

QTR 2 • 2022  
ISSUE 3  
#WALKTHETALK

# NEXT

STORIES  
FROM  
EARTHCHECK

GOOD FOR BUSINESS, GOOD FOR THE PLANET



There are more than 476 million Indigenous Peoples, found in all regions of the world, from the Arctic to the tropical forests. They make up more than 6 per cent of our global population.

In the spirit of reconciliation, EarthCheck acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout the world and their connections to land, sea, sky and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Indigenous Peoples today.

EarthCheck acknowledges that Indigenous Peoples are guardians of the forests and biodiversity hotspots we all depend on. Research shows that lands managed by Indigenous Peoples, with secure rights, experience lower deforestation rates, store more carbon, hold more biodiversity, and benefit more people than other lands — including protected areas.

We recognise and support the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the most comprehensive international instrument on the rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Declaration is a positive document that maps out a path for Indigenous Peoples to be free from discrimination and secure in their identities and life choices.



# A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO & FOUNDER

WELCOME TO 2022



Welcome to the first edition of NEXT for 2022. In this issue, Professor David Simmons, the Chair of the EarthCheck Research Institute, provides an important discussion on the opportunities to rethink tourism in a post-COVID recovery period. David reviews travel behaviour in a carbon-constrained economy and revisits whether EarthChecks core indicators are up to the challenge of the SDGs and climate change.

NEXT reviews the role played by Science Based Targets (SBTs), the rapidly emerging expectations of ESG reporting and the release of our latest reports on risk and crisis management and sustainable design. We are always mindful of the need to keep our clients and partners up to date on new and emerging industry and consumer trends. Data as a service is now being offered by our new market insights specialist. We have also recently signed a global partnership with Typsy, one of the world's leading online training providers, to deliver three training courses in sustainability which will all provide micro-credentials.

Please reach out to me or any member of our team if you would like to learn more about the projects and services now offered by EarthCheck.

Sincerely yours,

# NEXT

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IN A POST-COVID  
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# REFRAMING TOURISM IN A POST-COVID WORLD

OBSERVATIONS FROM PROF. EMER. DAVID SIMMONS, CHAIR OF THE  
EARTHCHECK RESEARCH INSTITUTE.



COVID has shaken the world. Human existence, food security, supply chains, and all human endeavours, including living conditions and tourism, have been challenged.

COVID has given destinations a breathing space to hit the reset button in their sustainable tourism policies. Tourism planners, managers and scientists are asking what technologies, methods, and regulations are being used today, which could be examples for destinations around the world?

Numerous forms of “re-thinking” tourism and its purposes have been proposed. Slower, more purposeful tourism and ensuring that tourists pay their fair share of the direct and indirect costs it generates are under consideration in numerous jurisdictions. For tourism, important new paradigms, including restorative and regenerative tourism, need to be seen in the context of longer standing sustainability initiatives. These, in turn, must sit within the broader context of all human activity and speak to more overall sustainability goals.

At the destination level, there is an increased focus on destination management and the integration of tourism with local development and wellbeing agendas. At the core of this are important questions about the key indicators to measure tourism’s impacts. Against this backdrop, we question whether EarthCheck’s initial criteria and core indicators still serve to offer direction, support and implementation pathways for the future of tourism.

### The sustainability agenda

Sustainability is an enduring goal. Anthropologists and human ecologists argue that the enduring tension for the human species is learning and adapting to live “within the grain of nature” [1]. As technology has progressed this challenge has become more difficult as human manufactured devices and organisations have led to increased buffers against direct environmental feedback that had previously shaped human behaviour[2].

Following the Brundtland (UN commissioned) report “Our Common Future” sustainability became a clarion call across all resource sectors including tourism. Many would argue that this has become a rhetorical term and has failed to attract real attention.

**"SIGNALLING A CLIMATE  
EMERGENCY IS ONE THING,  
COMMITTING TO ACTION AND HAVING  
A PLAN IS ANOTHER."**

*Emeritus Professor David Simmons,  
Chair EarthCheck Research Institute*

Notwithstanding as the human induced environmental pressures have become more pressing the existential goals of living ‘within planetary boundaries’ has been manifest in ways that focus on the need to “restore” past damage, and beyond that to “regenerate” natural systems. It would be easy to get lost in the language of – sustain: restore: regenerate – save to note that these are largely expressions of the need to draw only on a sustainable harvest of natural capitals with opportunities to step beyond immediate needs and give back to (restore) natural capital and ecosystem services.

Over time there has been an increasing focus on human-centred pressures – especially as the global community continues to seek greater equity in development. There are also a number of commentators who argue that biodiversity and human development goals are the ‘iceberg’ sitting below the current climate crisis[3]. Underpinning this is the pressing need (heightened by the ongoing COVID pandemic) to rebuild human – environment relationships – and reaffirm the anthropological paradigm that humans exist and progress by living within nature’s limits, rather than dominating them. It is these broadening goals that now need to be checked against EarthCheck indicators.



# A New Approach To Destination Sustainability: Balanced Tourism



**Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority (RAKTDA) announces its bold new approach to sustainability – Balanced Tourism, a key milestone in driving overall growth and leading the region in sustainable tourism by 2025.**

Under the banner of Balanced Tourism, the Authority is shaping tourism in the UAE by placing all aspects of sustainability (environment, culture, conservation and livability) at the center of its investment and development strategy.

