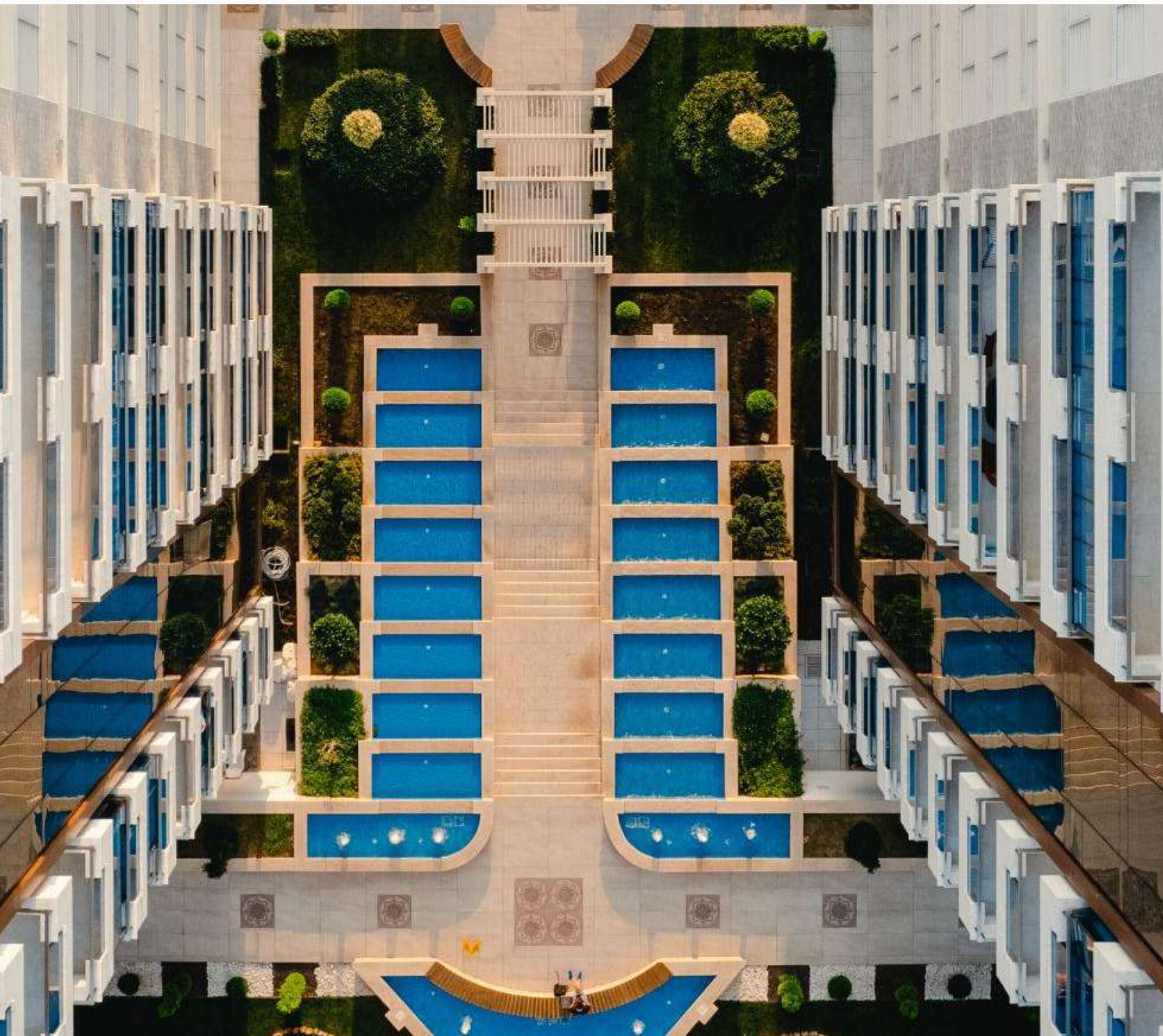


S U S T A I N A B I L I T Y



BRITISH COLUMBIA
HOTEL ASSOCIATION

PLAYBOOK



The data provided herein is presented in good faith and on the basis that none of the partners involved in this project (British Columbia Hotel Association, GreenStep Solutions Inc.)—nor their agents or employees, are to be held liable, for any reason, to any person and/or business for any damage or loss whatsoever, that occurs or may occur in relation to that person or business taking, or not taking, any action in respect of either the statements, information or research contained in this document.

While the data and research contained in this document are designed to assist accommodation providers in the development of effective sustainability strategies and reflect the best information that is available to the partners at this time, the partners cannot ensure either its accuracy or reliability. This research is subject to external changes and individual business requirements. The partners are not rendering legal and/or other professional advice and all users of this information should consult and interpret it with proper business diligence and consideration—this refers not only to the information provided but also to the business strategies that the information contemplates. Tourism is a complex industry and even slight pattern alterations can significantly change the impacts. Further, some opportunities or information may become outdated or not exactly as described at the time of reception and any person and/or business utilizing this document are urged to appreciate these factors and, ultimately, to interpret the information accordingly.

Development of this Playbook was completed by GreenStep Solutions on behalf of the BC Hotel Association.

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About the BCHA GoGreen Program

Since its establishment in 1917, the BCHA has served as the voice of the BC hotel industry at the Federal, Provincial, and Community levels. As the champion of hotel-related issues in BC, we have led movements such as combatting prohibition, supporting infrastructure investments, and now, implementing sustainability initiatives.

With over 800 member hotels and associate members representing more than 100,000 employees and 80,000 rooms today, our members contribute in excess of \$3.2 billion in revenue to the hospitality sector, the tourism industry, and the BC economy. With these voices behind us, our mission is simple: to shape the future of Hospitality. We intend to continue to be a leader of innovation and best practices within the industry and for our members, all while closely following our values of leadership, respect, and collaboration.

This playbook is one of many initiatives offered to our members through the BCHA GoGreen Program to help them integrate sustainable practices and become a more sustainable property. We also:

- Offer a complimentary Energy Analysis through the [GoGreen Program](#) to provide an in-depth look at energy consumption and savings opportunities
- Work in partnership with GreenStep's [EcoFund](#) program to help hotels invest in large energy efficiency, water conservation, and waste reduction projects that save money while reducing their carbon footprint
- Work in partnership with [GreenStep Solutions](#) and [BetterTable.ca](#) to provide education, training, and resources related to sustainability for our sector
- Collaborate closely with the Hotel Association of Canada to support the [Green Key program](#)

This Playbook has been created by the sustainability experts at [GreenStep Sustainable Tourism](#), a division of GreenStep Solutions. Founded in 2008 and based in British Columbia, GreenStep has provided sustainability-related certification, guidance, and expertise to more than 6,000 businesses and organizations across various industries including tourism and hospitality.

The BCHA Sustainability Playbook is made up of two sections:

The Playbook - Start Here

The Playbook is your roadmap to creating a cohesive plan for sustainability. ***It is highly recommended to work through the steps in the Playbook first.*** In doing so, you will create a set of sustainability goals and an action plan, helping to ensure that the impacts of your sustainability journey are quantifiable and measurable.

Note: The tools and strategies in the Playbook are designed to be scalable for the smallest to largest of hotels. Whether you have a green team of one or many, if you have a large budget or tiny one, the guidance, steps, and tools can be adapted to suit your size, scale, and capacity. *The most important step is to get started.*

The Toolkit

The Toolkit is designed to be used in conjunction with the Playbook to support your sustainability journey. Each section of the Toolkit contains action items, templates, and best practice activities that can be used to reduce your impact, improve employee engagement, and enhance guest experience. Under each step in the Playbook, a list of tools and links to various resources has been provided.

It is recommended that you add some or all of the actions in the Toolkit to the action plan you develop when working through the Steps in the Playbook.

If you need any support as you go, please feel free to reach out to our team:

British Columbia Hotel Association

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The Business Case for Sustainability

The People

Hotels with sustainable practices attract more consumers and command a higher willingness to pay around the world.¹ A 2021 survey of 30,000 travelers worldwide found that 83% feel sustainable travel is vital, yet almost half think that there aren't enough sustainable travel options available.² By working to attract this more savvy traveler, hotels can increase revenues by up to 9%. Employees are also looking for values-aligned employers; PwC's 2021 ESG Consumer report found that 86 percent of employees prefer to support or work for companies that care about the same issues they do.³ Through increased employee attraction, retention, and productivity, combined with reduced attrition costs, hotels can achieve up to 27% savings.

The Planet

The Sustainable Hospitality Alliance and the International Finance Corporation (IFC)⁴ found that to offset the increase in carbon emissions from the hotel industry's expected growth, it will be necessary to decrease emissions by a whopping 66% per room by 2030, and 90% per room by 2050. Decreasing energy and fossil fuel consumption can lead to cost savings of up to 75%, if strategically tackled.

The Profit

These cost savings and new revenue opportunities have the potential to increase profits by 51% to 81%. In the accommodation industry experts have observed a persistent cost perception gap where managers overestimate what it will cost to become more sustainable. In fact, by doing nothing, rising carbon taxes, energy and resource costs, labor issues, and changing consumer and employee preferences could result in a profit erosion risk of 16% to 36% for the average business.⁵

This Playbook will help hotels begin improving their triple bottom line; People, Planet, and Profit, and experience firsthand the business case for sustainability.

¹ Analyzing Willingness to Pay More to Stay in a Sustainable Hotel (2020), MDPI Journal. <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/12/9/3730/pdf>.

² 2021 Sustainable Travel Report (2021), Booking.com. <https://globalnews.booking.com/bookingcoms-2021-sustainable-travel-report-affirms-potential-watershed-moment-for-industry-and-consumers/>.

³ <https://www.pwc.com/us/en/services/consulting/library/consumer-intelligence-series/consumer-and-employee-esg-expectations.html> (2021)

⁴ Sustainable Hospitality Alliance. Hotel Global Decarbonisation Report (2017). Pg. 3. <https://sustainablehospitalityalliance.org/resource/global-hotel-decarbonisation-report/>

⁵ Willard, Bob. The New Sustainability Advantage : Seven Business Case Benefits of a Triple Bottom Line. 2012. <https://sustainabilityadvantage.com/>

How to Use this Playbook

Welcome to your sustainability journey! We are so glad you are here.

This Playbook is your roadmap to sustainability, and for the best results, it is recommended that you follow the steps in the Playbook in the order provided. While many hotels have taken at least some steps towards operating more sustainably, most don't have an overarching plan or strategy. By working through the Playbook step-by-step, you will create a set of sustainability goals and an action plan which will become your sustainability strategy to guide you over the months and years to come.

Here's what your journey will look like:

Step 1 - Engage Your Team

Step 2 - Measure Your Baseline

Step 3 - Create Your Sustainability Action Plan

Step 4 - Implement, Communicate, Celebrate, Repeat!

Important Note: Most steps are intended to be performed by members of your Green Team, unless they require executive decision-making (don't worry if you don't have one, we'll provide guidance on getting started).

