

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

2022-2023 Edition

“SAFE TOURISM”

LEARN ABOUT ALL STEPS AND PROCEDURES YOU NEED TO FOLLOW ONCE YOU DECIDE TO APPLY.

Table of contents

1. DEFINITIONS	22.	ABOUT THE AWARD	53.	ABOUT THE COMPETITION	64.
ABOUT THE APPLICATION FORM	74.1.	GENERAL INFORMATION	74.2.	PART 1- GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE PACKAGE	
	8a)	<i>Presentation of the package</i>	8b)	<i>Presentation of the lead applicant</i>	
	9c)	<i>Presentation of the partners - service providers involved in the package</i>	10d)	<i>Category for the competition</i>	
	114.3.	PART 2 - ASTA THEME QUESTIONNAIRE	12a)	<i>Presentation of the package activities related to the theme</i>	
			12b)	<i>Theme related criteria for the service providers</i>	
	124.4.	PART 3 - SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PACKAGE	134.5.	PART 4 - SIGNATURE	15
HELP OR ADVICE - LIST OF NATIONAL CONTACT POINTS					15

1. DEFINITIONS

APPLICATION SET: The application set is the folder containing all the documents necessary to apply for ASTA, namely the application form, the assessment forms and the Guidelines for Applicants.

ASEAN: The Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN, was established on 8 August 1967 in Bangkok, Thailand, with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration) by the Founding Fathers of ASEAN, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. Brunei Darussalam then joined on 7 January 1984, Viet Nam on 28 July 1995, Lao PDR and Myanmar on 23 July 1997, and Cambodia on 30 April 1999, making up what is today the ten Member States of ASEAN. More information on ASEAN: <http://asean.org/>

ASEAN TOURISM STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2025: The Tourism Strategic Plan is an agreement between all the Tourism Ministers of the ASEAN countries developing an action plan to achieve common goals by 2025.

Access the strategic plan here: <http://www.asean.org/storage/2012/05/ATSP-2016-2025.pdf>

ASEAN TOURISM STANDARDS: The ASEAN Member States have considered the standardization of tourism services essential for helping ASEAN to be a Quality Single Destination. Several Standards have been developed in the past years:

- ASEAN MICE Venue Standard
- ASEAN Clean Tourist City Standard
- ASEAN Community Based Tourism Standard
- ASEAN Green Hotel Standard
- ASEAN Homestay Standard
- ASEAN Public Toilet Standard
- ASEAN Spa Services Standard

For the Sustainability Criteria of ASTA, all the indicators have been extracted from the ASEAN Standards for Community Based Tourism, Green Hotel, Homestay and Public Toilets.

Access to all ASEAN Tourism Standards: <http://asean.org/asean-economic-community/asean-tourism-ministers-meeting-m-atm/other-documents-2/>

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA: ASTA application will be assessed according to 3 sets of criteria:

- **ASTA eligibility criteria:** Description of the package and the service proposed according to ASTA rules
- **Theme related Criteria:** Description of the activities and the services proposed in the package regarding the chosen theme.
- **Sustainability Criteria:** Assessment of the service providers included in the package according to ASEAN Standards.

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE: the national assessors of each country will be responsible for evaluating the veracity of the information in each application. ASTA application will be assessed in 2 steps:

STEP 1- Desk assessment

STEP 2- Field assessment

ASSESSORS: Assessors are individually appointed and trained by each National Tourism Organisation to assess the application. The Assessors will undertake the desk and field assessment at national level.

LEAD APPLICANT: The lead applicant is the organisation coordinating the partners for the application, and is in charge of submitting the application. It is the main contact for the National Tourism Organisation in charge of the assessment and in case of winning; it will receive the trophy for all the partners. The Lead Applicant has a central role and is responsible for the quality of the application.

NATIONAL TOURISM ORGANISATION (NTO): NTOs are Tourism Organisation depending on the Ministry of Tourism, according to each country's regulations. They are in charge of launching and promoting the ASTA. They are in charge of coordinating the application phase, supporting applicants and organising the field assessment. They are in charge of promoting the winning packages.

