

2015

# CERTIFICATION GUIDE

## Information on the Responsible Tourism Tanzania Certification Scheme.

Responsible Tourism Tanzania (RTTZ) is a non-profit organization that will encourage and promote a more sustainable tourism industry within Tanzania. This guide will provide the information required by a company that wishes to be certified by RTTZ through the process of third party onsite verification or auditing.



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## ABOUT US

Responsible Tourism Tanzania (RTTZ) is a non-profit organization that will encourage and promote a more sustainable tourism industry within Tanzania. RTTZ has been established in 2011 as a trusteeship with a governance and membership base that includes the key stakeholders within the tourism industry. RTTZ will provide various services or functions to support the tourism industry to manage their business in a sustainable manner; these include providing internationally accepted standards and guidelines, an auditing and evaluation process that will help guide the tourism venture to improving their actions and the product accompanied with a certification scheme that recognizes the company's efforts and successes. RTTZ will also be a key partner to develop the suitable regulatory environment by engaging in lobbying and advocacy on responsible tourism practices and favorable policies. The members will be provided with support and training to enable the tourism enterprises to understand and act according to the principles of a sustainable management. RTTZ will further support responsible tourism in Tanzania by promoting both the principles of RTTZ and the tourism products that are compliant to the international market.

## OUR VISION

Responsible Tourism Tanzania is about encouraging and promoting a more sustainable tourism industry within Tanzania. It stands for protecting and caring for the diverse cultures of the country, as well as its natural environment, whilst optimizing on business and economic sustainability. It aspires to support and communicate a positive impression of Tanzanian tourism, both locally and for the global market. Responsible Tourism Tanzania believes that the best in Tanzanian tourism is yet to come.

## OUR MISSION

Responsible Tourism Tanzania mission will be to support and guide the tourism industry to a holistic management approach by providing:

- Internationally aligned standards and guidelines with a clear set of practical ideas to introduce the tourism enterprises to a sustainable management approach.
- An auditing and evaluation process that will help guide the tourism venture to improving their actions and the product.
- A certification scheme with the branding for recognition of the company's efforts and successes
- Lobbying and advocacy on behalf of the tourism industry to develop policies and regulations within Tanzania for the sustainability of the resources and cultures and people.
- Information and practical ideas, tools as well as training to assist the tourism enterprises to practice and participate responsible tourism.
- Promoting the responsible tourism operators and products in Tanzania to the international tourism market.

## ORGANIZATIONS ON THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Responsible Tourism Tanzania board of trustees consist of members from both the public and private sector, the board is configured with 60% from the private sector, 20% public sector and 20% NGO's.

- Tourism Confederation of Tanzania
- Hotel Association of Tanzania
- Zanzibar Association of Tourism Investors
- Tanzania Association of Tour Operators
- Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism
- Tanzania Tourist Board
- Honeyguide Foundation
- Round Table Africa

## CERTIFICATION

By certifying your business with Responsible Tourism Tanzania, you will be able to prove your commitment to environmentally, culturally, and socio-economically responsible tourism to clientele on an international level. With this certification, your products and services will meet the highest of industry standards, thereby bringing peace of mind to businesses, employees, and customers alike.

Customers want to make informed choices. With RTTZ accreditation, you can guarantee them a business plan that is one they can trust and feel good about supporting.

- Becoming RTTZ certified will benefit your business by:
  - Improving the environment performance of your products and services
  - Handling energy and natural resources more sustainably and efficiently, thus leading to reduction in costs
  - Investing in your future
  - Reducing environmental risks within your business and environment
  - Giving you a market edge
  - Strengthening the confidence of your company
  - Creating a good reputation within the public, authoritative, and financial sphere
  - Becoming a role-model, inspiring others to make responsible changes within their businesses

## CERTIFICATION LEVELS

The first and second level of certification will require the tourism company to conduct a self-assessment followed up by an independent external audit. The last two steps or levels will only require an independent third party to audit the establishment.



**SEED:** The first entry-level accreditation offered. The criteria within this level illustrate the company's initial interest in adopting the triple bottom line approach. These initial criteria introduce the framework for responsible management and policy development, as well as prepare the member to plan and monitor their overall impact. This initial step plants the seed for a responsible business future. In order to qualify for SEED certification the company must:

- Show that initial steps have been taken by the company to include a sustainable management system to management.
- Have met no less than 70% of the required SEED criteria in an audit.
- Where any criteria that have not been met (no more than 30%) the company will address these shortfalls within a period 3 months of the audit date and show evidence that the shortfalls have been rectified.