Sustainability Action Summary, Checklist, and Toolkit

Each step in the journey includes an action summary and a list of resources to support your efforts, including exercises, templates, and tools. The instructions and descriptions for each of these items can be found in the BCHA Sustainability Toolkit.

While you are welcome to work ahead using the tools and resources listed in the Toolkit, for best results it is highly recommended that you follow the Playbook's step-by-step guidance.

By following the guidance in this Playbook, you will observe significant progress towards your goal of becoming a more sustainable hotel. In addition to more engaged staff and happier guests, you will have lower energy costs, a reduced carbon footprint, and a comprehensive sustainability action plan to keep the entire process in motion. *Let's get started!*

BCHA Sustainability Checklist

- Engage your team
 - Create your [Green Team](#)
 - Establish a regular Green Team meeting schedule
- Measure your baseline with the free [Sustainable Tourism Score](#) assessment
 - Sign up for a [BCHA GoGreen Energy Analysis](#)
 - Prioritize and record four to five key areas for improvement
 - Identify additional areas for baseline measurement to include in your sustainability action plan
- Create your sustainability action plan
 - Complete the [Visioning Exercise](#) to establish goals
 - For each goal identify what actions you will need to take
 - Document and prioritize your goals and actions in the [Sustainability Action Plan](#) template
 - Delegate team members to lead and track action plan progress
- Implement, Communicate, Celebrate, Repeat!
 - Include action plan progress updates into regular meetings
 - Create a [Sustainability Report](#) (and update annually)
 - Take the [SustainableTourism 2030](#) Pledge
 - Create a sustainability page on your website
 - Share your sustainability journey in your marketing and social media
 - Incorporate your sustainability goals into job postings and hiring
 - Update employee handbooks and onboarding to include sustainability
 - Hold a team celebration event(s)
 - Identify awards you aspire to win and/or pursue certification
- Implement Your Action Plan - List the first five actions here
 - Action 1 _____
 - Action 2 _____
 - Action 3 _____
 - Action 4 _____
 - Action 5 _____
- Repeat! Each year, review your goals, add new actions, implement, monitor, track, report, and celebrate your progress

Step 1 - Engage Your Team

As you embark on your sustainability journey, your Green Team will be your key to success. A Green Team is a group of enthusiastic, dedicated individuals with representatives from each department or operational area. The core mission of the Green Team is to create and execute the sustainability action plan.

Toolkit Resource: Refer to the [Create Your Green Team](#) checklist for best practices on how to create a Green Team.

As your Green Team works through the steps in the Playbook, they will:

- Perform baseline measurements
- Create goals, and identify actions to create a sustainability action plan
- Implement your sustainability action plan

Pro Tip: *Once your Green Team has created an action plan, integrate the actions into regular management and team meetings to share updates, delegate tasks, and track progress so that sustainability is not put into a silo. Eventually, sustainability should become a part of “how you do things,” similar to health & safety.*

Besides guiding the development of your sustainability action plan, there are many other reasons and benefits to having a Green Team. These include:

- **Attracting top talent** According to a Conference Board of Canada survey, 71% of Canadians want to work for an employer that has commitments to improve their company’s sustainability performance.⁶
- **Boosting employee engagement and morale** Green Team members typically have a strong personal connection to social and environmental sustainability. By harnessing their passion, you will be able to get green things done by people who love doing them. A Green Team can reduce turnover and boost morale among staff who want to see “green” on the company agenda.⁷
- **Realizing ROI** Green Teams help save you money. Your Green Team will work to find and implement ways to improve efficiencies, participate in your community, and cut down on energy consumption. These often have a great return on investment.

⁶ <https://www.conferenceboard.ca>

⁷ NEEF, *Winning in the Marketplace and the Workplace*, (2017)
<https://www.neefusa.org/resource/winning-marketplace-and-workplace>

Step 1 Action Summary

- Assemble a Green Team with representatives from each department or operational area
- Assign roles and responsibilities to the Green Team
- Schedule a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly meeting for the Green Team

Step 2 - Measure Your Baseline

What gets measured, gets managed! In order to know what goals and actions to set, it is important to know where you're starting from by taking stock of how sustainable your hotel is today. This is also beneficial for any sustainability reporting that you might do, and for measuring cost savings, efficiencies, and performance improvements over time.

The BCHA Sustainability Toolkit provides guidance on taking the following baseline measurements:

- [Sustainable Tourism Score Assessment](#)
- [Sustainable Purchasing Analysis](#)
- [Diversity and Inclusion Audit](#)
- [Accessibility Audit](#)
- [Carbon Footprint Measurement](#)
- [Energy Consumption & Cost Measurement](#)
- [Water Consumption & Cost Measurement](#)
- [Waste Production & Cost Measurement](#)
- [Single-Use Plastic Assessment](#)

While each of these measurements are a good way to understand current performance, and you can find guidance for these measurements in the [Toolkit](#), don't let a lack of information delay the creation of your action plan. Unless you already have some of this data at your fingertips, it is recommended that several of these baseline measurement activities get included in your action plan as some of the first actions you will take.

Step 2 Action Summary

- Sign up for a [BCHA GoGreen Energy Analysis](#)
- Consider what baseline data you may already have quantified on an annual basis (e.g. energy, water, and fuel consumption data; waste volume, etc.)
- Take the free [Sustainable Tourism Score assessment](#)

Then, based on the assessment results:

- List all of the questions where performance was lowest and work together with the Green Team to prioritize this list down to 4 to 5 things you would most like to improve, and record these as potential actions in a draft actions list.
- Think about your priorities, and add any remaining potential actions you think are important in the short term. For example, if your priority is cutting down on resource consumption costs, you would focus on the energy, waste, and water sections. Your first potential actions could include performing an energy assessment, waste audit, and water audit.

Pro Tip: Don't get overwhelmed! This step is essentially a guided brainstorming exercise based on an established set of potential actions. You will bring all of these flagged actions to the next section to set goals and refine your action list.

Step 3 - Create Your Sustainability Action Plan

At this point, if you're taking a step-wise approach, you should have a green team in place and have measured your baseline sustainability performance as outlined in Steps 1 and 2. If you haven't accomplished these things yet, we highly recommend going back to the previous two steps. In Step 3, you will begin building your sustainability action plan, which will be your roadmap for the coming months and years.

By the end of Step 3, you will create a sustainability action plan that includes:

- 3 - 5 "SMART" goals (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time-bound)
- A list of actions you need to take to achieve each goal
- The person responsible for each action
- An estimate of the budget and resources required
- Regular meetings to review your plan and discuss the status of each action

Step 3.1 Visioning Exercise

Before building out your sustainability goals and identifying targeted actions, begin with the [Visioning Exercise](#) outlined in the BCHA Toolkit to help your team think big and look towards the future.

Before Moving On:

- Establish a sustainability vision for your hotel
- Brainstorm what this looks like operationally in each department

Step 3.2 Setting SMART Goals

Using the picture you painted during the visioning exercise, combined with the results of the baseline measurements completed in Step 2, you should be ready to set some SMART goals. Follow the [Setting SMART Goals](#) exercise in the Toolkit to ensure your goals are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timebound.

Before Moving On:

- Draft a list of sustainability goals for the hotel
- Set one or more targets for each goal

Step 3.3 Refining and Prioritizing Actions

With SMART Goals in place, begin to brainstorm and organize the actions needed to achieve your goals. Use the [Refining and Prioritizing Actions](#) exercise for guidance on creating specific, digestible, and action-oriented tasks as well as for guidance on how to prioritize actions to achieve your sustainability goals.

Before Moving On:

- Create 3 - 5 "SMART" goals (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time-bound)
- Draft a list of actions you need to take to achieve each goal
- Organize actions by short (1-12 months), medium (1-2 years), or long term (3+ years)

Step 3.4 Document Your Action Plan

Using the previously identified goals, targets, and prioritized actions, [Document Your Action Plan](#) using the [Sustainability Action Plan Template](#) to create a structured

approach to sustainability. The action plan should include the action steps, team members responsible, budget, timeline, deadline, and status.

Before Moving On:

- Assign a person responsible for each action
- Estimate the budget and resources required for each action or goal
- Schedule regular meetings to review your plan and discuss the status of each action

Step 3 Action Summary

- Complete the visioning exercise (1 hour)
- Establish a set of goals (1-2 hours)
- Identify, refine, and prioritize the actions to achieve your goals (1-2 hours)
- Strategize and document an action plan (1-2 hours)

Step 4 - Implement, Communicate, Celebrate, Repeat!

Step 4.1 Implement

Congratulations! You've made it this far and should have a Sustainability Action Plan, complete with goals, actions, timelines, and people responsible for each action. You're ready to get to work on implementing your plan and improving your sustainability performance.

Besides doing the work, **the most important element to your success** is to establish or use an existing meeting to review progress on your plan, just as you would with other important tasks and activities at your hotel. A weekly status update on key tasks that are coming due, followed by a more detailed monthly discussion and quarterly or annual measurement and reporting of results, is ideal.

Step 4.2 Communicate

Many hoteliers are apprehensive about promoting their sustainability initiatives as they don't want to expose themselves to criticism for not doing enough. While it is important not to overstate or exaggerate your claims, sharing your progress with the

story of how your actions positively impact the environment, community, your team, and the guest experience, makes for excellent marketing content.

Not only is it important to communicate your sustainability practices externally through your website, social media, and other marketing efforts, but it's also vital to do this internally as well. Mounting research exists about employees' desire to work with values-aligned employers, and how engaging and educating team members around your sustainability efforts can help to improve staff satisfaction, retention, and even productivity. For best practices on how to share your progress and sustainability story, refer to the [Telling Your Sustainability Story Checklist](#).

Beyond adding a page to your website or including sustainability in your marketing and communications, creating a sustainability report is a formalized way to share your progress on improving your sustainability performance both internally, as well as with your external stakeholders. Use the [Sustainability Report Template](#) to get started.

Step 4.3 Celebrate

Your sustainability efforts deserve to be recognized. This is something you, and your entire team, should be very proud of. Transforming the operations of a complex organization like a hotel is no easy feat.

Refer to the BCHA Toolkit for recommendations on how to:

- [Host a sustainability team event](#)
- [Apply for awards](#)
- [Pursue certification](#)

Step 4.4 Repeat!

When you created your Sustainability Action Plan, you should have included timelines and a person(s) responsible for each action item. As you continue on your journey, be sure to keep yourselves accountable, as best you can. Your Green Team meetings will help with this.

While you should be using your action plan in weekly and monthly meetings to keep you on track, at least annually, take a deeper look to see all that you have accomplished. How much energy or water have you saved, waste reduced, or greenhouse gas emissions prevented? Quantify community or other social impacts if you've set some related goals.

If you have checked off most of your actions, but haven't yet achieved one or more of your goals, dedicate a meeting to brainstorming some more actions that will help get you there. If you have achieved your goals, set some new ones!

