



Travalyst

Certifications Initiative:
Ground Rules for the Review Process

Glossary

The table below outlines the various entities, processes and definitions that function within the certifications sector and you might see mentioned in our communication. This glossary is a work in progress as we reference key industry bodies and standardisation organisations, such as [GSTC](#), [ISO](#), [IAF](#) and others, to build out definitions around these processes and entities within the certifications ecosystem.

Accreditation	The process of approval by a accreditation body of a Certification Body's competence to certify organisations to a standard.
Accreditation Body	An organisation that provides certification, testing, calibration, inspection and other conformity assessment services can seek accreditation. An accredited body has demonstrated that it fully meets the requirements of relevant national and international standards.
Certification	Certification is a "third-party attestation related to products, processes, systems or persons," as defined by ISO/IEC 17000 Conformity Assessment—Vocabulary and General Principles. Also defined as a voluntary, third-party assessment, through an audit, of a tourism enterprise for conformity to a standard.
Certification Body	A body that verifies that specified requirements relating to a product, process, system, person or body are fulfilled.
Certification Scheme	Certification system related to specified products, to which the same specified requirements, specific rules and procedures apply.
Certification System	Rules, procedures and management for carrying out certification.
Scheme Owner	Person or organisation responsible for developing and maintaining a specific certification scheme. Note: The scheme owner can be the Certification Body itself, a governmental authority, a trade association, a group of Certification Bodies or others.
Sustainable Tourism Standard	A set of rules and guidelines that define the requirements of tourism enterprises in delivering sustainable tourism.

Background

Founded by Prince Harry, The Duke of Sussex, Travalyst is a pre-competitive coalition of some of the biggest names in travel and technology including Amadeus, Booking.com, Expedia Group, Google, Mastercard, Sabre, Skyscanner, Travelport, Trip.com Group, Tripadvisor, and Visa. Together, we aim to bring sustainability information to the mainstream to help people make more informed travel choices.

What is the Travalyst Certifications Initiative?

The sustainability certifications industry encompasses a wide range of approaches, which can create confusion for both travellers and accommodation providers. Travalyst is reviewing certifications, standards and schemes against a set of criteria which aims to increase transparency globally.

Travalyst makes its list of compliant entities publicly available for its partners and the wider industry to align behind. In doing so, we aim to drive consistency in the information presented to travellers, as well as give compliant accommodation providers visibility on global booking platforms.

Our criteria are intended to support the certifications industry on its journey towards regulatory compliance, and drive consistency in the minimum threshold these entities meet. This initiative is free, and we believe it is important to remain as inclusive as possible from the very start, because achieving a critical mass of credible entities that are working towards the same goal is crucial.

What are the criteria?

Travalyst has worked closely with its partners, and in conjunction with its Independent Advisory Group, to align on three initial criteria that entities must comply with in order to be included on Travalyst's list.

These initial criteria are:

1. **Third-party audit that includes on-site and/or remote online assessment of sustainable practices reported by the property.**
2. **Publicly available standards upon which the certification or scheme is based.**
3. **Focuses on evaluating the impact of social and/or economic, and/or environmental factors, among others, as encompassed within, but not restricted, to the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals.**

Why these criteria?

These criteria, validated by our Independent Advisory Group, are intended to support the certifications industry globally on its journey towards regulatory compliance, and drive consistency in the minimum threshold these entities meet. The criteria represent the first step in an ongoing effort to increase transparency globally, and we expect the criteria to become more robust with each iteration, in line with the evolving legislative landscape.

How will Travalyst conduct the review process?

The review process will be undertaken in stages, on a first-come-first-served basis. The review procedure to ensure that any applicant entities are compliant with the criteria is as follows:

