

# MOVING TOWARD REGENERATIVE TOURISM

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THIS GUIDE PROVIDES BASIC INFORMATION TO SUPPORT BUSINESSES TAKING THAT FIRST STEP TOWARDS REGENERATIVE TOURISM.

Queenstown's remote geographical position in the world and global concern about climate change, see our visitor economy face increasing challenges. Our goal to become a regenerative tourism destination will help provide opportunities to attract travelers with the same values and mindset, who want to stay longer. To move towards regenerative tourism, the basics of sustainability need to be in place. Many of the district's businesses are already showing leadership in sustainability, but often the hardest part is knowing where to start.

## WHAT IS A REGENERATIVE TOURISM DESTINATION?

"Regenerative tourism has a net-positive impact on the environment, society, culture and the economy, aiming to create a more just, vibrant, and sustainable world. While sustainable tourism seeks to reduce travel's potential harms, regenerative tourism takes a wider view, avoiding extractive economic models. It recognises that the visitor economy is part of an interconnected system. Simply put, regenerative tourism gives back more than it takes. It improves wellbeing and is the best path towards a tourism industry the Queenstown Lakes District can be proud of." - Travel to a thriving future 2023 (Queenstown Lakes regenerative tourism plan).

Read more about the Queenstown Lakes' regenerative tourism plan [here](#).

# WHY SHOULD BUSINESSES GET INVOLVED?

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## GOOD FOR BUSINESS

Discerning customers increasingly seek out tourism businesses that are sustainable and socially and ethically responsible. The same applies to other businesses you may deal with (like banks or regulatory bodies) which increasingly prioritise responsible businesses.

## GOOD FOR THE BOTTOM LINE

Discerning customers increasingly seek out tourism Understanding where your energy comes from, looking at ways to be more efficient and moving from fossil fuel to renewable energy will result in reduced operating costs. Consider electrifying your business - unlike most other countries, most of New Zealand's electricity (80-85%) is generated from renewable energy sources. More information [here](#).

## BE A LEADER

The visitor economy faces tightening local and national government regulations with the increasing impacts of climate change. Rather than be forced to make changes later, change now and get ahead.

## ATTRACT AND RETAIN THE BEST WORKERS

Socially and environmentally responsible employers are increasingly sought-after.

## LONG-TERM GAINS

Being part of the regenerative tourism approach will be good for your social license, brand and customer goodwill for generations to come.

## DESTINATION MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

We can provide advice as we transition to a regenerative tourism model. Get in touch now - contact Destination Queenstown and Lake Wānaka Tourism's Sustainability Manager [Micaela McLeod](#).

## HOW DO BUSINESSES START TO TRANSITION TOWARDS A REGENERATIVE MODEL?

### ENGAGE YOUR TEAMS

With the help of your teams, identify the priority areas for improvement. Involving your staff in your efforts from the beginning can be highly motivating and helps your teams become an integral part of your success and your story.

### KEEP RECORDS

Make sure you have simple records of your power, fuel and waste to use as a baseline so you can mark your progress and tell the story of your achievements.

### MAKE AN ACTION PLAN

Make a plan to tackle 2 – 3 of your priority areas for improvement with achievable goals. You can't change everything at once, so start with the smallest changes that make the biggest impact. There are numerous companies you can engage and/or free resources that can help with your plan. (See below)

### TAKE ACTION

Share your plan with your team and get started! Don't strive for perfection, whatever steps you take to do the right thing are steps in the right direction and remember you can adjust your plan.

# WHAT BUSINESS TOOLS COULD I USE?

There are several tools, certificates and frameworks to help businesses become more sustainable and many are free. Find one that aligns with your business vision and that provides the kind of information that your customers might look for. Other factors to consider are the cost and your internal capacity and time to provide the information required. Listed below are some of those most suitable for the visitor economy.

## THE GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE TOURISM COUNCIL (GSTC)

Free guidance – no certification.

A great place to start - the Global Sustainable Tourism Council establishes and manages global standards for sustainable travel and tourism. The GSTC Industry Criteria provide basic guidelines for businesses of all sizes to become more sustainable and help them choose sustainable tourism programmes that fulfil these global criteria. They can also serve as the basis for certificate.