Part of this bold vision is the Sustainable Tourism Strategy Implementation Plan for 2022, including two programs:

- Destination Certification Program for Ras Al Khaimah
- Tourism Business Accreditation Program for Ras Al Khaimah

[visitraskhaimah.com](http://visitraskhaimah.com)



In an important sense (and the COVID pandemic has demonstrated this) tourism is but one sector within a larger socio-economic context. Tourism's goals are now being challenged to address steps beyond sustainable harvest - to 'giving back' (restoring or regenerating) in environmental and social dimensions. Tourism is uniquely placed to advance this goal. Rich natural and cultural experiences, grounded in the nexus of people and places, withing a framework of a 'duty of care' befitting host - guest relationships can be the cornerstone of a more purposeful tourism experiences.

### Two major influences on travel behaviour

Two constraints to tourism activity have emerged throughout the pandemic as significant influences on travel choice and tourist behaviour.

The first is "health and safety". COVID and its variants have had a marked effect with age. The risk for severe illness with COVID-19 increases with age, with older adults at the highest risk. As late as November last year, the WHO advised against international travel for some over 60's due to Omicron [4]. Over the past decades, seniors have emerged as a significant market, with European travellers aged 65 or over accounting for nearly 1 in 4 tourism nights for private purposes spent by EU residents in 2019, while people aged 55+ accounted for 41% [5].

In advance of this trend, EarthCheck worked throughout 2020 to produce a health and hygiene program to stand alongside its other initiatives. Importantly "EarthSafe" is provided free of cost to the global tourism industry to offer a standard approach to establishing standards and verification for visitors' health and hygiene.

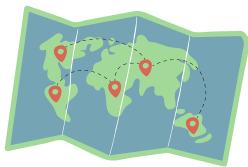


The second is the carbon-constrained global economy and tourism's role within it. During the pandemic, many travellers were restricted in their overseas/transborder travels. As the pandemic endured, significant improvements were reported in tourism's environmental footprint (OECD May 2021) [6], especially those recorded in GHGs (Greenhouse gas emissions). The November 2021 Glasgow IPCC/COP tourism declaration [7] was developed through the collaboration of UNWTO, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), VisitScotland, the Travel Foundation, and Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency. In March this year, the IPCC released its sixth report, Climate Change 2022 - Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. A high-level summary of the findings - signed off and approved by representatives of the same 200 governments - ended with a sharp warning: "Climate change is a threat to human well-being and planetary health. Any further delay in concerted, anticipatory global action... will miss a brief and rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a liveable and sustainable future for all." Importantly the reports recognise that 'human ingenuity cannot get us out of the suffering' arising from climate change and weather volatility. Tourism is being called to account and must rapidly adapt to address its resource impacts.

The signatories of the Glasgow Declaration agree on five shared pathways to ensure climate action is aligned across all of tourism sector: Measure, Decarbonise, Regenerate, Collaborate, Finance. The primary objective is to 'raise the climate ambition of tourism stakeholders and secure strong actions to support the global commitment to halve emissions by 2030 and reach Net Zero as soon as possible before 2050'. Many readers will recognise that these have been long term components of the EarthCheck Certification platform.

### Emerging travel patterns

New patterns of travel and tourism emerging. Curiosity, exploration, delight and novelty are essential parts of the human spirit. Explorations out of our home environment – for whatever purpose, duration and range are now well profoundly embedded as part of modern society. As discretionary activities, some key dimensions of leisure and tourism are emerging:



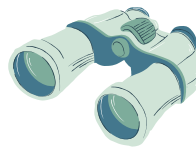
A resurgence in **domestic travel**. Travel has not stopped. In fact, in many regions and countries, a significant proportion of funds previously used for international trips has been redirected towards domestic travel. Important among travel motives are reconnecting with one's home country and visiting friends and family.



**Extended length of stay.** The increased risks, perceived and real, of travel, have also resulted in various forms of slower travel. This decreases the risks of crowded transfer points and allows for greater immersion in destinations. If travel prices increase, fewer trips with more extended stays are likely. As people followed stay-at-home orders and quarantined themselves, many developed what is known as "quarantine fatigue," or exhaustion associated with the restrictive lifestyle. This is further exacerbated by the closure of offices, schools and daycare facilities. As the pandemic reduces, more and more people are deciding to venture out and travel to fight quarantine fatigue.



**Vaccine passports.** Vaccine passports, also known as digital health passports, can act as digital proof of vaccination against COVID-19 and other coronavirus test results or health waivers. While currently not officially a travel requirement, vaccine passports are potentially on the horizon and could significantly impact travel. They are most likely to be in place for cross-border and long-haul travel.



Increasing connectivity with and concern for **nature**. Related to the above is a commonly reported desire to connect with nature for many re-connect. There has been growing interest in the relationship between regular contact with nature and human wellbeing. This has been exacerbated during various lockdowns and travel restrictions. Multiple agencies from the World Bank[8], the British medical journal The Lancet[9], and Canadian doctors (now able to 'prescribe visits to national parks[10]) are formally recognising this input to our wellbeing.

**A stronger focus on sustainability** (not just in tourism – but in everything we do). The COVID pandemic has given time to pause and reflect – especially on the pressures humans push onto our natural environments. Tourism has long spoken of various pathways to sustainability. The current conversation is spilling over into all aspects of human endeavour: agriculture, aquaculture, forestry, transport and distribution systems. As in the past, the tourism sector can take a leadership role in these endeavours.