Step 4 Action Summary

- Implement your action plan into regular meetings
- At least annually, quantify and report on your impacts
- Celebrate sustainability achievements with your team
- Apply for awards and certifications

Actions to Revisit

- If you've checked all of your actions and have not yet achieved your goal, or are getting stalled on actions due to budget and/or other constraints, dedicate a Green Team meeting to brainstorm new actions to advance your progress
- Once you achieve a goal, either increase your target or follow the goal-setting process to set some new goals, supporting the process of continuous improvement

Playbook Conclusion

Sustainability truly is a journey. We hope that this Playbook provides a valuable roadmap to help you create an overarching sustainability strategy that will guide your progress over the coming months and years. We also hope that through the process, you will see an improvement in employee engagement and guest satisfaction, as well as cost savings and carbon reduction. This is the business case for sustainability.

If you need any support as you go, please feel free to reach out to our team:

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GreenStep Solutions

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Web: <https://greenstep.ca/>

BetterTable.ca (Food Waste)

Phone: 604-700-7587

Email: info@BetterTable.ca

Web: <https://www.BetterTable.ca>

Green Key

Phone: 613-237-7149

Email: info@greenkeyglobal.com

Web: <http://www.greenkeyglobal.com/>

BCHA --- Sustainability Toolkit



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How to Use this Toolkit

This Toolkit is designed to support your efforts as you work through the **BCHA Sustainability Playbook**.

Throughout this Toolkit, you will find checklists, instructions for team exercises, impact measurement strategies, impact reduction strategies, best practice examples, templates for action planning, sustainability reporting, progress recording and more.

By following the guidance in the Playbook and utilizing these Toolkit resources, you will be well on your way to improving the sustainability of your hotel.



BCHA Sustainability Checklist

- Engage your team
 - [Create your Green Team](#)
 - Establish a regular Green Team meeting schedule
- Measure your baseline with the free [Sustainable Tourism Score](#) assessment
 - Sign up for a [BCHA GoGreen Energy Analysis](#)
 - Prioritize and record four to five key areas for improvement
 - Identify additional areas for baseline measurement to include in your sustainability action plan
- Create your sustainability action plan
 - Complete the [Visioning Exercise](#) to establish goals
 - For each goal identify what actions you will need to take
 - Document and prioritize your goals and actions in the [Sustainability Action Plan](#) template
 - Delegate team members to lead and track action plan progress
- Implement, Communicate, Celebrate, Repeat!
 - Include action plan progress updates into regular meetings
 - Create a [Sustainability Report](#) (and update annually)
 - Take the [SustainableTourism 2030](#) Pledge
 - Create a sustainability page on your website
 - Share your sustainability journey in your marketing and social media
 - Incorporate your sustainability goals into job postings and hiring
 - Update employee handbook and onboarding to include sustainability
 - Hold a team celebration event(s)
 - Identify awards you aspire to win and/or pursue certification
- Implement Your Action Plan - List the first five actions here
 - Action 1 _____
 - Action 2 _____
 - Action 3 _____
 - Action 4 _____
 - Action 5 _____
- Repeat! Each year, review your goals, add new actions, implement, monitor, track, report, and celebrate your progress

Step 1 Tools & Resources: Engage Your Team

Create Your Green Team Checklist

The Create Your Green Team Checklist will guide you through how to create a Green Team and set them up for success.

Steps to Create Your Green Team

- Meet with management to discuss working through the BCHA Playbook
- Management announces the sustainability initiative to employees
- Request willing 'champions', or dedicated individuals; at least one manager and one to three staff members per department to join your Green Team
 - Ideally, all employees should have the opportunity to participate, in addition to management
- Name your Green Team. Work with your team and come up with a name that resonates with your culture
- Assign roles and delegate responsibilities among Green Team members
 - Roles and responsibilities may include a Coordinator, and/or Lead to oversee and support meetings, send the agenda, take notes, and disseminate post-meeting summaries
- Schedule your first Green Team meeting
- Review the Playbook and the key steps that you will be working on
- Decide on a date and time to meet regularly every month
- Announce your new or refreshed Green Team and next steps through your internal communications channels, and publicly if you feel ready

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

Resources

Blog: [The Why and How of Building a Green Team](#)

Training Resource: [Example Employee Sustainability Roles & Responsibilities](#)

Step 2 Tools & Resources: Baseline Measurement

Management

Sustainable Tourism Score Measurement

A simple way to identify how your organization is doing on a broad set of sustainability indicators is by taking the Canadian-based, free online [Sustainable Tourism Score](#) assessment. With criteria recognized by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council, and aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs), it provides a snapshot of your performance in key areas of impact.

By working through the questions in the assessment, you will identify a broad range of activities that you may not be doing, measuring, or tracking, which can then become future actions and goals for your action plan. The assessment is 87 questions and can take approximately 1-2 hours, depending on how quickly you work through each question. We recommend doing this exercise with at least a few members of your Green Team as it covers several areas of your operations. You can access it at <https://www.greenstep tourism.com/free-sustainable-tourism-score/>.

Resources

Online Tool: [Free Sustainable Tourism Score](#)

Social & Economic

Sustainable Purchasing

A purchasing analysis is an indispensable tool for developing more sustainable purchasing habits. Given the nature of the hotel industry's large and wide supply chain, sourcing both more sustainable and local products has the potential to mitigate negative environmental impacts in a big way. This means you have the unique opportunity to cut down your footprint, simply in the way you decide to purchase.

Why Buy Local?⁸

Local purchasing enhances community connection, wealth circulation, and helps to establish a unique sense of place. By purchasing locally, a hotel can re-circulate 4.6 times more revenue in the local economy compared to purchasing from a multinational corporation. For example, one study showed that in British Columbia for every \$100 spent with a local business, \$63 was re-circulated back into the BC economy (vs \$14 for multinational corporations). The money retained, known as the multiplier effect, supports local jobs, businesses, as well as events, sports teams and charities. By spending locally, your hotel can help create a ripple of positive outcomes contributing to the health and prosperity of your local community.

Definitions

When conducting a purchasing analysis, it is best to account for both location and sustainability. It's typically better to source local goods over those that are sustainably certified that come from farther away, as this reduces the carbon footprint and keeps dollars within the local economy. ***Whenever possible, source both local AND sustainable goods, from locally owned, sustainable businesses!***

Location Definitions

- Local (<400 km) - Owned and/or manufactured within your region
- Provincial - Owned and/or manufactured within the province
- National - Owned and/or manufactured within Canada
- International - Owned and/or manufactured outside of Canada

Common Sustainability Labels

- [EnergyStar](#) - Energy efficient equipment and appliances
- [WaterSense](#) - Water conserving fixtures and appliances
- [Certified Organic](#) and [Fair Trade](#) - Primarily food and/or textiles
- [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.
- [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

⁸ <https://bcbuylocal.com/why-local/>

Methodology

Your hotel may have its own purchasing department, or you may have a manager or departmental-specific purchaser. We recommend you conduct this analysis on a per department basis, and make actions to purchase more locally and sustainably within each department, as well as creating a sustainable purchasing policy.

Step 1: Gather Data

To get started, ask your financial administrator to pull a spreadsheet of your suppliers/vendors, including how much you spend with them annually. This is a very simple exercise in most accounting software.

Then, focus on those suppliers that account for 80% of your annual spending. Sort, or identify these suppliers by highlighting them and/or moving them to another tab on your spreadsheet.

Step 2: Determine how local and sustainable your vendors are

Once you have created a shortlist of primary suppliers, add two columns: one for location and one for sustainability, using the definitions above.

Looking at each of your top vendors, identify how local each is in the “location” column. If you’re not sure about who is local or not, consider sending out a short questionnaire to your suppliers (see Step 5), to determine to what extent they are locally owned.

Next, note any known certifications that your vendors or their products have in the “sustainability” column. Vendors and suppliers who have made the effort to have the products and services they offer certified by an outside party demonstrate their credibility and their commitment to sustainability.

Step 3: Explore opportunities to: Reduce, Repair, Repurpose, Reuse, Recycle

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

- Can you stop buying stuff you don’t really need?
- 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?

Generally, steering clear of disposable products (think paper coffee cups, plastic water bottles, etc.), will save you money over the long term. There may be an upfront investment to begin, but there is most often a return on investment over a period of time, from the reduced ongoing expense of purchasing disposable products as well as the reduced ongoing costs of hauling away your garbage and recycling.

Step 4: Set a purchasing goal and add to your sustainability action plan

With your Green Team, think about what percentage of your purchasing meets one or more of the considerations above. How realistic is it for you to improve this 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 one month to check-in. Have these changes been made? Keep them on the agenda until they are done.

Step 5: 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

Note: *If you need more information about what vendors offer when it comes to sustainability, ask them! Send a short sustainable procurement email to your top vendors (or all of them if you're energetic), and ask them 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?

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!

Resources

Online Tool: Complete a "[How Are We Local](#)" impact assessment and create an infographic to communicate to staff, guests, and other stakeholders.

Tool: [Join the BC Buy Local Campaign](#) (for BC-owned hotels)

Blog: [Sustainable Purchasing Demystified](#)

Example: [Marriott International Serve 360 Report: 'Responsible Sourcing'](#)

Diversity and Inclusion

The resources and online tools linked in this section will help you learn how to support a diverse workforce and ensure that guests from all cultures, genders and backgrounds feel safe and welcomed.

Resources

Online Tool: [Take the Rainbow Registered LGBTQ+ Friendly Self-Assessment](#)

Online Tool: [Sign up for the 50-30 Diversity and Inclusion Challenge](#)

Workshop: [LGBT+ Diversity and Inclusion Workshops](#)

Accessibility

Use the tools and resources linked below to learn how your hotel can be accessible to guests and employees with diverse abilities.

Resources

Online Tool: [Accessibility Self Assessment Checklist](#)

Online Tool: [Think Accessibility: General Tip Sheet](#)

Environmental

Carbon Footprint Measurement Guide

Your carbon footprint is the summation of all your Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and is reported in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents (tCO₂e). 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.

Platforms such as [EcoBase Carbon Footprint Measurement Software](#) are online tools designed to easily calculate your carbon footprint. While it is recommended that you use an online carbon footprint calculator to efficiently measure your emissions, there are resources available to identify and calculate your emissions yourself.

Pro Tip: *Guidance and tools for calculating your carbon footprint are made available through the Greenhouse Gas Protocol here:*

<https://ghgprotocol.org/calculation-tools>

Overview of Steps to Measure Your Carbon Footprint

Download the [Greenhouse Gas Corporate Accounting Standard](#) for guidance on how to complete the following steps:

- Set an organizational boundary
- Set operational boundary
- Select a baseline year as a performance standard to measure against
- Determine Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions sources within your boundaries.
 - Scope 1: Direct emissions from sources you own or control
 - Scope 2: Indirect emissions from the offsite generation of electricity
 - Scope 3: Indirect emissions that occur at sources owned or controlled by another company
- Collect data for each emissions source
- Input data into online software (see list of tools below under “Resources”)
- Calculate carbon emissions for each emissions source
- Determine total carbon footprint
- Set a reduction target (science based reduction targets are generally considered to be 50% by 2030 and 90-95% by 2050)
- Identify actions for reductions in emissions
- Report - internally and publicly

- Implement reduction plan and/or purchase offsets

Resources

Online Tool: [EcoBase Carbon Footprint Measurement Software](#)

Online Tool: [GHG Protocol Emissions Calculator](#)

Online Tool: [Quantis Scope 3 Emissions Evaluator](#)

Online Tool: [SME Emissions Calculator](#)

Online Tool: [Net Zero Methodology For Hotels](#)

Additional Guidance & Training: [Greenhouse Gas \(GHG\) Protocol](#)

Energy Consumption & Cost Measurement

As energy prices and carbon taxes increase, managing energy consumption and expenses has become increasingly important. By establishing your baseline energy consumption and costs, you will be able to identify areas of opportunity for action and savings, effectively prioritize maintenance, retrofits, investments and upgrades, and implement energy saving operational behaviors.