Customised templates provide guidance on what you need to look for to measure your compliance with the GSTC industry criteria. They are downloadable from the GSTC website free of charge.

The criteria are organized around four main themes:

- Effective sustainability planning
- Maximising social and economic benefits for the local community
- Enhancing cultural heritage
- Reducing negative impacts to the environment on for sustainability.

## B CORP

Free assessment tool, cost for B Corp certification.

The free B Impact Assessment online tool enables businesses of any size to measure, manage, and improve their impact on the environment, customers, employees, suppliers, shareholders and the community, by answering a series of questions about business practices and outputs. The free self-assessment tool provides clear steps to B Corp certification if required.

Requires reasonable effort to gather the initial data. Businesses need to adopt governing documents which include a commitment to a 'triple bottom line' approach.



REFERENCE: [BCORP](#)

## FUTURE-FIT BUSINESS

Free online business tool that helps define what it takes for a business to be regenerative – no certification.

The free FutureFit Business Benchmark is a selfassessment business tool that helps you to:

- Set out your environmental and social ambitions.
- Provide detailed guidance on how to make and measure meaningful progress in pursuit of those ambitions.
- Transform how you engage with your stakeholders, by shifting the narrative to focus on the future: where the company is going, how it's working to get there and why that is good for both the business and society as a whole.

You can also join an online [Changemaker Community](#) to access member-only videos, resources and learning tools and have the opportunity to connect with others on the Future-Fit journey. At this point membership is free.

## **THE GLOBAL GOALS OR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)**

Free resources for Sustainable Development Goals - no certification.

In 2015, World Leaders adopted the 17 SDGs to build a greener, fairer, better world by 2030. They agreed to achieve sustainable development in its three dimensions – economic, social and environmental. It was a call to action to ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

Quite high-level, you can sign up to choose from an array of positive actions and resources to contribute towards any Global Goal on this website. Goals 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14 and 15 in particular, relate to tourism business.



REFERENCE: [UNITED NATIONS](#)

## **QUALMARK SUSTAINABLE TOURISM BUSINESS ACCREDITATION: BRONZE, SILVER AND GOLD**

Annual membership fee, based on tiered business structure.

Qualmark is New Zealand tourism’s official quality assurance organization. Since 2016 its Bronze, Silver or Gold awards have been based on Sustainable Tourism Business (STB) Criteria. Businesses are evaluated on an annual basis by their local Qualmark Specialist, who shares resources, guides and insights to ensure sustainable development and growth of the business. Qualmark’s STB Criteria was also the first in New Zealand to gain official recognition by the global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), meaning members can be confident achieving a Qualmark certification meets global standards of sustainability.

## **EARTHCHECK**

Annual Fee.

EarthCheck is an international certification, consulting and advisory group for sustainable destinations and tourism organisations of all sizes.

Programmes are science-backed and delivered by experts. It also has a cloud-based software programme that helps collect the data and metrics to easily produce visual reports for your sustainability programme.

## **GREEN GLOBE INTERNATIONAL STANDARD FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM**

Annual accreditation fee.

Developed specifically for the travel and tourism industry, Green Globe is an international certification for sustainable operation and management. It assists organisations to improve their economic, social and environmental sustainability while being rewarded and recognised for it. The Green Globe Standard provides organisations with a framework to conduct a comprehensive assessment of their environmental sustainability performance, through which they can monitor improvements and achieve certification.

## **RAINBOW TICK**

Annual membership fee which includes education hours, consultation hours and accreditation. One-off education sessions can also be booked for nonmembers (for a set fee).

International research shows that diverse and inclusive workplaces are more likely to attract highquality applicants, retain staff, and boost productivity. The Rainbow Tick certification process tests whether a workplace understands and welcomes sexual and gender diversity and involves an ongoing quality improvement process, with advice and resources on best practice, including the writing and application of appropriate policies.

## **LIVING WAGE EMPLOYER ACCREDITATION**

Annual accreditation fee.

The Living Wage Employer accreditation system allows employers to secure a license to become accredited and use the ‘Living Wage Employer’ trademark. It supports the recruitment and retention of staff, research shows it lowers absenteeism, boosts morale and enhances productivity. Being one of New Zealand’s Living Wage Employers also improves the reputation of businesses.