Taken together the above are indicative of a focus on what it means to be a "good tourist" and "good corporate citizen". It also indicates a shift to the need to inject 'quality' back into the tourism experience – at all the industry touchpoints.

The philosophies and practices of tourism have continued to evolve. Alongside a clear focus on sustainability (a sustainable harvest from ecosystem services), more contemporary expressions have focussed on more active contributions from tourism towards development goals to restoring past damage with further aspirational goals to the regeneration of eco – and socio-cultural services. These variants inevitably draw on the same compass bearings as sustainable tourism across the four (natural) capitals: environmental, social, cultural and economic. However, they do come with the promise of more demanding standards over time.

EarthCheck's programs are based on a small but manageable set of core indicators. These attribute directly to the principles set out in Agenda21 and its subsequent evolution into MDGs and SDGs (Agenda 2030). With this in mind, the EarthCheck Research Institute has reviewed its core indicators. From their origins as a response to Agenda21, these have been found to still have strong relevance for Agenda 2030 (as expressed in the UN's SDGs). Sustainability is an enduring goal, and the review has found that the original indicators still have strong relevance. Climate Action and a greater focus on human outcomes have emerged as shared goals. EarthCheck's benchmarking and certification indicators are well attuned to these needs. Within the EarthCheck platform, each of the 10 core business KPAs speaks to at least one of the UN SDGs.

The EarthCheck framework has retained its strong focus on energy use and emissions management in keeping with the Glasgow Declaration. However, the current global focus on 'climate change' should not overshadow other pressing anthropogenic pressures such as biodiversity loss, population pressures increasing inequalities within and between nations, and the current COVID biological pandemic.

#### **Let us know what you think.**

For more information on how our programs can support your destination or business meet the needs of a post-COVID world please email [info@earthcheck.org](mailto:info@earthcheck.org)



#### **References**

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# AZORES

CERTIFIED BY NATURE



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BY NATURE

# SCIENCE BASED TARGETS

A ROADMAP FOR A LOW CARBON FUTURE

MELINDA WATT, CHIEF SCIENTIST AND VICE PRESIDENT, RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT



For companies, science-based targets (SBTs) serve as a vital tool to help transform their businesses for a low-carbon future pathway. SBTs are aligned with current climate science and provide guidance on the amount of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions that must be reduced and the timeline for these reductions.

Following the IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report and post the COP26 global climate summit, the Science-based Targets Initiative (SBTi) has recognised a need for targets to align with a 1.5°C pathway. By assisting EarthCheck Certified members – some of the world's leading tourism organisations – to align their strategies with the goals of the Paris Agreement, science-based targets help accelerate the transition to a low carbon economy and avoid the worst effects of climate change.

EarthCheck has supported Capella Hotel Group (Capella) in its sustainability agenda and ESG disclosures for the past 4 years. Our most recent work was helping the group develop their SBTs and provide a pathway for recognition via the SBTi.

The ambition of Capella to set SBTs is in line with global best practices. It is likely to produce numerous benefits such as increased reputation, credibility, cost savings, resilience and competitiveness. EarthCheck's target calculations align with the SBTi methodology to set SBTs under different emission scenarios and allocation pathways.

## BRAND REPUTATION

AS CONSUMERS BECOME INCREASINGLY AWARE OF THEIR CHOICES' EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT, AND ETHICAL CONSUMPTION CONTINUES TO GROW AS A HOT TOPIC, A BRAND'S REPUTATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY IS PARAMOUNT.

79% OF CORPORATE EXECUTIVES SURVEYED BY SBTi FOUND A STRENGTHENED BRAND REPUTATION TO BE ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT BUSINESS BENEFITS FOR THEIR COMPANY FROM COMMITTING TO SBTs.

For Capella, setting SBTs offers a way to deliver the level of corporate responsibility their customers expect of them.

As consumers become increasingly aware of the direct connection between their purchasing choices and the impacts on the environment, responsible consumption will grow as a market driver, rewarding those brands with a differentiated reputation for sustainability.

In line with the SBTi's mission to define and promote best practices in science-based target-setting, EarthCheck provides data expertise and guidance to reduce adoption barriers and independently assess Capella's SBTs.

#### **Carbon budget**

This refers to a finite amount of carbon emitted into the atmosphere before warming exceeds specific temperature thresholds. Capella's carbon measurements were calculated utilising the award winning EarthCheck carbon footprinting tool.

#### **Emission scenario**

Emission scenarios indicate the ways of distributing the available carbon budget over time. This includes the magnitude and timing for reducing emissions.

#### **Allocation approach**

This refers to how the carbon budget is allocated among the hotels with the same level of disaggregation via either convergence or contraction of emissions. Convergence leads all hotels to reduce emissions intensity to a common value by a given year. Contraction leads all companies to reduce emissions intensity at the same rate, irrespective of initial emissions performance. For Scope 1 and 2 emissions, SBTi recommends the Sectoral Decarbonisation Approach (SDA) for absolute targets.

#### **Selection of base year**

EarthCheck worked with Capella to select a base year. This implies that emission performance must be tracked against the selected base year for target years. All Capella properties participating in the EarthCheck Certified program have verifiable data on emissions for all scopes to represent their GHG emission profile.

#### **Selection of target year**

SBTi highlights that SBTs should cover a minimum of 5 years and a maximum of 15 years. We recommend that the target setting calculation be based on three target years (2025, 2030 and 2050). The identified time paths allow the company to track GHG emission performance in the mid-term and long term.