BCHA GoGreen Energy Analysis

A great free of charge opportunity available to BCHA members is the [BCHA Go Green Energy Analysis](#). This service is complementary to other energy or sustainability assessments your hotel may have received, providing a deep analysis of energy consumption and costs, with the goal of identifying tens of thousands of dollars of annual cost savings and utility rebates.

The energy analysis begins with an energy assessment led by the Go Green Program Coordinator. Based on the results of the assessment, five energy savings opportunities are recommended to maximize efficiency and cost savings for your hotel. In addition to an Energy Efficiency Recommendations report, the Program Coordinator will help your hotel obtain project quotes as well as apply for rebates and incentives. Many of the energy savings projects qualify for funding through the [GreenStep EcoFund program](#) with payback periods as short as 14 weeks.

Some of the program's key benefits include:

- Analysis of energy costs, consumption, and overall energy performance
- Technology and equipment inventory for high energy use equipment
- Room controls survey and optimization for lighting and HVAC
- Benchmarking against similar properties across Canada
- Identify alternate revenue sources and available incentives and rebates

- FortisBC Rebates (Natural gas and Electricity)
- BC Hydro Incentives (Electricity)
- List of energy saving opportunities
- Present business case to hotel management
- Recommended next steps for equipment replacement
- Action list for no/low cost ways to reduce energy costs while experiencing low occupancy due to COVID-19
- Access to the GreenStep [EcoFund Program](#)

To get started, complete this [short survey](#) or this expression of interest [form](#) and a GoGreen Program Coordinator will set up a time to review the program in more detail.

How to Conduct Energy (or Fuel) Assessments

For organizations that want to develop a deeper understanding of energy management, this section provides guidance on how to perform a self-guided energy consumption assessment. The assessment is split into two exercises and it is recommended that a desktop energy assessment is performed first, using data from past energy invoices and bills, followed by an energy audit walkthrough to physically inspect areas of concern and/or identify discrepancies.

The baseline results of the energy consumption assessment will provide insights into opportunities to cut operational costs and improve energy efficiency. They will also be useful if you plan to measure your carbon footprint. This guidance is for energy, however, you can follow the same process for fuel.

Step 1: Energy and Fuel Use Desktop Assessment

- Gather energy and fuel bills from at least one 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
- Create an [energy tracker spreadsheet](#), 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 weather conditions, occupancy rates, transport services available, etc.
- Track annual consumption and chart progress towards reduction goals

- Conduct an annual review of this data with your Green Team to see how your data is trending and if you are reducing consumption

Step 2: Walk-Through Audit

- Create a list of high priority areas to inspect based on the data from your energy audit spreadsheet
- 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
- 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)
- Make a note of efficiency and conservation measures identified during the audit and add them to your action plan

Resources

Service: [BCHA Go Green Energy Analysis](#)

Service: [GreenStep EcoFund](#)

Survey: [BCHA GoGreen Analysis](#)

Survey: [GreenStep EcoFund and GoGreen Expression of Interest](#)

Online Tool: [Energy Star Portfolio Manager](#)

Template: [Energy Tracker Template](#)

Water Consumption & Cost Measurement

Water conservation is a core component of sustainability and understanding rates of water consumption is an important first step to identify savings opportunities, reduce environmental impact, and enhance community stewardship.

In this assessment, you will examine your organization's use of water through either metered data or monthly/annual costs to better understand your water usage and expenses. The Desktop Analysis Measurement Steps will guide you through the process of performing a water audit and a [Water Tracker Template](#) is provided in the [Appendix](#) of the Toolkit.

The baseline results of the water audit will provide insight into opportunities for water conservation as well as set a benchmark to track monthly or yearly improvements.

Desktop Analysis Measurement Steps

- Create a water audit spreadsheet (see [Water Tracker Template](#)) using a spreadsheet software such as Microsoft Excel or Google Sheets
- Track your monthly, quarterly, and/or annual water costs and/or consumption, if metered
 - 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
- 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
- Conduct an annual review of this data with your Green Team to see how your data is trending, and if you are reducing water consumption

Water Fixtures Audit & Consumption Calculations

For hotels that want to reduce their rates of water consumption, additional measurements can be taken in addition to the desktop analysis. Performing a fixture audit and per guest or per room consumption calculation will reveal insights into opportunities for water efficiency improvement and consumption reduction.

Step 1 Take Inventory

- Main water meter
- Sub water meter
 - 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 in complex facilities 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.
- Flow rates
 - Most equipment will have labels or manuals that tell you this information. If not, take a timer and a bucket with a known volume (i.e. 1 liter), to test and calculate this yourself.

- To calculate cubic meters per hour, estimate the number of hours water-consuming equipment is in use. Then, multiply this number by your liter per hour rate (to get liters per hour, multiply your liter per minute rate by 60). Lastly, divide by 1,000 to get cubic meters per hour.

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

- Water-saving fixtures, such as flow restrictors
- Whether specific fixtures or equipment use hot or cold water
- Whether specific fixtures or equipment require treated or filtered water, or currently use recycled water
- Note water use in specialized equipment (evaporative cooling towers or boilers) and any machinery that uses single-pass cooling
- The number of heads on the irrigation system, and the the flow rates of each fixture connected to the system

Step 2 Implement Monitoring Systems

- Implement monthly water meters checks
 - Take note of all submeters and create a spreadsheet that tracks them. If this is the first time you are checking them and want to get through the process quickly, you can check your water bills
- Implement valve, faucet, toilet and other fixture leak checks once monthly
 - Make notes and then ensure a process is in place for the maintenance team to take this information and resolve the issues.

Step 3 Find your Baseline

- Find your liters used per guest per night
 - Average consumption per room per night is 301 liters for hotels with swimming pools, and 85 liters for hotels without.⁹
- Find your liters used per room per year
 - Average consumption per room per year is about 331 kilolitres (331,000 liters).¹⁰

⁹ [IJF Green Water Audit \(2020\)](#)

¹⁰ [Government of South Australia Hotel Water Fact Sheet](#)

- Find your approximate liters utilization per operation per month (i.e. housekeeping, laundry, kitchen/room service, pool and spa)

Resources

Online Tool: [Energy Star Portfolio Manager](#) (can track water in addition to energy)

Template: [Water Tracker Template](#)

Service: [Canada Utility Solutions Submetering](#)

Waste Production & Cost Measurement

There are many opportunities to reduce waste and save costs across hotel operations. Whether your goal is to reduce single-use plastics or increase rates of composting and recycling, it is important to begin with measuring your waste production baseline.

A baseline understanding of your waste production is generated by reviewing and recording invoice data from all waste hauling providers and disposal services on a month-to-month or yearly basis. Invoice data can be used to create a spreadsheet as outlined in the [Waste Tracker Template](#). A waste production spreadsheet will provide insight into current levels/costs of waste production and serve as an important benchmark to track waste reduction progress.

To gain insight into areas of opportunity for waste reduction improvement, it is recommended that you perform a waste audit and bin size assessment.

- The purpose of a waste audit is to identify what is ending up in the trash, but is not actually “garbage”.
- The purpose of a bin size assessment is to monitor how full bins are at the time of pick-up. The results of the assessment can be used to adjust pick-up frequencies or bin sizes which can reduce emissions as well as lead to cost savings.

The results from these baseline measurements will serve as an important performance indicator and can inspire actions for your sustainability action plan.

Waste Measurement Overview

- Track your waste production and disposal costs in a spreadsheet
 - Request hauling data from all of your waste haulers (including recycling and compost where applicable) to estimate total annual volume
 - Review invoices and input data into a spreadsheet for tracking
- Organize a waste audit to measure your total waste production over a 2-day sample period
 - Extrapolate waste audit results for the season or year
 - Identify actions you can take to improve both upstream and downstream waste diversion
- Perform a bin size assessment
 - Adjust bin pick up frequency or request a change in bin size

How to Conduct a Waste Audit

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 a [waste audit data sheet](#)

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

How to Right Size Your Bins

Before performing this assessment, it is important to recognize that the amounts of average waste produced will vary in accordance with your tourism season. It is recommended that this exercise is performed during both busier and slower seasons. After completing this assessment, ensure that your waste pick-ups are optimized with attention to the season (or corresponding events, holidays, etc.)

Step 1

- Find out the frequency and dates that each bin type is picked up; record this information in a spreadsheet

Step 2

- 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 at Thursday at 8 am or on Wednesday afternoon

Step 3

- Check each bin for four consecutive periods (before pick-up) in accordance with your Step 2 schedule
- Record how full, percentage wise, the bins are before they are picked up on your spreadsheet
 - Note if any waste has piled up outside of the bin

Step 4

- 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), you may need to increase your bin size or collection frequency. Alternatively, perform a waste audit to identify opportunities to improve waste diversion

Step 5

- Repeat this process annually or bi-annually
- Compare your results against your Year 1 benchmark data

Resources

Template: [Waste Audit Data Collection Sheet](#)

Template: [Waste Tracker Template](#)

Service: [BetterTable.ca](#)

Online Tool: [Commercial Composter Directory](#)

Online Tool: [Hotel Waste Measurement Methodology](#)

Online Guide: [How to Conduct a Waste Audit](#)

Single-Use Plastic Assessment

Introduction

Across the world, the hotel industry is responsible for generating up to 150 million tons of single-use plastic each year. Annually 8 million tons of the world's plastic finds its way into our oceans with only 5 percent actually being recycled.

Single-use plastics have become a huge issue that has increasingly been addressed by governments around the world. As of 2021, local governments in B.C. can ban single-use plastics without further ministerial approval, and the [Government of Canada is working to ban harmful plastics](#) including straws, cutlery, foodservice ware, and stir sticks.

Single-Use Plastics

Often referred to as disposable plastic, single-use plastic is commonly used for plastic packaging and includes items intended to be used only once before they are thrown away or recycled.

| Includes | Excludes |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grocery bags• Good packaging (i.e. take-away containers)• Bottles• Coffee stirrers• Straws• Containers• Cups• Lids | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plastic packaging that comes on large items or bulk orders• Plastic items that are not single-use, such as furniture, décor, pens, etc.• Waste generated by guests |

Eco-Plastics

'Eco-plastics' such as biodegradable or compostable plastics, are not accepted in most composting collection systems. Generally, eco-plastics contaminate compost and reduce its value, often only breaking down when exposed to prolonged high

temperatures of about 50°C – conditions met in incineration plants. Bioplastics derived from renewable sources (corn starch, cassava roots, or sugarcane) or from bacterial fermentation (sugars and lipids) also do not naturally degrade in the environment and especially not in the ocean.¹¹ Essentially, please do not purchase biodegradable! Most biodegradables simply hinder waste diversion efforts .