PARTNERS: The partners are all the service providers involved in a product proposed to the ASTA. They are coordinated by the Lead Applicant. Each partner has to be mentioned in the Application, with the URL of its website and a contact email.

SERVICE PROVIDERS: The 5 categories of service providers of an ASTA package are the following:

- **LOCAL TRANSPORTATION:** It can be the pick-up and drop-off transportation from the place of departure and arrival, but also bikes provided for a cycling activity, the boat in a cruise... The objective is to ensure that the local transportation is provided and included in the product.
- **ACCOMMODATION:** It includes all forms of sleeping facilities for visitors including hotels and the home stay categories.
- **LOCAL FOOD & BEVERAGE SERVICES:** It is a form of service where traditional and typical food and beverages are produced and / or sold by local people in food stalls, local restaurants or other similar outlets. This includes also the meals provided by the hotel, the home stay of the local community
- **ACTIVITY PROVIDERS:** organisations in charge of an activity during the tour such as a visit, a walk, a cooking class, a sight seeing, a sport...
- **LOCAL COMMUNITIES:** a village, a district or a group of people benefiting from the tourism activity represents a local community.
- **GUIDES AND LOCAL GUIDES:** The definition can vary according to each country (“local guide”, “community guide”, “interpreter”...), it has to be adapted for each national context and regulations. For the purpose of ASTA, it is intended as a local person who guides visitors in its own language, with the assistance of a national guide when appropriate, and interprets the cultural and natural heritage of an area, which person normally possesses an area-specific qualification usually issued and/or recognised by the local community or authority. The objective is to ensure, when possible, that the guide accompanying the visitors in a local community understands the local language and knows the local culture. It is possible to involve one national guide and one local guide for the same product.
- **TOUR OPERATOR / TRAVEL AGENCY / GROUND HANDLER:** For the purpose of ASTA, the package proposed must already exist for at least a year. The package must already be sold and have a price. The visitor must be able to book the package online or via a partner. The partner with the agreement to commercialise tourism packages are quite always Tour Operators, travel Agencies or ground handlers. These types or partners must therefore be part of the Partners of the application. If the partner in charge of the commercialisation has another status, it still has to be evaluated in the Assessment form regarding “Tour operators, travel agency” in the Application Form.

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM: For the purpose of ASTA, “sustainable tourism” provides direct and indirect benefits to the local population, promoting cultural and/or natural heritage, and respecting

environmental and hygienic standards, all of these must be consistent with the ASEAN standards;

SUSTAINABLE RURAL TOURISM PACKAGE (Rural Area): For the purpose of ASTA, a sustainable rural tourism package is based in a rural area, which is defined as an open swath of land that has few homes or other buildings, and not very many people. A rural area's population density is very low. It is a geographic area that is located outside towns and cities. Rural tourism focuses on actively participating in the rural lifestyle, which is not only about visiting agricultural or non-urban areas. Rural tourism includes farm-based holidays, but also comprises special interest nature holidays and eco-tourism, walking, climbing and riding holidays, adventure, sport and health tourism, hunting and angling, educational travel, arts and heritage tourism, and in some areas, ethnic tourism.

The criteria to define a rural area are listed below. The area of the product proposed by the applicants must comply with 4 out of the 5 criteria to be eligible to compete for the ASTA rural package category.

Criteria for rural areas:

1. An area outside of cities and towns;
2. Outside settlements with more than 10,000 resident population and
3. Sparsely populated with small settlements;
4. Characterized by farms, vegetation, and open spaces;
5. Mostly providing homestay and B&B to visitors.