#### **Target options**

SBTi has announced that from 15 July 2022, all companies submitting targets will need to align to the new criteria requiring targets "well below 2° to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels." To ensure long-term compliance and recognition, we advise this target to be implemented from the outset.

#### **Defining the output measure**

The output measure is essential when emissions reduction is measured relative to a specific business metric. As the properties under Capella fall under the category of "services/commercial buildings," the area under roof (AUR) is considered the output measure. For EarthCheck Certified properties, AUR data can be extracted from the MyEarthCheck databases.





*Keep Discovering*



The subsequent SBT report provided Capella with visualisations and data illustrating the key performance areas, including emissions for the reporting period and targets. Explanations concerning boundary settings, assumptions, and extrapolations were provided, along with key figures and data tables relevant to Capella's operations and management. Performance options were also highlighted.

**Like to know more?**

For more information on how our services can support your organisation meet their reporting needs please reach out to Melinda or email us [info@earthcheck.org](mailto:info@earthcheck.org)



**"WITH INCREASED INNOVATION, REDUCED UNCERTAINTY, STRENGTHENING INVESTOR CONFIDENCE, AND IMPROVED PROFITABILITY, THOSE ORGANISATIONS AHEAD OF THE CURVE ARE WELL PLACED TO SUCCEED IN THE LOW CARBON ECONOMY. AS NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS WORK TO IMPLEMENT THE PARIS AGREEMENT – AND RATCHET UP THEIR COUNTRY-LEVEL PLEDGES' AMBITION – COMPANIES CAN EXPECT TO SEE MORE REGULATION TO CURB EMISSIONS-INTENSIVE ACTIVITIES."**

*Stewart Moore  
CEO and Founder  
EarthCheck*



# ESG & EARTHCHECK

## UNCOVERING THE VALUE OF SUSTAINABILITY

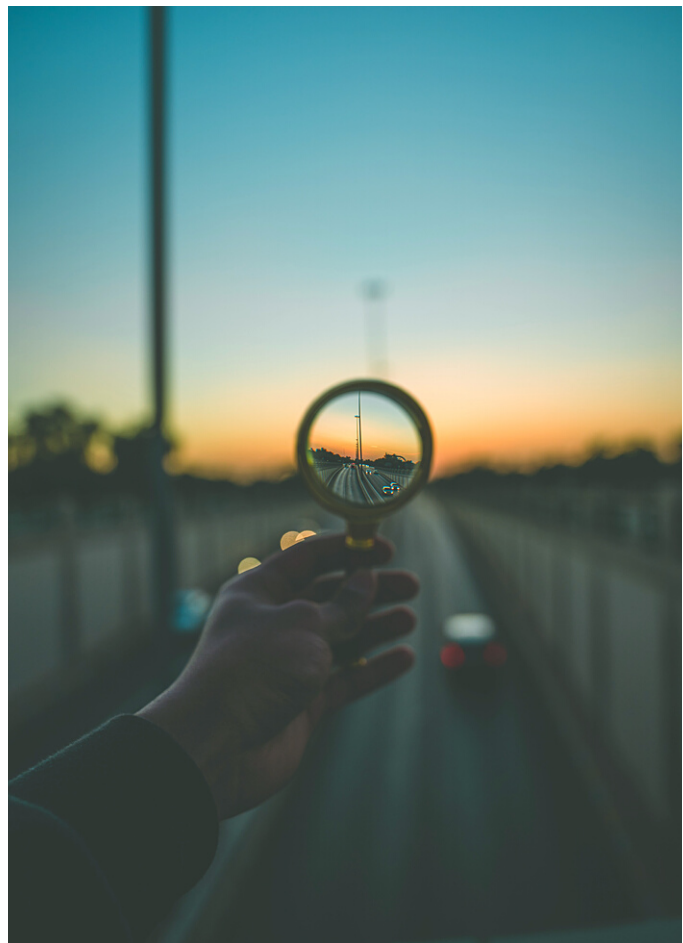
EDWARD FOORD, GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY SERVICES LEADER

Since the start of COVID sent a system shock to the global economy, one of the hottest topics has become ESG. While the acronym for Environmental, Social and Governance has been described as many things, the essence of ESG is the translation of non-financial aspects of an organisation into consistent, material measures of performance.

The key to ESG is a systematic approach to identifying risks and opportunities not traditionally captured within an organisation's financial ledger. At EarthCheck, we have built our reputation on a comprehensive understanding of the most effective ways to integrate sustainability into corporate operations. ESG provides a consistent language to translate sustainability measurement into financial performance and, ultimately, the long-term value creation of an organisation.

To support organisations looking to incorporate ESG into their operations, EarthCheck has developed a simple process to allow an organisation to efficiently upskill and integrate ESG-aligned sustainability at the right pace for their unique circumstances. First, EarthCheck works with leadership to deliver training and capacity-building to raise understanding amongst key stakeholders. In this way, a multi-disciplinary team can determine roles and responsibilities and collaboratively assess the organisation's current status.

EarthCheck then supports the ESG team in applying relevant frameworks and standards to meet regulatory requirements, partner/investor expectations or align to the goals and targets of the organisation. EarthCheck can support organisations that struggle to capture ESG data throughout their operations by implementing our cloud-based MyEarthCheck platform. In a similar fashion with existing EarthCheck Certified members, the MyEarthCheck system provides organisations with a central repository for collecting all necessary sustainability data. MyEarthCheck aligns with our world-leading science, undergoes multiple quality control and audit layers, and complies with international standards, including CDP and the Greenhouse Gas Protocol for carbon emissions calculations.