Methodology

Download the [Single-Use Plastic Audit Template](#) and begin filling it in, performing the plastic audit exercise on a departmental basis (i.e. F&B Restaurant outlets, F&B Stewarding/Banquets, Guest Services, Guest Rooms & Housekeeping, Pools & Spas, Procurement). The entire activity will rely strictly on the purchasing data you have available.

The spreadsheet will be where you document your data to help you answer the following key questions:

1. To what extent does the hotel use single-use plastics?
2. Which parts of the hotel use the most?
3. How much of this can be eliminated?
4. What are the possible solutions and alternatives?

Next Steps

Many large hotel chains over the past years have developed single-use plastic reduction or banning strategies to illustrate the incredible impact these measures can have.

Example Single-Use Plastic Initiatives

| Hotel | Scope | Initiatives |
|--------|---|--|
| Accor | Over 5,100 hotels, including Fairmonts and Novotels across Canada | To eliminate 200 million single-use plastic products annually across rooms, meetings, restaurants and leisure areas by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Removing all single-use plastic items in guest experience from its hotels by the end of 2022 |
| Hilton | 650 hotels, including 174 across Canada | To save roughly 5 million plastic straws and up to 20 million water bottles annually by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Removing plastic straws |

¹¹ [UN report on “Single-Use Plastics: A Roadmap to Sustainability”](#), Page 14

| Hotel | Scope | Initiatives |
|------------------------------|--|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removing plastic water bottles from conference rooms |
| Marriott International | 6,500 hotels, including 16 across Canada | <p>To eliminate 1 billion plastic items per year by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Banning plastic straws Introducing new shower-product dispenser system in lieu of providing throwaway shampoo and conditioner bottles |
| Four Seasons Hotels & Resort | 118 hotels, including 3 across Canada | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Banning plastic straws in all hotels Going completely plastic-free within certain hotels |

Here are some suggestions on how to reduce single-use plastics:

- Use your purchasing power to pressure suppliers to change their products and/or packaging. They may have other customers interested in going plastic free as well.
- Single-use items are the most difficult to remove from “to go” scenarios, such as a cafe or restaurant within your hotel. In these examples, switch your products to something more eco-friendly, like paper-based products, glass, or as a last resort, bioplastics. For other uses within the hotel you can substitute single-use plastics (and bioplastics) with alternatives.
- Train staff not to assume that a customer needs “to go” products. Even if they think they might go out later, you can always pour their beverage or transfer their food into a to-go container if/when they are ready.
- A great way to reduce the usage of many products is to make them available upon request only. For example, shaving kits, toothbrushes, umbrella bags, and even in-room amenities.
- Some hotels have different tiers of banquet/catering service, including an “eco-friendly” level with no single-use plastics.

Resources

Template: [Single-Use Plastic Audit Template](#)

Online Resource: [Single-Use Plastic Fact Sheet](#)

Step 3 Tools & Resources: Create Your Action Plan

Visioning Exercise

Time required for Green Team meeting: About 1 hour

The visioning exercise helps to build a picture of what success looks like, gets the ideas flowing, and is an exciting and positive activity to conduct with your team.

Here are the guiding questions to ask your team for this exercise:

- Imagine for a moment that in ten years your hotel is 100% sustainable and profiled in the media because of your sustainability practices. Brainstorm what the headlines and people would be saying about the hotel and your team. (Don't worry if you think this vision is impossible - dream big and just imagine! You might not get there, but these thoughts will inspire the next steps and help you to create stretch goals.)
- Now, brainstorm what this looks like operationally in each department. What actions have you taken and what are all of the things you are doing differently?

By the time you finish this exercise, you should have many ideas describing what your hotel could look like in a sustainable future. The goals and actions you create in the next step will be the grit and glue that help you get closer to making this vision a reality.

Setting Smart Goals

Time required for Green Team Meeting: 1-2 hours

Using the picture you painted during the visioning exercise, combined with the results of the baseline measurement you completed in Step 2, you should have an idea of what success looks like and a list of potential actions that you want to take to improve the sustainability performance of your property.

Now it's time to create some SMART goals. Before getting started, take each of your potential actions and write them out on sticky notes, or use a free online tool such as [Google Jamboard](#), to note down each potential action on a virtual sticky note. Then,

in your Green Team meeting, begin clustering the actions together based on their similarities. For example, you could cluster actions that are related to energy and carbon, waste and purchasing, and guest and employee education. It's really up to your team how you choose to cluster your actions. You can give each cluster a heading to help remind you of what actions should go where. Each cluster of related actions will now be used to develop a goal. Each goal should include two components:

1. The name of the goal, i.e. Zero Waste, Carbon Reduction, Education, or Community.
2. One or more targets that make the goal SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timebound.

Some examples of SMART goals include:

Goal: Zero Waste

Target 1: Achieve 90% or greater diversion of waste from the landfill by 2025 by reducing single-use items, reusing items whenever possible, and recycling or composting what can't be reduced or reused.

Goal: Net Zero Carbon

Target 1: Reduce our consumption of natural gas by 50% by 2030 through energy efficiency retrofits, employee and guest education, and building automation.

Target 2: Offset 100% of the carbon emissions that we haven't reduced by 2030.

Goal: Education

Target 1: 80% of staff understand our sustainability goals and practices by 2024.

You can add more goals if you want to, but try to limit the number of goals to no more than three to five if possible. This will make achieving your goals more realistic.

Resources

Online Tool: [Google Jamboard](#)

Example: [List of Example Goals and Actions](#)

Refining and Prioritizing Actions

Time required for Green Team Meeting: 1-2 hours

If you haven't already done so, you can now move the clusters of actions you have created under each relevant goal. Now is also a good time to ensure that your actions are written in an action-oriented way, keeping in mind that the best actions are:

- Specific (even more so than your goals)
- Concise (short and digestible)
- Time-bound (it can be completed within the timeframe of its related goal)

Looking at each goal, brainstorm all of the additional actions you will need to take to achieve it. Don't worry about creating too many actions, we will prioritize them in the next step. You may wish to refer back to the [Sustainable Tourism Score assessment](#) to help you come up with some additional action items.

In many cases, you may still have some baseline work to do to understand where you are currently at. For example, if your goal is zero waste, and you have set a target of achieving 90% diversion from landfill or incineration by 2030, it will be important to know how much waste you are currently diverting. So, your first action could be to undertake a [waste audit](#) using the guidance in the BCHA Sustainability Toolkit, or by hiring a service provider.

You should now have several actions under each goal. You can add more in the future if needed, but this is a great starting point. Looking at each action, it is now time to prioritize 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.

Toolkit Resources

Online Tool: [Free Greenstep Sustainable Tourism Score](#)

Online Tool: [Google Jamboard](#)

Document Your Action Plan

Time required for Green Team Meeting: 1-2 hours

At this stage someone should be assigned to add your goals, targets, and prioritized actions into a structured action plan, using the [Action Plan template](#). Feel free to add to or adapt this as needed to accommodate all of your goals, targets, and actions.

A final action planning meeting can now take place, where you can populate the remaining columns for each short-term action (you can do this for all of the actions if you have time):

- Action Steps (what steps are needed to complete this action)
- Team Member(s) Responsible (who is accountable for this action)
- Budget (Actual \$\$ or estimate low, medium, high)
- Timeline (short, medium or long-term)
- Deadline (when will it be completed)
- Status (in progress with notes, or completed)

As a final step, you may want to align your goals and action plan with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs). The [SDG Compass](#) provides guidance for companies on how they can align their strategies as well as measure and manage their contribution to the realization of the SDGs.

Resources

Template: [Sustainability Action Plan Template](#)

Tool: [SDG Compass](#)

Additional Guidance: [How to Create A Sustainability Action Plan \(start at 10 mins, end at 23 mins\)](#)

Additional Guidance: [Align Your Strategies with the UN Sustainable Development Goals](#)

Example: [List of Example Goals and Actions](#)

Example: [Marriott Serve 360 Goals 2025](#)

Low / No Cost Actions to Get Started

Low or No Cost Energy Efficiency Measures

This resource will help you achieve quick wins for energy efficiency. A great opportunity to help your hotel prioritize upgrades and retrofits is to partake in the [BCHA GoGreen Energy Analysis](#). All of the following activities will also help to reduce energy use and start accumulating energy savings.

Lighting:

- Ensure lights are turned off when space is not in use or when light is not necessary; this includes lighting fixtures for the interior, exterior, and signage.
- Ensure lighting controls or timers are adjusted for varying hours of daylight during different seasons. The same can be done for any adjusted operating hours or areas.
- Use timers to turn on safety lighting at the required times, rather than leaving the lights on 24/7.
- Take advantage of natural daylight where possible to reduce reliance on lighting. Locate work stations near windows. Bonus: employees will appreciate the view from outside!
- Ask staff to turn off lights when they leave a seldom-used room (e.g. staff washroom or storage closet).
- Ensure that housekeeping staff use lighting wisely. Lighting levels should provide minimum sufficient illumination for effective cleaning and staff's safe movement between work areas. Additionally, lamps should be dusted regularly. Dirty lamps and fixtures can reduce effective light output by as much as 50 percent.
- Install lighting controls, such as occupancy sensors, to automatically turn off lights in unoccupied areas such as offices and conference rooms at night.
- Upgrade to LED lighting to enhance your atmosphere and save energy costs. You can replace standard incandescent bulbs with ENERGY STAR® certified LED bulbs and T12 fluorescent lamps with high-performance T8 or LED lighting.
- Replace older incandescent or fluorescent exit signs with LED versions, which use a fraction of the energy.

- Replace metal halide and mercury vapour high-bay lighting with LED lighting

Heating & Cooling / HVAC

- Encourage housekeeping staff to set temperatures to minimum levels after cleaning each room.
- Try to book rooms in clusters so that only occupied building areas need to be heated or cooled for guests. Rooms on top floors, at building corners and facing west (in summer) or north (in winter) can be the most energy-intensive.
- If your guest rooms have packaged terminal heat pumps or air conditioners, pair them with an occupancy sensor that will allow guests to control the temperature when they are inside, but allow you to set back the temperature when rooms are unoccupied.
- For larger buildings with a central building management system, reprogram the building management system to reflect the building's operating schedule or put the building on "Holiday/Break/Vacation" mode if it will be unoccupied for an extended period.
- Program thermostats to turn down the temperature about an hour before closing time as it will likely continue to stay warm for the next hour.
- Program thermostats to a lower temperature in unoccupied areas such as storage rooms and stairwells.
- Ensure there is proper air flow. Remove any obstructions from your vents including return-air vents. Items such as furniture, curtains, displays or boxes could be blocking airflow which reduces the efficiency of HVAC systems and increases energy costs.
- For an occupied building, the recommended thermostat heating and cooling temperatures, health permitting, are 68°F / 20°C and 73°F/ 23°C, respectively. Encourage staff to wear extra layers to stay warm, if needed.
- For an unoccupied building and in low-use areas, set thermostats to 62°F / 17°C in the winter, or 78°F/ 26°C in the summer. Having different set points when your business is closed, or in low-use areas, will lead to significant savings!
- Service HVAC equipment yearly. Make sure a qualified technician regularly maintains your HVAC equipment. Ensure cooling towers are serviced regularly since they are subject to scale deposits, clogged nozzles, poor airflow and poor pump performance.
- Change your air filter regularly. Check your filter every month, especially during heavy use months (winter and summer). If the filter looks dirty after a

month, change it. At a minimum, change the filter every three months. A dirty filter will slow down air flow and make the system work harder to keep you warm or cool — wasting energy.