SUSTAINABLE URBAN TOURISM PACKAGE (Urban Area): For the purpose of ASTA, an urban tourism package is based in an urban area, which is a location characterized by high human population density and vast human-built features in comparison to the areas surrounding it. The team of applicants where the package is proposed must be located within a district or a zone which is part of a patchwork of interconnected consumption experiences or sub-systems, spatially dispersed within a tourist city, (defined in the context of ASTA as urban tourism destinations), such as entertainment or cultural zones, with symbols, a unique language and a range of icons to differentiate the experience of place consumption. These districts, zones (part of bigger cities) or small-scale cities are also from where the surrounding region can be explored.

The criteria to define an urban area are listed in the table below. The area of the package proposed by the applicants must comply with 4 out of the 5 criteria to be eligible to compete for the ASTA urban package category.

Criteria for urban areas:

1. A location with an integrated public transport network;
2. A human settlement with high population density and infrastructure of built environment;
3. Counting more than five (5) hotels;
4. The package or the main activity is not more than one hour drive from the accommodation.
5. Located less than two hours drive from the city

SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT FORMS: For each category of service providers (toilet, Accommodation, Local Food & Beverage Service, Activity involving Local Community, Local guide and Tour Operator / Travel Agency) a checklist has been developed with 22 criteria extracted from the corresponding ASEAN Tourism Standards. These are the sustainability assessment forms.

Most packages will involve several partners in each category, the assessment form is to be filled only once for all the services of one category. The service providers of a package all share the responsibility of the package proposed to the tourists.

TOILETS: For the purposes of the award, "Toilets" are defined as easy and free access to toilets that visitors can use during their visit. It can be toilets in a public area (market, park...) as well as the toilets

of the local food and beverage service, the local community, the activity provider. The toilets available for the visitor during the product must be assessed according to its ASTA Sustainability Assessment Form. Toilets are not a category of service provider, as it is proposed by several of them. Therefore all the toilets proposed during the tour must comply with sustainability criteria.

TOURISM DESTINATION: A tourism destination is a geographical area with a common identity, regrouping an ensemble of services for tourism purposes. The aim of ASTA is to improve the quality of tourism packages in each country, in order to promote the same level of quality within the “ASEAN Destination”.

TOURISM PACKAGE: The aim of ASTA is to improve the quality within the ASEAN countries and to foster the public-private partnership. Therefore ASTA focused on “Combined tourism products”, best known as “tourism packages”, or “packaged tours”.

A Tourism Package for ASTA is a combination of one or more activities including at least one overnight stay, 1 meal in a local food & beverage service, 1 activity including a local community, 1 local guide, with an easy and free access to 1 toilet/toilet, and local transportation beginning and ending in an ASEAN country.

In order to ensure sustainability, the package for ASTA must already exist and be sold for at least one year. This avoids promoting products that could have great quality but with no market space.

2. ABOUT THE AWARD

WHAT is ASTA ?

ASTA is the ASEAN Sustainable Tourism Award, created under Lao PDR Presidency in 2016. It is a competition to award the most sustainable urban and rural tourism packages in each of the ASEAN Countries. Two editions have already been launched, with each time a different theme

Do I have to pay a fee to participate in ASTA ?

No, ASTA competition is free

What is the award?

We want to give more visibility to sustainable package on the tourism market, therefore the winners will benefit from a large international and national promotion, with for instance:

- Dedicated space on <https://www.visitsoutheastasia.travel/> and on the national marketing website
- Invitation to the ASEAN Tourism Fair for the Award Ceremony where you will receive a trophy
- Integration of your package our national tourism promotion material used for national and international tourism fairs
- Promotion in the press, social media and tourism communication channels

What are the categories ?

ASTA has only 2 categories: Rural packages and Urban packages

How many winners will receive the Award ?

There is a maximum of 2 winners per country, 1 rural package and 1 urban package.

3. ABOUT THE COMPETITION

Who can apply ?

The competition will award existing sustainable tourism packages, therefore if you are a partner of an existing package tour you can apply.

How and when to apply?

You have to send the completed and signed application form to the national contact point before the deadline.

The application forms can be downloaded on

<http://www.tourism.gov.bn/SitePages/Tourism%20Standards.aspx>

What is the assessment procedure?

