collaboration to ensure stakeholder commitment to sustainable tourism goals.
- **Develop implementation tools:**
 - Create a **Guide for Businesses** outlining practical steps to implement the Green Tourism Standards, tailored to the tiered certification levels (Committed, Engaged, Leading).
 - Design a **Self-Evaluation Tool** to enable businesses to assess their sustainability performance and identify improvement areas.
 - Design a commitment-based charter for the different type of businesses that wish to enroll in Level 1 program (large 5 stars hotel chains, mid-range hotels, homestays, restaurant, experience owners, transport/rental suppliers...)
 - Develop a **Monitoring and Assessment Framework** to track compliance and progress, including key performance indicators (KPIs) and reporting templates.
- **Build Capacity:**
 - Provide training sessions for tourism businesses and local authorities on implementing and monitoring the standards.
 - Recommend a governance structure (e.g., a sustainability committee) to oversee ongoing management and continuous improvement, inspired by the Swisstainable model's Plan-Do-Check-Act approach.
 - Discuss and agree with local authorities on the type of incentives that will be granted to businesses achieving the different levels in order to achieve buy-in and commitment from the private sector to enroll.

3. Deliverables

- Revised Quang Nam Green Tourism Standards, aligned with GSTC criteria and structured in a tiered certification framework.
- A complete GSTC application package, including all required documentation.

- A stakeholder consultation report summarizing inputs and outcomes from workshops and dialogues.
- Implementation tools (in English and Vietnamese):
 - Guide for Businesses.
 - Self-Evaluation Tool (user-friendly format, e.g., checklist or digital platform).
 - Charters to apply to level 1 for the different types of businesses
 - Monitoring and Assessment Framework with KPIs and templates.
- Final workshop presentation and report summarizing the upgraded standards and implementation roadmap.
- Training materials and session reports for capacity-building activities.
- Final report highlighting achievements, challenges and proposed solutions and a roadmap for continuous support to the public and private sector to enhance and sustain the initiative.

4. Reference document:

ST4SD Quang Nam Sustainable Tourism Standards Roadmap:
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1tu0Nhw6vfmzfpQCYM73eHOZoiHKivJF6?usp=sharing>

5. Candidate Requirements

Required:

- Relevant qualification and 10 years of experience in tourism certification.
- Strong knowledge of global sustainable tourism standards, certification frameworks and GSTC related.
- Strong proficiency in English and Vietnamese, both written and spoken.
- Knowledge of the tourism industry hospitality industry and an understanding of sustainable tourism issues.
- Excellent communication skills (verbal and written) and able to present complex data in a manner specific to a range of stakeholders and actors including: ministry, provincial governments, donor, tourism training institutes, students, tourism experts, business service providers, tourism associations, individual tourism enterprises.
- Good planning skills and able to work to tight deadlines, including travel to target provinces, sometimes at short notice.

Desired:

- Knowledge & experience of certification within the tourism industry.
- Strong presentation skills to a range of stakeholders.
- Previous knowledge of Quang Nam - the target provinces
- Evidenced specific knowledge and experience of similar tasks.
- Familiar with similar project types and Swiss funded project is an advantage.

6. Request for Proposal Submission

Interested and qualified candidates are kindly requested to submit the following documents as part of their application:

- **Curriculum Vitae (CV)** of key expert(s), highlighting relevant qualifications and experience.
- **Technical Proposal**, demonstrating an understanding of the assignment, including:
 - Methodological approach;
 - Proposed activities and implementation plan;
 - Anticipated number of working days and team composition (mif applicable);
 - Identified risks and proposed mitigation measures.
- **Financial Proposal**, detailing the cost breakdown (daily rate, travel, per diems, taxes, etc.).

All proposals must be submitted via email Olivier.Messmer@helvetas.org, helvetas.vietnam@helvetas.org and assist3@st4sd.vn no later than **30th June 2025**.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited for an interview, tentatively scheduled for **5th July 2025**.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.