Insulate & Draft-Proof

- Insulating and draft-proofing are low cost ways to reduce strain on heating and cooling systems.

Plug Loads

- Unplug equipment that has a standby setting that is not being used in order to reduce phantom power. Examples include photocopiers, printers, computer monitors, microwaves, toasters, coffee makers, stereos, television screens.
- Turn off or unplug power strips when electronics are not in use.

Water Heating

- Lowering the water heater set point temperature can save you 4%-22% annually. Reducing the set point temperature reduces standby losses (heat lost from water heater into the surrounding area); and consumption (from water demand or use in your business). 120°F is the recommended set point. Many manufacturers default the set point to 140°F.
- 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

- Where possible, turn off equipment at night or cut preheating time for kitchen equipment. In doing so, you can save 30-60% of that equipment's

energy consumption (depending on operating hours and the type of equipment).

- Turn off stoves, fryers, grills and boilers when the restaurant is unoccupied.
- Turn off booster heaters and dishwasher water heaters when the dishwasher is not in use and when the restaurant is unoccupied.
- When practical, cover pots while cooking so you can turn down the burner.
- Fully load ovens when using them. Tighten hinges and replace seals on oven doors to prevent heat loss.
- Cover fryers during slow periods to retain heat.
- Make ventilation fans work more efficiently by grouping heavy-duty appliances under the center of the hood. Push appliances against the wall to maximize overhang.
- Load dishwashers to capacity as they use the same amount of energy regardless of the size of the load.
- Turn off the dishwasher's internal tank heater overnight to avoid heating water unnecessarily.
- 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. Wash curtains keep heat in, improving 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.

Refrigeration

- If there is food in the refrigerator and freezer, ensure they are set to 4°C / 40°F and 0°C / -18°F (respectively); if the freezer isn't full, add a bag or two of ice, or a couple plastic jugs 75% full of water to help the freezer maintain a steady temperature.
- If there is no food in the refrigerator or freezer, consider turning it off completely, as a refrigerator uses a lot of energy. If you turn off the refrigerator and freezer, remember to prop the door open to avoid odours and mould.
- Turn off lights for refrigeration display cases when the business is closed.

- Train staff to shut cooler and freezer doors when they exit to prevent the loss of cooled air, saving the HVAC system from having to work harder to reheat the surrounding area.
- Do a regular thermostat check and calibrate the temperatures of refrigerators and freezers.
- Inspect doors of walk-in refrigerators and freezers regularly to make sure they are aligned and closing tightly.
- Dirty evaporator and condenser coils make refrigerator motors work harder, so clean them to improve energy efficiency.

Swimming Pools & Water Features

- Adjust temperature settings in the indoor pool area so that the air temperature is higher than the water temperature. This reduces heat loss from the pool.
- Cover the pool and hot tub when not in use, to reduce heat loss and evaporation.
- Reduce indoor pool room ventilation rates at night when the pool is not being used.
- Cover the outdoor pool while it is being heated at the start of the season to reduce heat-up time.
- Clean filters regularly and conduct pump maintenance annually to help reduce energy use and extend the life of your pump.

Boiler & Steam Distribution

- Operate boilers and furnaces at their designed capacities.
- Conduct regular flue gas analyses to monitor operating efficiency.
- Clean hot surfaces such as heat exchangers.
- Use automatic boiler blow-down controls that continuously measure boiler water conductivity to save energy, water and chemicals.
- Use the oxygen trim feature and reduce flue gas temperature by 20 °C (68 °F) to help increase your boiler efficiency by 1-2 percent.
- Inspect for failed steam traps regularly. Steam traps remove condensation from the steam distribution system once it has cooled. A trap that has failed to open and is leaking steam can cost you thousands of dollars a year in energy costs, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

- Ensure condensate from steam can return to the boiler, as poor drainage leads to water hammer, increased maintenance, and poor heat transfer.
- Insulate bare steam or hot water pipes and tanks to help keep steam at the right pressure and liquids at the right temperature.

Low or No Cost Water Efficiency Measures

This section of the toolkit provides quick wins and easily implementable actions for water conservation and water efficiency. To maximize impact, it is recommended that actions are prioritized based on the results of your [Water Consumption & Cost Measurements](#) or based on the guidance of water consumption tracking softwares such as the [Free Energy Star Portfolio Manager Program](#).

Water Efficient Retrofits & Upgrades

- 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 hotel 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

Water Efficiency Tools, Assessments & Programming

- Use the [WaterSense Certified Product Directory](#) to check the efficiency of current fixtures and as a guide for product purchasing
- Take the [WWF Water Risk Assessment](#) to address water risk and enhance business resilience
- Train staff on water efficiency best practices and behaviors
- Create signage to encourage water saving behaviours for guests and staff

Resources

Tool: [Free Energy Star Portfolio Manager Program](#) (while primarily developed to track energy consumption, it also includes tools for water measurement)

Tool: [WaterSense Certified Product Directory](#)

Tool: [WWF Water Risk Assessment](#)

Service: [Canada Utility Solutions Submetering](#)

Template: [Water Tracker Templates](#)

Natural & Cultural Resource Guide

This resource guide is here to help you with implementing your natural and cultural goals. However, you know your region and local community best! We recommend using this as a preliminary list when undertaking your natural and cultural goals, such as creating information and interpretive resource guides, or engaging with your local Indigenous community.

There are several ways that hotels, even in urban areas, can support the promotion and protection of natural and cultural heritage. To provide some examples, see the checklists below derived from the free online [Sustainable Tourism Score](#) criteria:

Cultural Heritage

How does your hotel contribute to protecting, preserving, and enhancing sites, traditions, and communities of cultural, historical, archaeological, and spiritual significance?

- Using best practices to develop and share a visitor code of conduct or pledge with staff and customers to enhance and/or protect cultural experiences, including cultural heritage and living cultures
- Providing monetary and in-kind support to culturally significant sites, traditions and communities
- Working with local heritage societies or cultural conservation NGOs

TIP: Areas, sites and communities of cultural significance might include museums, architecture and heritage sites, Indigenous culture and language, and music or art displays.

How does your hotel contribute to the protection and promotion of traditional and contemporary Indigenous culture and heritage?

- Employing people of Indigenous heritage and/or connecting guests to Indigenous tourism operators to provide authentic local Indigenous cultural experiences
- Formal, collaborative partnership with local Indigenous community
- Informal connection with local Indigenous communities, including building and maintaining relationships, seeking permission to share information, etc.
- Featuring authentic local Indigenous arts and crafts and/or cuisine in some aspect(s) of business operations
- Providing information about Indigenous culture and cultural events/festivals on websites, brochures, etc.

How does your hotel contribute to the protection and promotion of other traditional and contemporary local culture, heritage, and artifacts?

- Incorporating local cultural heritage and traditions into guest experience, in consultation and partnership with local communities
- Connecting guests with local interpreters or experiences that can present the heritage and culture in an authentic and traditional manner
- Featuring local arts and crafts and/or cuisine in some aspect(s) of business operations
- Providing information about the local culture, history, and cultural events/festivals on websites, brochures, etc.

Natural Heritage

How does your entity support and contribute to the conservation of biodiversity, ecosystems and landscapes?

- Avoid promoting activities that have potential to disturb or negatively impact ecosystems and landscapes
- Providing information and interpretation for guests on the local environment
- Using best practices to develop and share a visitor code of conduct or pledge with staff and customers to enhance natural experiences and minimize negative impacts
- Providing monetary and in-kind support for conservation of wildlife, protected natural areas, and areas with high biodiversity value
- Working with local conservation NGOs

List of Natural and Cultural Resources

INDIGENOUS RESOURCES

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| British Columbia & Canada | Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) Indigenous Tourism BC (ITBC) British Columbia Assembly of First Nations Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN) First Nations Languages in BC Suggested Land Acknowledgements for all Regions of British Columbia |
| Vancouver Island | Vancouver Island First Nations Interactive Map Vancouver Island, Indigenous Tourism BC Vancouver Island & Coast Region, BCAFN |
| Vancouver Coast & Mountains | Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Center Vancouver Coast & Mountains, Indigenous Tourism BC Vancouver Island & Coast Region, BCAFN Lower Mainland Southwest, BCAFN Vancouver Aboriginal EcoTours |
| Thompson Okanagan | Thompson Okanagan, Indigenous Tourism BC Thompson Okanagan Region, BCAFN |
| Kootenay Rockies | Kootenay Rockies, Indigenous Tourism BC Kootenay Region, BCAFN |
| Cariboo, Chilcotin Coast | Cariboo Chilcotin Coast, Indigenous Tourism BC Cariboo Region, BCAFN |
| Northern British Columbia | Northern BC, Indigenous Tourism BC Nechako Region, BCAFN North Coast Region, BCAFN Northeast Region, BCAFN |

WILDLIFE AND CONSERVATION RESOURCES

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| British Columbia & Canada | Canadian Wildlife Federation Wildlife Rescue Association of BC Wildlife Collision Prevention Program WildsafeBC Nature Conservancy of Canada: NCC BC Conservation Foundation BC Parks: Conservation Invasive Species in Canada Invasive Species Council of BC Sustainable Forestry Initiative |
| Vancouver Island | Raincoast Conservation Foundation Pacific Wild Vancouver Island Region Wildlife Discover Vancouver Island - Wildlife |
| Vancouver Coast & Mountains | Raincoast Conservation Foundation Pacific Wild Destination Vancouver Sustainable Tourism |
| Thompson Okanagan | Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program (SOSCP) BC Nature (Federation of BC Naturalists) Thompson-Nicola Conservation Initiative (TNCI) |
| Kootenay Rockies | Kootenay Conservation Kootenay Resilience: Conservation Planning Wildsight Kootenay National Park Conserved and Protected Species |
| Cariboo, Chilcotin Coast | Cariboo Chilcotin Conservation Society Valhalla Wilderness Society |
| Northern British Columbia | Conservation North Conservation Solutions Lab UNBC Northern Lights Wildlife Shelter |

CULTURE AND HERITAGE RESOURCES

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| British Columbia & Canada | Canada Heritage Heritage BC BC Arts Council Indigenous Tourism BC Heritage Sites Indigenous Tourism BC Cultural Centers 4 Ways to Weave Canada' Cultural Heritage into Your Story (GreenStep) |
| Vancouver Island | History & Heritage of Vancouver Island Vancouver Island North Cultural Centers Vancouver Island Travel: Where to Find First Nations and Culture on Vancouver Island |
| Vancouver Coast & Mountains | Destination Vancouver: Indigenous Culture in Vancouver Heritage Vancouver Society The Fraser Valley Sea to Sky Arts & Culture Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Center Culture - Visit Sunshine Coast Coast Cultural Alliance |
| Thompson Okanagan | Okanagan Heritage Museum (Kelowna) Thompson Okanagan Arts & Culture by Region Secwepemc Museum & Heritage Park Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association |
| Kootenay Rockies | Ktunaxa Cultural Heritage Arts & Culture - Kootenay Rockies Tourism Art BC - Kootenay Rockies |
| Cariboo, Chilcotin Coast | Cariboo Chilcotin Coast: History Cariboo Chilcotin Coast: Arts & Culture Central Cariboo Arts & Culture Society Museum of the Cariboo Chilcotin Explore Cariboo Art BC - Cariboo Chilcotin Coast |
| Northern British Columbia | Art BC - Northern BC City of Prince George Arts & Culture |

Step 4 Communication and Reporting

Telling Your Sustainability Story Checklist

As you build momentum in your sustainability journey, it is highly recommended that you incorporate milestones, progress, and/or initiatives from your sustainability action plan into both internal and external communications. Stories of how your actions are positively impacting the environment, your community, your team, and guest experience make for excellent marketing content. There is also 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. The following checklists offer best practices for both internal and external communications.