ASTA application will be assessed in 2 steps

STEP 1- Desk assessment

National assessors will check if your application respects the 3 sets of criteria and select the 3 applications with the highest score in each category.

The desk assessment will be undertaken directly on the application form and the assessment forms.

STEP 2- Field assessment

National assessors will visit the best packages to verify the veracity of the application and select the best application in each category.

What are the assessment criteria ?

ASTA application will be assessed in according to 3 sets of criteria

#1-ASTA eligibility criteria: Minimum requirement for packages

These criteria are mandatory, if one of this criteria is not fulfilled, the application will be rejected.

The application must be

- 1) Completed in English or one of the official language of the ASEAN
- 2) Submitted within the deadline
- 3) Proposed by one service provider (Lead Applicant)
- 4) Signed by the Lead applicant

The package proposed must

- 5) Combine one or more activities including at least one overnight stay, 1 activity, 1 meal in a local food & beverage service, 1 activity including a local community, 1 local guide, with easy and free access to 1 toilet/restroom, and local transportation.

- 6) be located within a country of the ASEAN
- 7) Exist at least for one year and purchasable online
- 8) Respond to 1 of the two categories of ASTA: Rural package or Urban package
- 9) Respect the National and ASEAN legislation and policies regarding illegal human and animal activity

The service providers involved in the package must

- 10) All be nominated with a contact information

#2-Theme related Criteria: Description of the activities and the services proposed in the package regarding the chosen theme..

These criteria are mandatory, if one of this criteria is not fulfilled, the application will be rejected.

- 1) The package activities must respond to the theme of the competition
- 2) The service providers must respect 5 criteria related to the theme of the competition

#3- Sustainability Criteria: Assessment of the services providers against ASEAN Sustainability Standards

The package must achieve a minimum requirement to pass the step 1 of the assessment process.

For each category of the service providers involved in the tour, a sustainable form is requested, and you will have to achieve at least 50% of the scoring system for rural and 60% for urban packages

The criteria are based on the existing ASEAN Standards

- Categories: Local Food and beverage, Hotels & Homestay, Toilets, Community involvement, Local Guide and Tour operators

Most packages will involve several services in each category, the assessment form is to be filled only once for all the services of this category. The service providers of a package all share the responsibility of the package proposed to the tourists.

When will we know the results ?

The results will be published by each national Tourism Organisation by the term of their assessment

If I have questions on the application, what can I do ?

You can find a lot of explanations in this Guidelines for Applicants, please read it through carefully. If you have doubts, you can write to your national contact point.

4. ABOUT THE APPLICATION FORM

4.1. General information

- The Application can be submitted in any official language of the ASEAN Countries or in English.

- The applications can be filled electronically or handwritten
- The application must be submitted to the national tourism organisation of the package's country.
- The application must be submitted before the given deadline, if not the application will not be assessed
- The application is divided in 4 parts with subparts
 - Part 1- General information about the package**
 - 1.1. Presentation of the package
 - 1.2. Presentation of the lead applicant
 - 1.3. Presentation of the partners - service providers involved in the package
 - 1.4. Category for the competition
 - Part 2 - ASTA theme questionnaire**
 - 2.1. Presentation of the package activities related to the theme
 - 2.2. Theme related criteria for the service providers
 - Part 3 - Sustainability of the package**
 - Part 4 - Signature**
- Every part must be filled, if not the application will not be assessed

4.2. Part 1- General information about the package

The aim of ASTA is to improve the quality within the ASEAN countries and to foster the public-private partnership. Therefore ASTA focused on “Combined tourism products”, best known as “tourism packages”, or “packaged tours”.

A Tourism Package for ASTA is a combination of one or more activities including at least one overnight stay, 1 meal in a local food & beverage service, 1 activity including a local community, 1 local guide, with an easy and free access to 1 toilet/restroom, and local transportation beginning and ending in an ASEAN country.

In order to ensure sustainability, the product for ASTA must already exist and be sold for 1 year. This avoids promoting products that could have great quality but with no market space.

a) Presentation of the package

Eight questions are asked to present your package for the competition All questions must be answered, if not the application will not be assessed.