- Have no complaints made on the company by other certification bodies that are partners with RTTZ (these are: Travelife, any member of the Sustainable Tourism Certification Alliance Africa).
- A company can only remain on SEED level for a maximum of 2 years after which the company must improve and apply for the SAPLING certification level.



SAPLING: The Company has taken on the principles of a triple bottom line approach and has now started to incorporate these into their day-to-day actions and communication. The training of employees has now been implemented, and systems are being developed to record and report to directors and to the public the company's policies and impacts. In order to qualify for SAPLING certification the company must:

- Have completed and met 100% of the criteria in the SEED level during an audit.
- Have met no less than 70% of the required SAPLING criteria in an audit.
- Where any criteria that have not been met (no more than 30%) the company will address these shortfalls within a period 3 months of the audit date and show evidence that the shortfalls have been rectified.
- Have no complaints made on the company by other certification bodies that are partners with RTTZ (these are: Travelife, any member of the Sustainable Tourism Certification Alliance Africa).
- A company can only remain on SAPLING level for a maximum of 2 years after which the company must improve and apply for TREE level.



TREE: Having operated for a period of time, the member can now prove that their working culture and daily operations are fully integrated into a sustainable and responsible management approach. Systems are in place to monitor and redirect the operations and all the employees understand the triple bottom line approach. This step forms the core of the company culture. In order to qualify for TREE certification the company must:

- Have completed and met 100% of the criteria in the SAPLING level during an audit.
- Have met no less than 70% of the required TREE criteria in an audit.
- Where any criteria that have not been met (no more than 30%) the company will address these shortfalls within a period 3 months of the audit date and show evidence that the shortfalls have been rectified.
- Have no complaints made on the company by other certification bodies that are partners with RTTZ (these are: Travelife, any member of the Sustainable Tourism Certification Alliance Africa).
- A company can remain on TREE level indefinitely, the company must have a verification audit every 2 years to ensure that their management continues to fulfill the required standards.



**FRUIT: NOTE THAT RTTZ HAVE NOT YET DEVELOPED THIS LEVEL AND ARE NOT CERTIFYING FOR THIS LEVEL UNTIL 2016:** Now as a role-model in responsible tourism, the member can demonstrate appropriate actions, disseminate information, and ultimately change their surrounding environment, build a clientele, and urge suppliers and partners to adopt similarly responsible practices.

## PREPARING FOR CERTIFICATION

STEP  
01

Register as a subscriber. The company must fill out the subscriber application form available on line (it may take up to 5 days for us to respond to your application). This will allow the company to have access to RTTZ toolkits and resources and also receive regular news bulletins that are sent.

STEP  
02

Print the standards. (downloadable version of the standards are available on the RTTZ website). Use the toolkits for each of the sections in this website to understand more about how to implement these standards.

STEP  
04

Download the criteria that are required in order to comply with the first and second certification level, the Seed and Sapling (downloadable version of the standards on RTTZ website). This is in a simple checklist format. Use this checklist to assess the company. Become acquainted with the website and use the website tools to aid your company to achieve the standards.

STEP  
04

Become acquainted with the website and use the website tools to aid your company in achieving these standards. The website has an online library that has a handbook to sustainability, toolkits, sample policies and other useful documents.

STEP  
05

Conduct a practice self audit. Pass through your camp or lodge and conduct an audit with your management and staff, by using the checklist provided as a guide. An audit will highlight any areas you need to improve upon, as well as determine the level you have reached on the (SEED or SAPLING).

STEP  
06

Book an audit once your company has completed Step 5 and are ready to book an appointment for one of our approved auditors to audit your company. We will schedule audits routinely book and as effectively as possible, and you will be notified about the specific dates.

## AUDIT APPLICATION

STEP  
01

**APPLICATION STEP:** fill out the applicants details form from the website including your accommodation facility name and contacts. Download and read the RTTZ terms and conditions and ensure that you agree to accept them (NB: you will be required to sign this and send it to us in step 2 when you upload all the documents.)

STEP  
02

**DOCUMENT REVIEW:** use the document checklist on the website to find out what you will need to have to submit in writing to RTTZ for a document review.

Start to collate all the documentation that you already have and identify the documents that are missing. You will find plenty of help on the RTTZ website to assist you with policy writing, data collection and recording of training etc. Please feel free to contact RTTZ for guidance.

STEP  
03

**BOOK AN ONSITE, 3RD PARTY AUDIT:** in addition to the document review RTTZ will need to verify that you have complied with the criteria for the seed level that cannot be checked in a document review. Depending on the size of the property this should take from a few hours to a full day to complete.

You can go to the RTTZ website and book your audit using the form provided. To ensure cost effectiveness RTTZ will try and schedule audits so that several can take place in the same area around the same time. These will happen approximately every 6 months. If you would like to book an individual audit, which will be slightly more expensive, please indicate this on the checklist together with you specified dates, and RTTZ will consider your request.