Internal Communication Actions

- Provide training on sustainability policies and progress to all existing staff
- 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
- Add a "Sustainability Action Plan Status Update" to your weekly 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

External Communication Actions

- Create a Sustainability page on your website, detailing your sustainability related mission, goals, policies, and initiatives
- Publish an annual or quarterly [sustainability report](#) that includes the progress made towards your sustainability goals and any new initiatives
- Take the [Sustainable Tourism 2030 Pledge](#), 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)
- Pursue awards or certification to have your sustainability achievements formally recognized

Resources

Tool: [Sustainable Tourism 2030 Pledge](#)

Blog: [Five Steps to Finding and Sharing Your Unique Sustainability Story](#)

Blog: [Telling Your Green Story to Attract More Guests](#)

Blog: [Values Based Marketing: How to Attract Guests Through Sustainability](#)

Example: [Siwash Lake Resort Sustainability](#)

Example: [Huntington Manor Green Initiatives](#)

Host a Team Event

Take some time to celebrate your achievements. It's a great way to congratulate your team and build momentum for even more engagement and action. During this celebration, senior leadership should highlight the achievements, successes, and continued work on your action plan.

Some ideas for an internal celebration could include:

- 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

Apply for Awards

Applying for awards is a great exercise 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.

Tips for Award Applications

- Keep records of your organization's history and resource consumption
 - Understanding the roots of your organization 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 hotel has progressed
- Maintain an active list of external organizations that you collaborate with and/or programs you participate in
- Document all consulting services your organization 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
 - 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 organization is sponsoring or funding in relation to your sustainability goals

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

Look for local awards as well as those listed below.

- [BC Tourism Industry Awards](#)
- [BC Tourism & Hospitality Awards](#)
- [Canadian Tourism Awards](#)
- [Travel & Hospitality Awards](#)

Pursue Certification

By following the guidance in this playbook, you have implemented important changes that align directly with several certification criteria that align with the [Global Sustainable Tourism Council](#) criteria and the 17 [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#). You may wish to explore having your hotel certified by a Canadian-based sustainability certification provider for hotels. There are two based in Canada that use globally recognized standards - [GreenStep Sustainable Tourism](#) and [GreenKey](#).


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
 - 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 organizational practices (even as simple as 'turning lights off when you leave the room') are documented either in writing 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

Appendices

Sustainability Action Plan Template


The sample sustainability action plan template found in the link below is designed to be used in conjunction with the action planning procedures outlined in the [Document Your Action Plan](#) section of the Toolkit and [Step 3 - Create Your Sustainability Action Plan](#) section of the Playbook.

 Sustainability Action Plan Template

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1TmJ5DpbwOOU-Oel55NE2VckPb_wLV2gCfc8DUNjPOqM/edit#gid=887521757

Energy Tracker Templates

The sample energy tracker templates found in the link below are designed to be used in conjunction with the energy measurement procedures outlined in the [Energy Consumption & Cost Measurement](#) section of the Toolkit.

 BCHA Energy Tracker Templates

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/14GRF3Zf_zcYZp5RMZypcdkurOifaIVsWxgvCE-i7Etc/edit?usp=sharing

Water Tracker Templates

The sample water tracker templates found in the link below are designed to be used in conjunction with the water measurement procedures outlined in the [Water Consumption & Cost Measurement](#) section of the Toolkit.

 BCHA Water Tracker Templates

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1sn_0Q-w1O7WQmwmzD9Q1CAO-UCPtvSM DzSL-HfOTBok/edit?usp=sharing

Single-Use Plastic Audit Template

The single-use plastic audit template found in the link below is designed to be used in conjunction with plastic audit procedures outlined in the [Single-Use Plastic Assessment](#) section of the Toolkit.

 Single-Use Plastic Audit Template.xlsx

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1d0DYF-LeEEL8Ch8dalg9X0c_J_FCkaVy/edit?usp=sharing&oid=102508826366743657470&rtpof=true&sd=true

Waste Tracker Templates

The sample waste tracker templates found in the link below are designed to be used in conjunction with the waste measurement procedures outlined in the [Waste Production & Cost Measurement](#) section of the Toolkit.

 BCHA Waste Tracker Templates

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1qRkdpJyIzsW4n77MTSvjAzPbQV1Zo-4K1tsE10xx3TY/edit?usp=sharing>

Waste Audit Data Collection Sheet

Event Name: _____

Date: _____

Auditor(s): _____

Source of Waste: _____

Bin Size(s): _____

Days Worth of Waste: _____

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Bag Info | Bin / Bag # ► | | | | | | | | | |
| | Bin/Bag size ► | | | | | | | | | |
| | Volume (% full) ► | | | | | | | | | |
| Waste Category | Recycling | | | | | | | | | |
| | Depot Items | | | | | | | | | |
| | Compost | | | | | | | | | |
| | Other | | | | | | | | | |
| | Garbage | | | | | | | | | |
| Volume of waste = Bin/bag type or size x Volume (% full) | | | | | | | | | | |

Notes on waste composition (problematic items, packaging trends, observations, etc)

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Total Recycling | |
| Total Depot items | |
| Total Compost | |
| Total Other | |
| Total Garbage | |
| Total Waste | |

| | Volume | Percent |
|-----------------------|--------|---------|
| Total Diverted | | |
| Total Garbage | | |

Example Employee Sustainability Roles & Responsibilities

This resource is intended to help you with training employees and delegating sustainability-related roles and responsibilities throughout your hotel by providing examples of department-related duties. Not all potential duties and responsibilities are identified here, so add your own as needed based on your Sustainability Action Plan and related policies and procedures.

- Determine which new tasks need to be completed as part of your sustainability action plan. Using the following examples begin delegating various departmental sustainability roles and responsibilities. Add new responsibilities if any are missing.
- Delegate new responsibilities and tasks during a Green Team meeting, or during other staff meetings. Ideally each department responsible for these roles should be represented on your Green Team.
- Develop a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly monitoring system to ensure new responsibilities are adopted.

Monitoring energy:

- If you haven't already, sign up for an online account with [FortisBC](#) or [BC Hydro](#), to access the most up to date online utility billing data. These accounts also enable an account administrator to provide view-only access to another team member
- Analyze energy consumption compared to contributing factors such as occupancy rates, chart progress towards reduction goals and continue to set goals for the long-term
- Conduct a quarterly review of this data with management and your Green Team

Monitoring waste:

- Visit your local Regional District website, find the section on solid waste management, and familiarize yourself with what types of waste are banned from the landfill and what programs or guides exist for businesses to manage their commercial waste, recycling, and organics
- Perform a [bin size assessment](#) and ensure all bins are properly labeled with what can go in them, including bins in staff areas, guest areas and outside

- Review invoices for waste hauling and input data into a waste management spreadsheet for tracking
- Conduct a quarterly review of pick-up frequency for waste, compost and recycling; assess if frequency can be reduced to save costs
- Organize a [waste audit](#) and/or [single-use plastic audit](#) to improve both upstream and downstream waste diversion

Purchasing:

- Conduct a [purchasing analysis](#) using the guide under the “Social and Economic” section of the BCHA Sustainability Toolkit or by following the steps in [Sustainable Purchasing Demystified](#)
- Write a sustainable purchasing policy and ensure that all staff who have purchasing power are trained and measured on their implementation of the policy

Communications:

- Hold monthly and quarterly Green Team meetings that include sustainability action plan updates reflecting current actions and progress towards sustainability goals
- Integrate sustainability into outbound communications including websites, newsletters, social media, advertising, etc.
- Add sustainability policies and commitment to employee hiring and onboarding process
- Provide training on sustainability policies and progress to all existing staff

Housekeeping:

- Chemical use – use cleaning products made from natural ingredients
- Waste management - when cleaning rooms, ensure all materials are properly sorted based on your waste management program (recycling, refundables, organics, etc.)
- Linen - ensure a linen change policy is in place and followed to reduce laundry and labour
- Turn down room thermostats to set point (~16C in winter, ~24C in summer) when guests check-out; to be turned back up to more comfortable yet energy efficient set point (~18C in winter, ~22C in summer) before check-in

Maintenance

- All building and construction materials, hazardous waste such as paint and batteries, etc. should be stored and contained in a manner meeting Health and Safety regulations until disposed of or recycled at the appropriate facilities
- Continually seek ways to repurpose building materials and wood throughout the property to reduce waste and minimize costs
- Ensure continued supply and use of LED light bulbs across the property; when needed, old appliances such as cabin fridges and laundry facilities should be replaced with Energy Star equipment ONLY
- Coordinate energy assessments with the [BCHA GoGreen Program](#)
- Request an opportunity analysis through the [GreenStep EcoFund Program](#)
- Explore [BC Hydro Rebates/Incentives](#) and [FortisBC Rebates/Incentives](#)

Example Goals & Actions

See [Sustainability Action Plan Template](#) for formatting.