1. **What is the name of the package?** Fill in with the name of the package as it appears on your commercial website or brochure.
2. **In which country is the package located?** Fill in with the name of the country of your package. The package must be located in one of the ASEAN countries (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, or Vietnam). This is also by this ASEAN country that your application will be assessed.
3. **In which area(s) is the tour located ?** Fill in with the region(s) visited during the tour.
4. **How can the client buy the package ?** Fill in with the link of the package on your website, or a link to download a brochure, or an explanation on how the visitors can buy the package through a partner for example. ASTA will accept only existing packages that are purchasable. Without this information, the application will not be accepted.
5. **How long is the package being commercialised ?** Fill in with the date of the first commercialisation of the package. ASTA will accept only packages existing for at least 1 year.

Without this information, the application will not be accepted.

6. **What is the price per person ?** Please indicate the price average of the package according to your rules (number of participants, time of the year...)
7. **Short description of the package.** This part is very important for the assessors to understand the package, and if your application wins, this text will be used to promote it on the national website and national promotion strategy. It should include a day by day description of the activities proposed to the visitors and any information you consider relevant regarding sustainability.
8. **The proposed package is respecting the National and ASEAN legislation and policies regarding illegal human and animal activity ?** Answer by YES or NO. Be aware that your application can be rejected at any time of the assessment if the assessor sees that your package involves illegal activities.

b) Presentation of the lead applicant

The lead applicant is the organisation coordinating the partners for the application, and is in charge of submitting the application. It is the main contact for the National Tourism Organisation in charge of the assessment and in case of winning, it will receive the trophy for all the partners. The Lead Applicant has a central role and is responsible for the quality of the application.

The questionnaire is organised in four parts. All questions must be answered, if not the application will not be assessed. If some information is not available, please explain in the form the reasons. The national tourism organisation will decide if it is acceptable or not.

1. Status

- **Public/Private:** Please choose between the two categories according to national rules
- **Organisation legal name in national language:** Please complete
- **Organisation legal name in English:** Please complete
- **Legal Status:** Please choose between the three proposed categories, and if your organisation is of another nature, please choose “other” and explain the legal status of your organisation.
- **Role in the package:** Please explain which role your organisation takes in the package, if in charge of the production, the commercialisation, or if you are one of the service providers, or other...

2. Postal address

The postal address should be located in one of the ASEAN countries (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, or Vietnam).

- **Street Name and Number :** Please complete
- **Post Code :** Please complete
- **Town/City/Village :** Please complete
- **Country Name:** Please complete
- **Website / Social network accounts :** Please complete, these information will be used for promotion

3. Legal representative

- **Title (Mr, Mrs, Ms.):** Please choose and complete
- **Usual Family Name:** Please complete
- **First Name:** Please complete

- **Function:** Please complete
- **Telephone n°:** Please complete, this information will be used by the assessors to organise the field assessment if your application is selected
- **E-mail:** Please complete, this information will be used by the assessors to organise the field assessment if your application is selected

4. Contact person (if different from legal representative)

This is to be filled only if for the assessment, you prefer to give another contact than the official legal representative, such as a director, a manager or a product manager...

- **Title (Mr, Mrs, Ms.):** Please choose and complete
- **Usual Family Name:** Please complete
- **First Name:** Please complete
- **Function:** Please complete
- **Telephone n°:** Please complete, this information will be used by the assessors to organise the field assessment if your application is selected
- **E-mail:** Please complete, this information will be used by the assessors to organise the field assessment if your application is selected

c) Presentation of the partners - service providers involved in the package

ASTA considers 7 categories of service providers involved in tourism packages: 1) Local transportation, 2) Accommodation, 3) Local food and beverage service, 4) activity providers, 5) local communities, 6) guides and local guides, 7) tour operators / travel agencies/ Ground handler. More detail below.