You will be expected to provide transport and accommodation, if required, for the auditor.

Once RTTZ reply to confirm the dates of the audit, you will need to pay the audit fee in accordance with the invoice and instructions provided by RTTZ.

#### STEP 04

**PREPARE AND COORDINATE YOUR AUDIT:** once you have booked your audit make sure that you are ready for the auditor. Carry out your own audit onsite to see if you think that you can comply with the criteria. Make any changes if necessary before the audit.

Plan the audit with the RTTZ coordinator and the auditor making sure that the transport and accommodation are organized.

Inform employees on site the date of the audit, and explain to them the process.

The auditor will carry out the audit, and then submit their report to the RTTZ coordinator who will then send you an audit report, giving recommendations and identifying any changes that need to be made.

#### STEP 05

**IMPLEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:** once you have received the audit report from RTTZ you will need to consider the recommendations that they have made, and carry out the necessary changes. Once the changes have been made, the evidence will need to be relayed to RTTZ e.g. a photo, a signed document, etc.

#### STEP 06

**REVIEW BY CERTIFICATION COMMITTEE:** once the document review and the audit processes are completed, the application together with all the reports are submitted to the certification committee for review by the RTTZ coordinator.

The committee will meet every three months to consider all the completed applications at each level. If the committee decides that there are still changes that need to be made in order for the organization to be fully compliant then the process will return back to Step 5.

If the committee decides that the organization has complied with all the RTTZ criteria, certification will be awarded.

All information that the organization provides to RTTZ is treated as strictly confidential. Documentation is only accessible to certain RTTZ staff and the Certification Panel. All auditors are required to sign a confidentiality agreement with RTTZ.

## APPEALS AND CONFLICTS

**Auditor-** the first point of appeal should be made during the closing meeting of the audit when the auditor is delivering the findings of the audit. At this point, if a company feels that they auditor has not correctly interpreted the criteria against their facility, the company should discuss the matter with the auditor. If the auditor

is still insistent on the finding and the facilities are not on the same view, the facility will have to take the matter to the audit coordinator. Inform the auditor that you would like to take the matter to the audit coordinator, and the auditor will be able to provide you with their contacts. During the audit, the auditor has the last and final say.

Audit coordinator- the audit coordinators roles is to assist with the coordination and planning of an audit as well as acting as a sounding board for the auditor whist in the field. The auditor can call the audit coordinator at any time for a cross reference or different option. The company can request the audit coordinator to review a finding on the auditor's report. The company must send an email to the audit coordinator requesting for their attention, the company must provide the criteria number, the auditors findings and describe in detail their complaint or reason for appeal.

Standards and certification committee- the final avenue for an appeal by the company is to write to the standards and certification committee. If the company has failed to convince the audit coordinator or wishes to complain about either the audit coordinator or auditor, the company must then take the matter to the standards and audit committee. Their contacts will be found in the terms and conditions of an audit. The standards and certification committee's roles are:

1. Appeals- to accommodate all appeals on any audit that has been carried out and make rulings if appeal is to be heard and to communicate the outcome of the appeal to the management.
2. Conflicts/ disagreements- to assist in any conflicts or disagreements regarding the certification process and/or standards.

## AUDIT TARIFFS

RTTZ charge an audit fee and then on top of that for the auditor's time to travel to the audit. This is his/her travel time to get to the tourism property that has requested an audit, for example the Serengeti will require 2 days travel (there and back) and 4 to 6 hours in the camp/lodge for the audit, so we will generally charge for 2 days travel and the audit fee. Apart from the cost of the auditor's time, you are required to provide accommodation and transport to and from your camp/lodge.

### TRAVEL TIME CHARGES<sup>i</sup>

- \$75 per day of travel.

AUDIT TARIFFS	SEED and SAPLING	TREE RATE*
▪ 1-10 Beds or 1-5 Rooms	\$100	\$200
▪ 11-24 Beds or 6-12 Rooms	\$150	\$300
▪ 25-48 Beds or 13-24 Rooms-	\$200	\$400
▪ 49-80 Beds or 25-40 rooms	\$250	\$500
▪ 81-120 Beds or 41-60 Rooms	\$300	\$600
▪ 120+ Beds or 61+ Rooms-	\$350	\$700

\*Tree rate costs apply for the first TREE audit only, all subsequent verification audits will be costed at the SEED and SAPLING rates above.

<sup>i</sup> Occasionally RTTZ will offer a SPECIAL, this is when audits are carried out in one geographic area therefore travel costs can be shared. In this case, no travel time will be charged.