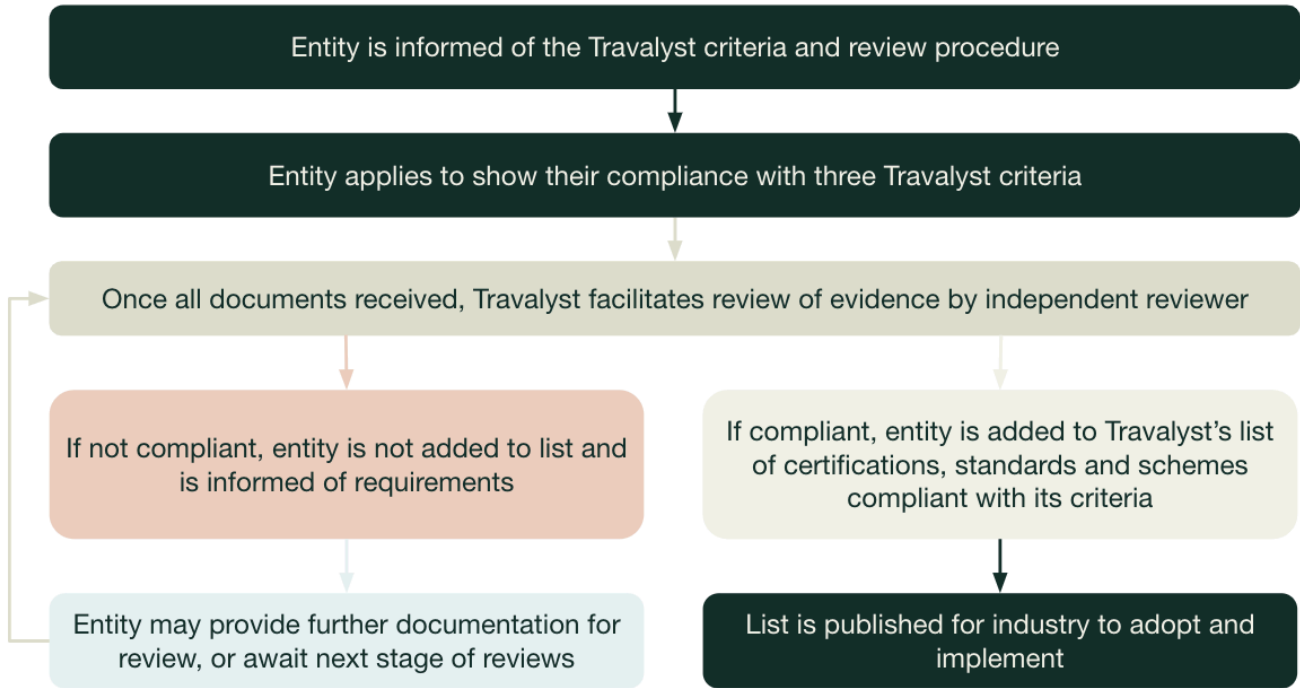


Figure 1: A flowchart to visualise the Certification Initiative Review Procedure

What documentation is required for the review process?

The table below outlines the documentation requested by Travalyst to evidence compliance.

Travalyst Criteria	Documentation accepted as proof
<p>1 Third-party audit that includes on-site and/or online assessment of sustainable practices reported by the property.</p>	<p>1.1a. Extract from process manual describing third-party audit process and frequency.</p> <p><i>Or</i></p> <p>1.1b. Promotional material (e.g. website/brochure) for properties, detailing third-party audits required to achieve certification.</p> <p><i>And</i></p> <p>1.2. Example of a recently completed third-party audit evaluation (less than 12 months old).</p> <p><i>And</i></p> <p>1.3. Evidence of qualifications of auditors (e.g. CVs, course certificates)</p>
<p>2 Public available standards upon which the certification or scheme is based.</p>	<p>2.1. Weblink provided by the applying entity, where the standards are accessible.</p>
<p>3 Focuses on evaluating the impact of social and/or economic, and/or environmental factors, among others, as encompassed within, but not restricted, to the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).</p>	<p>3.1. Certification or scheme standard/s.</p> <p>3.2. Applying entity is asked to share their own comparison of their standard with the SDGs, using a template prepared by Travalyst.</p> <p>3.3. Information on how tiered certification reflects different levels of coverage of criteria within the certification or scheme standard (e.g. bronze, silver, gold, platinum etc)</p>

What happens after the review process?

Following successful review, applicant certifications, standards and schemes will be included in Travalyst's list of entities compliant with its criteria. Travalyst makes its list of compliant entities publicly available for its partners and the wider industry to align behind. In doing so Travalyst aims to drive consistency in the information presented to travellers, as well as give compliant accommodation providers visibility on global booking platforms.

If a certification, standard or scheme owner applies and is not compliant with the Travalyst criteria, they will be informed of missing requirements and are welcome to provide further documentation for review. There is no limit on the number of times an entity can re-apply, and there is no closing date for the initiative.

Participating in our certifications initiative may be an early step in a certification body's sustainability journey, and we encourage them to seek further support and accreditation where appropriate.

Travalyst is not facilitating the onboarding process between entities compliant with its criteria, and travel booking platforms. Our partners reserve the right to display certifications, standards and schemes on their platforms at their own discretion. Some of our partners work with sustainability data management platforms to support their processing of data associated with sustainability initiatives, and therefore certifications, standards and schemes may be requested by our partners to liaise with these platforms directly.

We expect our criteria to become more robust with each iteration, in line with the evolving legislative landscape. As our criteria evolve, we will iteratively review all certifications, standards and schemes on our list. This is so that we can continue to support the certifications industry on its journey towards regulatory compliance, and raise the minimum threshold these entities meet over time.

How can I find out more information?

For more information visit <https://travalyst.org/work/certifications-initiative/>

For any comments or queries, please contact us at certifications@travalyst.org