- **For each category fill in the name of the organisation and an email address to contact the organisation and when possible, the website.**
- **If a service provider is involved in several categories, just repeat the same information in the different tables. For example a local community can also act as a food and beverage service, or the hotel will provide accommodation but also breakfast.**

The different responsibilities of each service provider must appear clearly, as ASTA promotes partnerships. This information is important for the sustainability assessment.

1. Local transportation: It can be the pick-up and drop-off transportation from the place of departure and arrival, but also bikes provided for a cycling activity, the boat in a cruise... The objective is to ensure that the local transportation is provided and included in the product.

2. Accommodation: It includes all forms of sleeping facilities for visitors including hotels and the home stay categories.

3. Local food & beverage services: It is a form of service where traditional and typical food and beverages are produced and / or sold by local people in food stalls, local restaurants or other similar outlets. This includes also the meal provided by the hotel, the home stay of the local community.

4. Activity providers: organisations in charge of an activity during the tour such as a visit, a walk, a cooking class, a sight seeing, a sport...

5. Local communities: A local community is represented by a village, a district or a group

of people benefiting from the tourism activity.

6. Guides and local guides: The definition can vary according to each country (“local guide”, “community guide”, “interpreter”...), it has to be adapted for each national context and regulations. For the purpose of ASTA, it is intended as a local person who guides visitors in its own language, with the assistance of a national guide when appropriate, and interprets the cultural and natural heritage of an area, which person normally possesses an area-specific qualification usually issued and/or recognised by the local community or authority. The objective is to ensure, when possible, that the guide accompanying the visitors in a local community understands the local language and knows the local culture. It is possible to involve one national guide and one local guide for the same product.

7. tour operator / travel agency / ground handler: For the purpose of ASTA, the product proposed must already exist for a year. The package must already be sold and have a price. The visitor must be able to book the product online or via a partner. The partner with the agreement to commercialise tourism packages are quite always Tour Operators, travel Agencies or ground handlers. These types or partners must therefore be part of the Partners of the application. If the partner in charge of the commercialisation has another status, it still has to be nominated in this category.

d) Category for the competition

This part is dedicated to understanding in which category your package will compete for ASTA.

- In each country, the 2 most sustainable theme related packages will receive the ASEAN Sustainable Tourism Award, one in each category: Rural Package and Urban Package.
- One package can apply only in one category.

The definition of rural and urban area is framed by 5 criteria:

- ❖ **Sustainable rural tourism package:** For the purpose of ASTA, a sustainable rural tourism package is based in a rural area, which is defined as an open swath of land that has few homes or other buildings, and not very many people. A rural area's population density is very low. It is a geographic area that is located outside towns and cities. Rural tourism focuses on actively participating in the rural lifestyle, which is not only about visiting agricultural or non-urban areas. Rural tourism includes farm-based holidays, but also comprises special interest nature holidays and eco-tourism, walking, climbing and riding holidays, adventure, sport and health tourism, hunting and angling, educational travel, arts and heritage tourism, and in some areas, ethnic tourism.

The criteria to define a rural area are listed below. The area of the package proposed by the applicants must comply with 4 out of the 5 criteria to be eligible to compete for the ASTA rural product category.

Criteria for rural areas:

1. An area outside of cities and towns;
2. Outside settlements with more than 10,000 resident population and
3. Sparsely populated with small settlements;
4. Characterized by farms, vegetation, and open spaces;
5. Mostly providing homestay and B&B to visitors.

- ❖ **Sustainable urban tourism package:** For the purpose of ASTA, an urban tourism package is based in an urban area, which is a location characterized by high human population density and vast human-built features in comparison to the areas surrounding it. The team of applicants where the product proposed must be located within a district or a zone which is part of a patchwork of interconnected consumption experiences or sub-systems, spatially dispersed within a tourist city, (defined in the context of ASTA as urban tourism destinations), such as

entertainment or cultural zones, with symbols, a unique language and a range of icons to differentiate the experience of place consumption. These districts, zones (part of bigger cities) or small-scale cities are also from where the surrounding region can be explored.