**"EVIDENCE IS EMERGING THAT A BETTER ESG SCORE TRANSLATES TO ABOUT A 10 PERCENT LOWER COST OF CAPITAL, AS THE RISKS THAT AFFECT YOUR BUSINESS ARE REDUCED."**

*Robin Nuttall, Expert Partner, ESG and Regulatory, McKinsey & Company'*

EarthCheck can facilitate disclosure of ESG performance by co-creating an annual report with key stakeholders. In line with the ethos of ESG to drive transparency, consistency and accountability, an ESG report is the public declaration of the organisation's ambition for sustainability, progress towards internal goals and external targets and the record for measuring consistency in subsequent reports. With recent developments in the merger of formerly competing international standards, ESG is closer than ever to achieving uniform disclosure requirements to match traditional accounting standards for financial reports. EarthCheck will support the organisation in clearly communicating the commitment to achieving sustainability leadership to internal and external stakeholders.



The value of ESG integration and alignment is considerable when the breadth of organisational applications is considered. Whereas previously, sustainability has been thought of as a function of operations, marketing and, in some cases, legal compliance, ESG extends sustainable considerations to every facet of an organisation. Most importantly, ESG considers the accountability of the C-Suite and boards of directors to actively manage sustainability data and incorporate it into corporate strategy. Sustainability risks and opportunities have become the frontier of competitive advantage and drivers of value generation in many industries globally. With the increase of mandatory disclosure regulations across jurisdictions, ESG is no longer a luxury for industry leaders but a requirement for legal compliance. EarthCheck can provide instruction and assurance that your organisation is prepared and empowered to take advantage of the increased risks and opportunities of the transition economy.

**What's next?** For more information on how our services can support your organisation meet its reporting needs please email [info@earthcheck.org](mailto:info@earthcheck.org)

An aerial photograph of Glasgow, Scotland, showing a mix of urban architecture, green spaces, and the River Clyde. The River Clyde flows through the center of the image, surrounded by lush green trees. To the right, there are large, historic buildings with red brick facades and multiple chimneys. In the background, modern buildings and a large stadium are visible under a blue sky with scattered white clouds.

# PEOPLE MAKE GLASGOW GREENER

**Glasgow** is an international destination for business, events, investment and tourism. We recognise the importance of taking action to safeguard and care for the health and wellbeing of our citizens and our visitors.

Our city is proud to be working towards becoming the **UK's first EarthCheck destination**.

**PEOPLEMAKEGLASGOW.COM**

**Glasgow**life™

# DESTINATION DIAGNOSTIC AND REPORT FOR POST COVID-19 RECOVERY

INTERVIEW: DR NATASHA MONTESALVO, PRINCIPAL CONSULTANT,  
DESTINATIONS, STRATEGY & INSIGHTS

Tourism in the life-blood of many communities, something Dr. Natasha Montesalvo knows all too well having spent years living and working in some of Europe's most popular tourism destinations. But now, to balance the needs the community and the wants of increasingly demanding tourists is more challenging than ever before.

"We're at a really interesting point in time," Dr Montesalvo explains. "The key areas of our business are closer than they have ever been before, with the advisory team being asked more about sustainable policy and resilient destinations, with a groundswell of interest in destination certification and performance benchmarking and an increasing need to focus on scientific research, education and capacity building to safeguard the future of the industry that we rely".

"We are lucky enough to work in more than 70 countries, with offices in Brisbane, Playa del Carmen, Barcelona, Shanghai and we have now opened a new office in Toronto, Canada. It gives us insight into global consumer and policy shifts and changing expectations. This is an exciting time for tourism and how we shape the future of the sector!"

We sat down with Dr Montesalvo to discuss the refresh of the successful EarthCheck Assessment & GSTC Evaluation Report (EAGER) which has been used in Canada, Scotland and Australia.



**"THE EAGER PROCESS IS INTENDED TO BRING KEY DESTINATION STAKEHOLDERS TOGETHER – UNDERSTANDING THAT LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND DESTINATION MANAGEMENT ORGANISATIONS NEED TO BE INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS. IT HELPS PROVIDE AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND THE EXISTING MONITORING IN PLACE WITHIN THE REGION."**

*Dr Natasha Montesalvo  
Principal Consultant, Destinations, Strategy & Insights  
EarthCheck*

### **What is the EAGER program?**

The EAGER program is designed to examine a destination's current commitments to sustainable practices - in other words, the current situation, understand its future goals and devise a pathway to success. The assessment explores destination management principals in relation to readiness for destination certification and against best practice destination stewardship.

### **How can it help a DMO or community?**

EAGER introduces a destination management team to the elements required for best practice sustainable policies and practices. It unpacks what this means for a destination and what the best first steps are. The program concurrently applies the EarthCheck Sustainable Destinations and GSTC Destinations Criteria to a defined destination to understand how to build back stronger. The assessment process allows a destination to understand both sets of Criteria, to understand sustainability performance and to take a realistic look at how a destination can reach its overall sustainability and resilience goals.

### **How is it different from Certification?**

EAGER is intended to act as a 'health check' for the destination. It is not a pass or fail process. It is designed to assess tourism sustainability and build capacity; to assist the region to identify current sustainability performance; and, to provide recommendations. It's a first step - often a baby step.

