

## **Terms of Reference (TOR)**

# **Technical support in the areas of supporting & upgrading the Green Star Hotel Classification Program**

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| <b>Job Title:</b>                     | <b>International Expert in GSTC Requirements</b>   |
| <b>Country:</b>                       | Cairo, Egypt   |
| <b>Project Title:</b>                 | Mainstreaming the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity into the tourism development and operations in threatened ecosystems in Egypt |
| <b>Reports to:</b>                    | Project Manager, MBDT  |
| <b>Duty Station:</b>                  | MBDT Cairo, Egypt  |
| <b>Duration of Contract:</b>          | 25 Working days  |
| <b>Period of assignment/services:</b> | 25 Working days  |
| <b>Languages Required:</b>            | English (Arabic knowledge will be an advantage)  |

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### **1. Context and Background:**

The four-year project 'Mainstreaming the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity into the tourism development and operations in threatened ecosystems in Egypt' (MBDT) is expected to target ecologically sensitive areas exposed to tourism development pressures in the short-to-medium term with the objective of mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into tourism-sector development and operations.

This project comes at a critical time in Egypt's recent history with the political changes that are currently underway to make government institutions more accountable and to develop the economy, both of which are resulting in considerable changes in the way that both tourism and biodiversity resources may be managed in the future. Therefore, the project will work on two levels:

The first level will engage directly with tourism industry and government to fill gaps in the existing planning and regulatory framework, namely a Strategic Environmental Assessment, in order to identify key areas, habitats and ecological processes, and assess their vulnerability and also the guidelines for the existing EIA regulations specific to biodiversity, linked to an offsetting mechanism. As a consequence, the project will develop a monitoring programme to track the impacts of tourism on biodiversity for conservation management purposes.

The second level will engage the tourism industry by developing Responsible Tourism Grading and promoting Egypt as a global destination for ecotourism and developing community-based systems to allow those closest to the resources to benefit and manage them sustainably.

One of the issues to be addressed in the country is related to the cumulative impacts on biodiversity and environmental resources caused by tourism investments and developments. Management and operational practices that take place in tourism establishments and at tourism operations generate several impacts on the environment and its biodiversity.

**In late 2013, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and the Egyptian Hotel Association jointly launched The Green Star Hotel (GSH) which is a national green certification and capacity-building program managed by the Egyptian Hotel Association (EHA) under the patronage of the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities. The GSH program offers an opportunity for hotels operating in Egypt to be internationally recognized for raising their environmental performance and social standards while reducing their operational costs. A team of certified local and international experts guide interested hotels through a sequence of training and information support sessions leading to field audits to ensure compliance with the program standards prior to granting the GSH certification.**

In 2015, the Green Star Hotel program achieved Global Sustainable Tourism Council 'GSTC Recognized' status. GSTC-Recognized means that a sustainable tourism standard has been reviewed by GSTC technical experts and the GSTC Accreditation Panel in order to be deemed equivalent to the GSTC Criteria. Additionally, an organization that meets GSTC requirements must administer the standard. The purpose of the GSTC programs is to recognize and reward genuine practitioners of sustainable tourism, which in turn builds confidence and credibility with consumers.

After 8 years of successful implementation in the sector despite different local and global challenging conditions, the GSH program is now ready to update its standards and to push the hospitality industry to different heights. Therefore, a set of environmental sustainability measures has been developed in collaboration with EHA by assigning a team in order to upgrade the Green Star Certification Program criteria among other supporting activities

## **2. Scope of Work:**

The assigned team is seeking a consultant who will critically examine the proposed modifications for the purpose of ensuring compliance with the overall objectives the GSH program while ensuring compliance with all the GSTC requirements for the acknowledged standards. Additionally, the consultant will support Egyptian Hotel Association (EHA) in its communication with GSTC throughout the process as necessary. The criteria must be unambiguous and clearly

comprehensible and allow a significant improvement above the existing criteria, capacity building of existing GSH's national auditors to be able to implement the proposed criteria and provide guidance to the existing certified hotels and raising the ability of the GSH national auditors to perform remote site audits to improve efficiency.

**The main responsibilities of the consultant are as follows:**

- I. The primary responsibility is to review, examine, revise and update proposed Standardization and Modifications for GSH program and ensuring compliance with all the GSTC requirements for the acknowledged standards.
- II. Technical support for the Egyptian Hotel Association (EHA) in its communication with GSTC throughout the implementation and upgrading process.
- III. Training for GSH's national auditors on how to implement the proposed criteria and providing guidance to the existing certified hotels.
- IV. Training for GSH's national auditors to perform remote site audits and improve efficiency.
- V. Carry out meetings/workshops with stakeholders to discuss and gain insight on the existing Standardization and Classification System.
- VI. Present the final report to assigned team and the report should importantly include the analysis for the proposed measures, training plan and communications.

### **3. Deliverables and Duration:**

**Deliverables:**

- Assessment report for the updated GSH proposed measures.
- Final report for the updated GSH proposed measures aligned with GSTC requirements and standards.
- Training guidelines and report

**Duration:**

The consultancy assignment shall be completed within 20 working days as per the following time frame:

- Approximately 7 to 9 working days for drafting the language and providing discussion about the reason for the update.
- 5 working days for communication with GSTC and the GSH program team.
- 7 to 9 working days to prepare and deliver training for the GSH auditors.

#### **4. Competencies, Qualifications & Experience:**

1. Familiarity with the GSTC's most recent standards.
2. Experience with obtaining accreditation or approval for recognized standards from the GSTC.
3. International experience with green certification for hotels.
4. International experience with delivering capacity building programs for auditors.
5. Familiarity with the nature of the tourism sector in Egypt and its variety of patterns.
6. Ability to assess the reasonableness of implementing the requested update to the operation of the hospitality sector in Egypt.
7. Familiarity with the GSH program operation is preferred.
8. Excellent communication skills.
9. Reporting capacities.
10. Excellent command of English.

#### **5. Documents to be submitted:**

Interested individual consultants must submit the following documents/ information to demonstrate their qualifications.

- Curriculum Vitae
- Proposal describing how he/she will approach and conduct the work.
- Estimated budget (financial proposal) for daily rates in US Dollar.

The interested consultants are requested to submit the above documents electronically to [procurement@mbdtegypt.org](mailto:procurement@mbdtegypt.org) - [m.elewa@mbdtegypt.org](mailto:m.elewa@mbdtegypt.org) by 09 December 2021.

The short-listed candidates will be contacted and be asked to submit the outline of the final report.

#### **6. Evaluation Criteria:**

Combined Scoring method – where qualification, competencies, experience and the proposed methodology will be weighted a max. of 70%, and combined with the price offer which will be weighted a max of 30%