The criteria to define an urban area are listed in the table below. The area of the package proposed by the applicants must comply with 4 out of the 5 criteria to be eligible to compete for the ASTA urban product category.

Criteria for urban areas:

1. A location with an integrated public transport network;
2. A human settlement with high population density and infrastructure of built environment;
3. Counting more than five (5) hotels;
4. The product or the main activity is not more than one hour drive from the accommodation.
5. Located less than two hours drive from the city

The form is divided in to tables:

- **Table 1: Please tick the criteria responding to your package, it must comply at least with 4 out of 5.**
- **Table 2: Please tick the category to which your package will compete**

4.3. Part 2 - ASTA theme questionnaire

For each ASTA edition, a theme is chosen by the ASEAN member states. The package must comply with the theme.

2022-2023 ASTA edition theme: “Safe tourism”

Safe tourism refers to trips made to destinations where all the precautions have been taken to provide visitors with the safest experience and it constitutes the main selling argument.

Why this theme ?

- With COVID-19, it becomes key to anticipating the concern of travellers who want to spend holidays in ASEAN country
- Safe tourism concept covers the whole course of travel of domestic/foreign guests from their arrival at any airport until their return home/departure
- It means to encourage businesses to introduce new measures across a wide spectrum ranging from transportation to accommodation, facility personnel to the visitors’ state of health.

All questions must be answered, if not the application will not be assessed.

a) Presentation of the package activities related to the theme

Please fill in with a description of how your package responds to the ASTA theme, such as the information provided before and during the tour, the respect of safety measures, the adjustments made to the package in order to comply with the national or international regulations, the certifications or standards received...

b) Theme related criteria for the service providers

Please answer each criterion by YES or NO, on behalf of all service providers involved in the tour. Be aware that if your application is selected for the assessment, these measures will be checked and if not respected, your application will be rejected.

4.4. Part 3 - Sustainability of the package

To fill in this section of the application, you will have to

- First complete the 5 + 1 assessment forms
- Report the score obtained in each assessment form in the **SUSTAINABLE SCORING TABLE**
- Calculate the total score obtained and report it in the **TOTAL** line of the **SUSTAINABLE SCORING TABLE**

The ASEAN Sustainable Tourism Award was created in order to improve sustainable tourism of the Region. For the purpose of ASTA, a “sustainable tourism” provides direct and indirect benefits to the local population, promoting cultural and/or natural heritage, and respecting environmental and hygienic standards, all of these must be consistent with the ASEAN standards;

In order to assess the sustainability of the packages, the ASEAN countries decided to use the ASEAN Tourism Standards.

Several Standards have been developed in the past years: ASEAN MICE Venue Standard, ASEAN Clean Tourist City Standard, ASEAN Community Based Tourism Standard, ASEAN Green Hotel Standard, ASEAN Homestay Standard, ASEAN Public Toilet Standard, ASEAN Spa Services Standard¹.

For the Sustainability Criteria of ASTA, all the indicators have been extracted from four out of the seven ASEAN Standards, namely Community Based Tourism, Green Hotel, Homestay and Public Toilets. Those standards regroup the essential services provided to the visitors during a tour.

Which are the Sustainability Assessment Forms?

1. Local Food & Beverage service Sustainability Assessment Form
2. Accommodation Sustainability Assessment
 - 2.1. Hotel Sustainability Assessment Form
 - 2.2. Homestay Sustainability Assessment Form
3. Community Involvement Sustainability Assessment Form
4. Local Guide, TA and TO Sustainability Assessment Form
5. Public toilet Sustainability Assessment Form
- +
6. Bonus Accessibility and Destination Management Sustainability Assessment Form

Where to find the Sustainability Assessment Forms ?

- The assessment forms can be found in the ASTA Application Set, along with the application form and this guide. If you encounter difficulty finding these forms, contact your national tourism organisation.

How to fill each Sustainability Assessment Forms ?