### **What outcomes are likely to be seen?**

The EAGER process is intended to bring key destination stakeholders together - often it is the first time that key tourism stakeholders will come together to discuss their sustainable aspirations for the region. The most successful destinations are where there is strong collaboration between local (or municipal) governments and destination management organisations - prior to this assessment there may have been limited, or no engagement between organisations. It helps provide a shared understanding of the sustainable management practices and the existing monitoring practices in region. Associated recommendations are provided that can be used to improve the destination's sustainable positioning over time in alignment to best practice principals from around the world. These measures, in turn, can be used by local communities, if they decide, to pursue certification as a sustainable destination.

The analysis has the ability to yield a set of observations and associated recommendations, particularly regarding strengths, issues and priorities considered material to the region's tourism management and future development.

### **What will these types of assessments do?**

The analysis is broken down into three key areas:

1. **Establish the regional context:** material topics, planning policy and instruments (e.g. tourism destination and/or management plan) overlaying the destination;
2. **Explore sustainability principles** against the criteria required in the EarthCheck Destinations Certification and the GSTC Destination Criteria concurrently; and,
3. **Identify regional strengths, challenges, and priority actions** for the destination, and provide recommendations to assist in pursuing sustainability criteria and management practices.

Once completed, a destination analysis, review of existing alignment and future opportunity report is produced to support next steps. The assessment acts as a handbook to key stakeholders in destination to further embed sustainable action destination wide.

# AUSTRALIA'S BEST SKI RESORT

WE ALL LOVE IT, SO LET'S PROTECT IT



Thredbo Resort is committed to preserving, protecting, and prioritising our unique alpine environment. We take pride in our long list of environmental initiatives and embrace the opportunity to lead our industry and our community through our shared passion of the mountains towards a more sustainable future, today.



### **How is the not-for-profit EarthCheck Research Institute involved?**

All assessments are guided by Emeritus Professor David Simmons who is the Chair of the not-for-profit EarthCheck Research Institute. David was the founder of tourism studies at Lincoln University and previously held the position as Director of Research at the Australian Sustainable Tourism Co-operative Research Centre where he provided expert content design and editorial oversight of the sustainable tourism online research portal. He has worked on tourism planning issues in Cambodia (WWF), Mauritius (UNDP), Niue, Vanuatu (WTO/UNDP), Nepal (MFAT and WWF), India (WWF), Sarawak (E. Malaysia), and DPR (North) Korea (UN/WTO).

### **Does sustainability play a role in tourism recovery?**

What other choice do we have now? We still strongly believe that the tourism industry has an opportunity to take the lead and build the industry back in a safe, sustainable and climate friendly manner creating sustainable destinations to live, work and play. When done genuinely, a sustainable approach to tourism can underpin brand engagement and positioning in market. Sustainability (low carbon, circular principles, social inclusion and regeneration) needs to be a core value for everything that the sector stands for. In other words, it is not an add-on marketing strategy, to be truly sustainable the ethos must sit central to the destination values and goals.

To take a genuine approach, scientific metrics and agreed performance indicators that are transparent to market and consumers must be employed. Without these, we could say anything. But, visitors can see through that. Indicators like CO2 emissions, water, waste, energy, consumer and community sentiment need to sit right beside supply and demand trends and performance tracking in destination management plans and policy. It's time to think differently about the metrics that are important to destinations and how we define the value of tourism.

### **Why should we be taking action now?**

Because tomorrow is too late. Any discussion on sustainable tourism, resilience, climate change and decarbonisation needs to drive real and meaningful change. Enough of the lip service. This may mean aligning to the policy environment that already exists, or accelerating the agenda of the Government and supporting ambitious, but achievable, targets that will strengthen your community.

Sustainability needs to be taken up across the visitor economy supply chain from airports and trains through to convention centres, resorts and tour operators - every visitor touch point. A single organisation cannot make a destination sustainable, it is about a partnership approach that drives systemwide change. It becomes a point of difference and a holistic way of doing business.

EarthCheck has recently prepared a number of strategic tourism plans for leading economies in Europe and the Middle East and supported destinations globally develop independent targets that suit the environmental, economic and social needs of their community.

### **Like to know more?**

For more information on EAGER and how your destination can examine its current commitments to sustainable practices please email [natasha.montesalvo@earthcheck.org](mailto:natasha.montesalvo@earthcheck.org)



**Castle Region, Alberta, Canada**

# CARAVAN & CAMPING PARKS BUSHFIRE PREPAREDNESS KIT

CARAVANNING QUEENSLAND



## MESSAGE FROM QUEENSLAND FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

*During a bushfire (or other event such as severe weather, floods, cyclones), the safety of all the people within and around your park depends on your preparations and the decisions you make.*

*It's important you have a plan in place and know exactly what you can do to protect yourself, your family, your caravan and camping park visitors and your property.*

Caravanning and camping are part of the Australian psyche. Why wouldn't it be... idyllic locations, opportunities to connect with nature, and, most importantly, a chance to slow down and enjoy quality time with our loved ones.

It is little wonder that in 2021, there were over 11 million caravan and camping visitor nights, pumping an impressive \$1.6 billion in visitor expenditure into the communities they visited.

The same things that make the caravanning and camping sector so important also create vulnerabilities and put caravan parks and campgrounds at risk of natural disasters, including bushfires. Due to remote locations and limited connectivity, increased challenges from single access points put parks at even greater risk.

Unlike other natural disasters, with bushfires, there is not always the same amount of time to evacuate when the disaster is real. This means prior preparation is critical to ensure that your teams know what to do when and to ensure the safety of all those around.