Goal 1: Zero Waste

Target: *Achieve 90% or greater diversion of waste from the landfill by 2025 by reducing single use items, reusing items whenever possible, and recycling or composting what can't be reduced or reused.*

Actions:

- Establish a composting program (if not already in place)
- Improve property recycling levels by 25% by including recycling bins in each guest room and infographics in staff rooms

Goal 2: Net Zero Carbon

Target 1: *Reduce our consumption of natural gas by 50% by 2030 through energy efficiency retrofits, employee and guest education, and building automation.*

Target 2: *Offset 100% of the carbon emissions that we haven't reduced by 2030.*

Actions:

- Measure the carbon footprint of the hotel
- Perform annual measurements of electricity, natural gas, and fuel consumption (part of carbon footprint measurement)
- Join the GreenStep [EcoFund](#) program in partnership with the BCHA

- Complete an energy assessment through the [BCHA Go Green Energy Analyst](#) to determine where energy efficiency improvements can be made, and/or identify rebates in your area
- Implement energy efficiency retrofits, including:
 - LED light-bulbs and televisions
 - Low-flow fixtures and aerators on all guest faucets, shower heads, and toilets
 - Occupancy sensors/control systems for heat/air conditioning and lighting in all guest rooms
 - Energy Star appliances
 - HVAC, hot water, electricity vehicles, etc.
- Educate your employees and/or guests on energy saving behaviors, such as turning off all lights before exiting a room

Goal 3: Increase Sustainability Knowledge

Target: *80% of staff understand our sustainability goals and practices by 2024.*

Actions:

- Conduct employee and guest sustainability surveys to measure understanding
- Add a sustainability section to the website to identify actions and goals, and share progress
- Add a monthly update on social media about action plan and progress
- Include a summary of sustainable actions guests can take during check-in
- Incorporate sustainability policy/mission/vision/commitment into onboarding

Goal 4: Support the Local Economy

Target: *Increase local purchasing (within 400 km) to 50% by 2027*

Actions:

- Perform a purchasing analysis to determine what percentage of supplier are local and/or sustainable
- Identify opportunities to switch to local and/or sustainable suppliers
- Discuss potential bulk-buying opportunities with other local businesses

Goal 5: Promote Our Region's Culture

Target: *Add ten new opportunities for guests to understand and experience local arts, culture and heritage by 2024*

Actions:

- Brainstorm opportunities at your next Green Team meeting
- Engage with local Indigenous communities to promote their events, galleries, and interpretive opportunities
- Add a Land Acknowledgement into your booking process
- Support local artisans by purchasing local art to feature and/or sell in gift shop
- Recommend activities or things to do that enable guests to experience the local culture

Sustainability Report Template

We have provided this template to help walk you through the process of creating your own sustainability report. You can also include a cover page with your hotel or organization's name, branding and current year.

Key Steps to Sustainability Reporting

- Gather leadership and top management support to ensure the report is supported top-down with quality checks in place
- Determine your audience (e.g., guests, employees, community members, special interest groups, investors, other stakeholders)
- Gather a cross-functional team of contributors (your Green Team)
- Determine a reporting strategy
- Determine the scope of your report and focus on the issues that are most important to your audience and areas of your hotel
- Identify your Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that will serve to monitor and measure your efforts over time
- Consider aligning your strategies and measuring your contributions to the UN Sustainable Development Goals using the [SDG Compass](#)
- Create your report, using the template below as a guide
- Disseminate to your relevant stakeholders, revising and redistributing annually

Sustainability Report Template

Table of Contents

| | |
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| Welcome Statement | [X] |
| Introduction and Organizational Profile | [X] |
| Report Scope | [X] |
| Overall performance summary | [X] |
| <i>Current Performance</i> | [X] |
| <i>Achievements and challenges</i> | [X] |
| Summary goals and performance indicators | [X] |
| Additional Information | |

Welcome Statement

This section provides a welcome statement from your company's leadership that presents the sustainability commitment and discusses the connection between your business strategy, mission and values, and aspirations for lessening your environmental impact and improving your overall sustainability performance. Also include a description of how sustainability is governed and managed within your company. Discuss organizational roles and committees that are responsible for achieving sustainability goals.

Include your senior corporate officer signature, title, and date.

Introduction and Organizational Profile

Introduce your hotel and your area of business (i.e. luxury accommodation provider), the industry (i.e. hospitality), the number of employees (or other size indicator), and any other details that would help someone understand your company.

Include a section in the introduction clarifying issues such as the scope dates and measure of the report to address questions and prevent confusion or misinterpretation of your report early on.

Describe your environmental strategy and goals and provide a summary of the report's contents. Link these sections to the overall business strategies and objectives (i.e. market share, profitability).

Also include a description of how sustainability is governed and managed within your company. Discuss organizational roles and committees that are responsible for achieving sustainability goals.

Overall performance summary

Current Performance

This section provides a brief summary of the overall performance of each goal and KPI. The performance summary can be provided in a bulleted list. Use quantitative data, if applicable (and available). If you have measured and managed the indicator over a period of more than two years, discuss trends.

- Goal and indicator 1: Provide a brief summary of performance.
- Goal and indicator 2: Provide a brief summary of performance.
- Goal and indicator 3: Provide a brief summary of performance.
- Goal and indicator 4: Provide a brief summary of performance.
- Goal and indicator 5: Provide a brief summary of performance.

Achievements and challenges

Provide information about key achievements and challenges of this reporting period. Use quantitative data, if applicable (and available).

- Achievement 1: Provide a brief explanation of the first achievement.
- Achievement 2: Provide a brief explanation of the second achievement.
- Challenge 1: Provide a brief explanation of the first challenge faced.
- Challenge 2: Provide a brief explanation of the first challenge faced.

You may also share information about future plans and discuss how they are expected to affect performance.

Summary goals and performance indicators

This section provides detailed information about each sustainability goal and performance indicator (expanding on the information in the report scope section).

For each goal and indicator, include an introduction that provides details such as:

- What the goal and indicator measures;
- Why the goal and indicator is important;
- Summary of performance including progress to date, targets and challenges (using quantitative data, tables, graphs and illustrations, where applicable).

Additional Information

- This section provides readers with further context to understand your report. Information provided in this section includes references, terms and definitions, assumptions and any other specific details that are more appropriate at the end of the report or as an appendix.
- Other information that can be provided includes organization profile-related information that you may not have been able to include in the report body, such as any sustainability groups your organizations belong to and/or any sustainability-related awards you have achieved.
- You may also want to let readers know how they can contact you for questions or to provide feedback on your report.

Index of Tools and Resources

Accessibility

Online Tool: [Accessibility Self Assessment Checklist](#)

Online Tool: [Think Accessibility: General Tip Sheet](#)

Apply for Awards

Example: [BC Tourism Industry Awards](#)

Example: [BC Tourism & Hospitality Awards](#)

Example: [Canadian Tourism Awards](#)

Example: [Travel & Hospitality Awards](#)

Carbon Footprint Measurement

Online Tool: [EcoBase Carbon Footprint Measurement Software](#)

Online Tool: [GHG Protocol Emissions Calculator](#)

Online Tool: [Quantis Scope 3 Emissions Evaluator](#)

Online Tool: [SME Emissions Calculator](#)

Additional Guidance & Training: [Global Warming Potential Values](#)

Additional Guidance & Training: [Greenhouse Gas \(GHG\) Accounting protocols](#)

Additional Guidance & Training: [ISO 14065 Quantification and Reporting of GHG Emissions and Removals](#)

Carbon Footprint Reduction

Blog: [Ten Ways to Reduce the Carbon Footprint of Your Tourism Business](#)

Online Tool: [The Carbon Offset Guide](#)

Online Tool: [EcoBase Carbon Calculator](#)

Online Tool: [Sustainable Travel Carbon Footprint Calculator & Offsets](#)

Online Tool: [OstromClimate: Calculate Emissions & Purchase Certified Offsets](#)

Online Tool: [Less: Certified Offsets](#)

Online Tool: [EcoFund Program](#)

Create Your Green Team Checklist

Blog: [The Why and How of Building a Green Team](#)

Training Resource: [Example Employee Sustainability Roles & Responsibilities](#)

Diversity and Inclusion

Online Tool: [Take the Rainbow Registered LGBTQ+ Friendly Self-Assessment](#)

Online Tool: [Sign up for the 50-30 Diversity and Inclusion Challenge](#)

Workshop: [LGBT+ Diversity and Inclusion Workshops](#)

Document Your Action Plan

Template: [Sustainability Action Plan Template](#)

Online Tool: [SDG Compass](#)

Additional Guidance: [How to Create A Sustainability Action Plan](#)

Additional Guidance: [Align Your Strategies with the UN SDGs](#)

Example: [List of Example Goals and Actions](#)

Example: [Marriott Serve 360 Goals 2025](#)

Energy Consumption & Cost Measurement

Service: [BCHA Go Green Energy Analysis](#)

Service: [BCHA EcoFund](#)

Survey: [BCHA GoGreen Analysis](#)

Survey: [BCHA EcoFund and GoGreen Expression of Interest](#)
Online Tool: [Energy Star Portfolio Manager](#)
Template: [Energy Tracker Template](#)

Energy Efficiency and Conservation Actions
Energy Tracker Templates
Example Sustainability Goals & Actions
Host a Team Event
Example: [Earth Day](#)

Low or No Cost Energy Efficiency Measures
Low or No Cost Water Efficiency Measures
Natural & Cultural Resource Guide
[List of Natural and Cultural Resources](#)

Pursue Certification
Example: [GreenStep Sustainable Tourism Certification](#)
Example: [GreenKey](#)

Refining and Prioritizing Actions
Online Tool: [Free Greenstep Sustainable Tourism Score](#)
Online Tool: [Google Jamboard](#)

Setting SMART Goals
Online Tool: [Google Jamboard](#)
Example: [List of Example Goals and Actions](#)

Single-Use Plastic Assessment
Template: [Single-Use Plastic Audit Template](#)

Single-Use Plastic Audit Template
Sustainability Action Plan Template
Sustainable Purchasing
Online Tool: “[How Are We Local](#)” impact assessment
Online Tool: [Join the BC Buy Local Campaign](#) (for BC-owned hotels)
Blog: [Sustainable Purchasing Demystified](#)
Example: [Marriott International Serve 360 Report: ‘Responsible Sourcing’](#)

Sustainable Tourism Score Assessment
Online Tool: [Free Sustainable Tourism Score](#)

Telling Your Sustainability Story
Tool: [Sustainable Tourism 2030 Pledge](#)
Blog: [Five Steps to Finding and Sharing Your Unique Sustainability Story](#)
Blog: [Telling Your Green Story to Attract More Guests](#)
Blog: [Values Based Marketing: How to Attract Guests Through Sustainability](#)
Example: [Siwash Lake Resort Sustainability](#)
Example: [Huntington Manor Green Initiatives](#)

Visioning Exercise
Online Tool: [Google Jamboard](#)
Example: [List of Example Goals and Actions](#)

Waste Production & Cost Measurement
Template: [Waste Audit Data Collection Sheet](#)

Template: [Waste Tracker Template](#)

Online Tool: [Commercial Composter Directory](#)

Online Guide: [How to Conduct a Waste Audit](#)

Service: [BetterTable.ca](#)

Waste Tracker Templates

Water Consumption & Cost Measurement

Online Tool: [Energy Star Portfolio Manager](#)

Template: [Water Tracker Template](#)

Service: [Canada Utility Solutions Submetering](#)

Water Efficiency and Conservation Actions

Online Tool: [Free Energy Star Portfolio Manager Program](#)

Online Tool: [WaterSense Certified Product Directory](#)

Online Tool: [WWF Water Risk Assessment](#)

Service: [Canada Utility Solutions Submetering](#)

Template: [Water Tracker Templates](#)

Water Tracker Templates