- For each form, there is a checklist with 22 criteria having been extracted from the corresponding ASEAN Tourism Standards.
- For each category the applicant must complete the form following 5 steps
 - 1) Indicate the name of the package in the table on the top
 - 2) answer by YES or NO to each of the 22 criteria in the first two left columns (the right columns are for assessors only)

¹ Access to all ASEAN Tourism Standards: <http://asean.org/asean-economic-community/asean-tourism-ministers-meeting-m-atm/other-documents-2/>

- 3) calculate the number of YES and NO and report it at the end of the form
- 4) Answer the final question by YES or NO
- 5) Report the total number of YES in the Sustainability Scoring Table of the Application Form

How is the scoring system organised ?

- Each form includes 22 criteria to be answered by YES or NO, therefore the maximum points achievable is 22
- Each category of service provider must comply with a minimum number of criteria to be considered sustainable
 - For rural packages, the minimum requirement for each category is to achieve 50% of the criteria, corresponding to 11 points.
 - For urban packages, the minimum requirement for each category is to achieve 60% of the criteria, corresponding to 13 points.
- If one category of service provider does not reach the minimum requirement, the package can not be considered sustainable, and therefore will not be selected for ASTA.

How many forms must be completed ?

- Only 1 per category
- If the package involves for instance 5 partners providing similar services such as Food and Beverage, you only complete 1 Food and Beverage Service Sustainability Assessment Form, evaluating the 5 partners' services, as all of them must be sustainable. If one service provider is not sustainable, then the whole package is impacted. The service providers of a package all share the responsibility of the package proposed to the tourists.

How to complete the Accommodation Sustainability Assessment forms ?

- If your package only includes Homestays, you will complete the Homestay Sustainability Assessment Form following the 5 steps. For rural packages typically.
- If your package only includes Hotels, you will complete the Hotel Sustainability Assessment Form following the 5 steps. For urban packages typically.
- If your package includes Hotels and Homestays, you will have to complete both sustainability assessment forms, calculate the average (Addition of total points of homestay and total points of hotel divided by two) and report this result in the Sustainability Scoring Table of the Application Form.

How to assess the public toilets ?

- Typically during a tour, the visitors will need bathroom breaks, before or during an activity, during meal stops...and it is an important criterion for sustainable tourism and the quality of your product.
- You will have to assess the sustainability of all the public toilets proposed to the visitors during the tour, which are under the responsibility of several partners of the package such as accommodations, food and beverage services, communities, activity providers...
- The service providers of a package all share the responsibility of the package proposed to the tourists.

Who should fill in the form ?

- The lead applicant is responsible for submitting the form, but the partners should participate in the assessment of the services, as all share the responsibility of the package proposed to the tourists.
- The lead applicant is responsible for coordinating the application and therefore coordinating

the partners.

What is the Bonus Assessment form ?

- This assessment form is not compulsory
- The criteria have been selected from international standards and will give extra visibility to the packages showing quality in terms of accessibility and participation to destination management.
- It will give extra points to the application and can be used in case of a tie between two applications.
- It should be filled in following the same 5 steps as the sustainability assessment forms

Will the answers be verified ?

- If your application is evaluated as one of the best in your category, you will be selected for the field assessment and an assessor will contact the lead applicant to organise a visit.
- During the field assessment, the assessor will use the assessment forms submitted and check the veracity of your answers regarding the different categories. service providers
- If the difference between your assessment and the one from the national assessors is larger than 30%, your application will be rejected.

Why do the applicants assess themselves ?

- ASTA is about improvement; therefore the partners involved assessing their services against these ASEAN sustainability criteria are given a common framework for improvement, guidelines.
- ASTA is about commitment; the packages participating in the competition must be truly committed to develop sustainable tourism.

4.5. Part 4 - Signature

The lead applicant signs the application form, certifying to have involved the partners and to have their consent to submit the application on their behalf.

The signature is compulsory, if missing, the application will be rejected.

SEEKING HELP OR ADVICE – CONTACT OR EMAIL

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