Caravan parks and campsites can be (temporary) homes to thousands of people who may not know the local area or be connected to any local emergency messaging systems. Having processes in place facilitates a measured response, reduces the risk and offers a choreographed response.

For park management, the safety of staff and guests is primary; however, planning ahead also ensures that the return to 'business as normal' is as seamless as possible.

With climate change and Australia's ever-changing landscape resulting in more bushfires and other natural disasters, the Campsite and Caravan Park Bushfire Preparedness Kit provides practical guidelines to help businesses prevent, prepare, respond and recover. EarthCheck worked in partnership with the Caravan Parks Association of Queensland (CPAQ) to develop the practical guidance and ensured that outcomes were endorsed by Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. The program is jointly funded under the Commonwealth/State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements 2018 under the Community Development Program.

The Bushfire Preparedness Kit offers practical check lists and real-life case studies alongside capability building webinars that give managers, owners and teams simple strategies and business planning activities to strengthen disaster prevention, preparedness, response and recovery efforts.

#### Like to know more?

For more information on how our services can support your organisation address risk and resilience please email us  
[info@earthcheck.org](mailto:info@earthcheck.org)



**"WHILE YOU CAN'T PLAN FOR A CRISIS, YOU CAN ENSURE THAT WHEN A CRISIS HAPPENS YOU HAVE STEPS IN PLACE TO HELP ASSIST YOU. ONCE YOU HAVE DONE A CRISIS RISK ASSESSMENT, CLEAR COMMUNICATION THROUGH THE CRISIS AND RECOVERY PHASES IS ONE OF YOUR BEST ASSETS."**

**"AFTER ALL, COMMUNICATION IS KEY,"**

*Tash Wheeler, EX-CEO Tourism  
Whitsundays.*



# SUSTAINABLE HOUSING: RIVERFRONT

ANDY VO, PROGRAM MANAGER, EARTHCHECK DESIGN



Riverfront is a terrace home precinct on the junction of Albany Creek and the South Pine River in Moreton Bay, Queensland, Australia. The 8-hectare development is segmented into 3 distinct zones: the residential (containing 39 terrace homes), a recreation hub (resort pool, BBQ & outdoor dining) and a communal green space (nature trails, organic garden, seating areas & river/creek access). The adjoining South Pine River & Albany Creek have significant ecological and State value. A conservation corridor will be created to protect its riparian visitation values.

Brisbane based, Lucindale Holdings, is a community-focused developer that places a strong emphasis on sustainability throughout their planning, design and construction phases. A "whole of systems" approach is undertaken, to ensure that designs are constantly adapted and improved to enhance environmental, social, and economic outcomes.

Riverfront has gained design certification from the internationally recognised EarthCheck building planning and design program. EarthCheck works with luxury & lifestyle brands around the world including Alila, One&Only, Belmond, Capella and Banyan Tree.



"THE INCLUSION OF SOLAR, WATER TANKS  
AND ALL THE GREEN SPACE WITH ORCHARDS  
AND VEGETABLE GARDENS REALLY  
IMPRESSED US AND GAVE US THE FEELING OF  
MODERN SUBURBIA PAIRED WITH A MINI ECO  
VILLAGE. QUALITY OF LIFE FOR OUR YOUNG  
SON IS IMPORTANT AND WE THINK HE IS  
GOING TO LOVE HAVING ALL THIS SPACE TO  
EXPLORE."

*Paul Abad  
Home buyer*



**“WE WANTED TO INTEGRATE INNOVATIVE SUSTAINABLE DESIGN PRINCIPLES EARLY ON IN THE PROJECT IN ORDER TO DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN POSITIVE, PRODUCTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE INTENDED RESIDENTS AND EXISTING LOCAL COMMUNITY.”**

*Marcel Russ  
Managing Director, Lucindale Holdings*

Lucindale achieved best practice across ten key performance areas of the Building Planning and Design Standard (BPDS). Their commitment to perpetuating sustainable lifestyles was a key driver behind their design philosophy. Working within the EarthCheck framework has ensured that Riverfront will be developed with a holistic approach to responsible design. Initiatives include:

**Sustainable Construction:**

- Principal contractor management systems developed and used to ensure sustainability policies are embedded with the builder and sub-contractors through Lucindale Riverfront's own policies.

**Energy:**

- LED lighting throughout homes.
- Architectural passive design features, ventilation, use of preserved natural vegetation.

#### **Water and Wastewater:**

- Rainwater harvesting and re-use. This is expected to reduce potable water consumption by an estimated 150 litres per day per household (avg. or a combined saving of 2.14 megalitres per annum across the community).
- Freshwater magnesium filtration for the community pool allowing re-use on gardens.

#### **Resource Management:**

- Composting, central waste storage and separation.

#### **Renewable energy:**

- A solar PV electrical system on every home and communal amenities reducing carbon emissions from the National Electricity Network by 420 tonnes of CO2 equivalent per annum.

#### **Sustainable Materials and Resource Conservation:**

- Wagners' earth-friendly geopolymer concrete.
- Enhancement of conditions for natural flora and fauna.
- Introduction of communal vegetable gardens and beehives.
- Celebration and regeneration of a historical orchard on site for all to enjoy.
- Limited fencing to allow native fauna to traverse site.

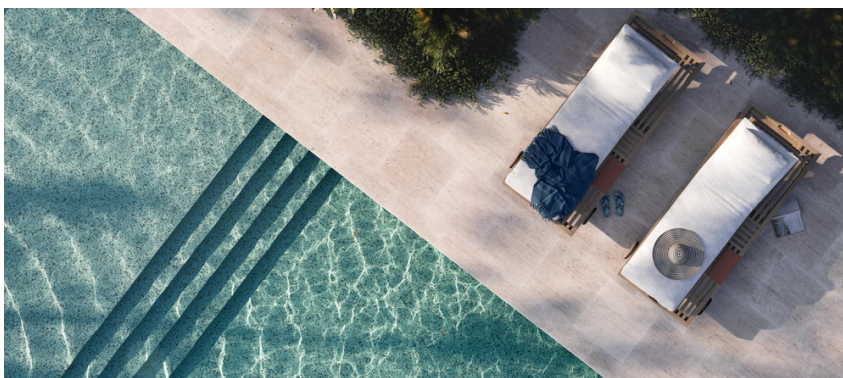
#### **Indoor Environmental Health**

- The use of R-32 in ducted air conditioning system.
- High quality, low allergen and low pollution materials are utilised throughout the home through the selection of suitable paints and floor coverings to minimise the potential for volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions.
- R-32 refrigerant has zero ozone depleting potential (ODP), causing zero depletion in the stratosphere.

#### **Transport**

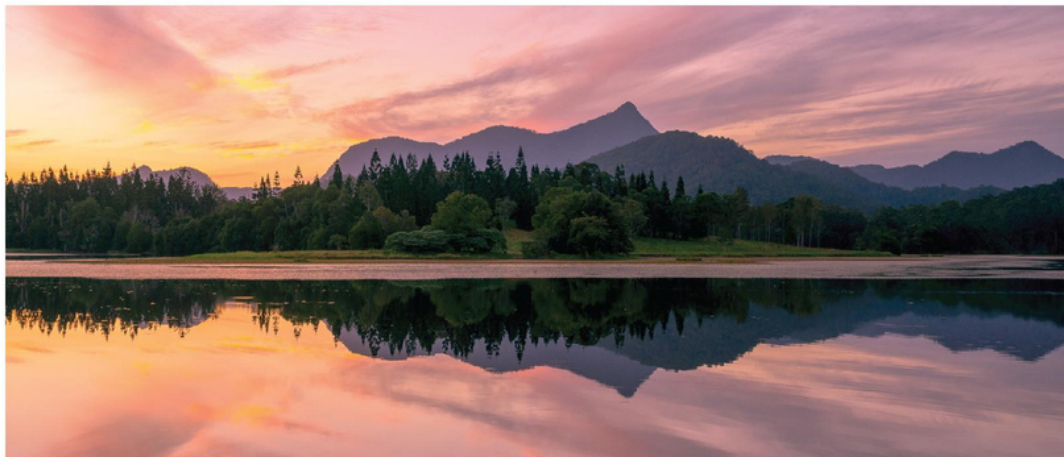
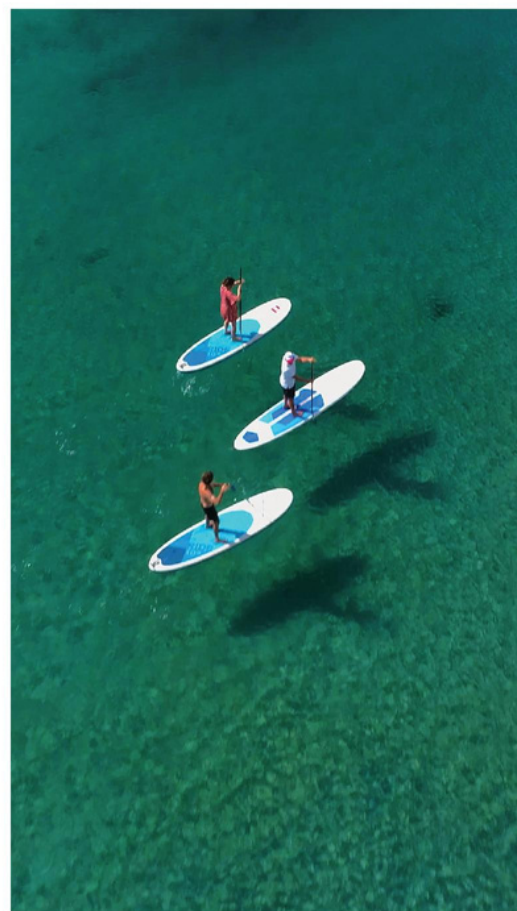
- EV vehicle charging provision in every garage.

**What's next?** For more information on how our services can support your future design needs please reach out to Andy or email [info@earthcheck.org](mailto:info@earthcheck.org)



# 「THE TWEED」

PRISTINE BEACHES AND WATERWAYS, GUARANTEED TURTLE EXPERIENCES AT  
COOK ISLAND NATURE RESERVE, WORLD HERITAGE-LISTED NATIONAL PARKS  
FEATURING MILLENNIA-OLD GONDWANA RAINFOREST.



OUR REGION IS PROUD TO BE WORKING TOWARDS BECOMING AN EARTHCHECK  
ACCREDITED SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DESTINATION.

**VISITTHETWEED.COM.AU**

# CURATED DATA & INSIGHTS

WAYNE CARLSON, PRINCIPAL CONSULTANT, STRATEGY AND MARKET INSIGHTS



## Curated

(adjective)

*cu·rat·ed* | \ 'kyūr-, ā-təd ,  
'kyər-; kyū-'rā- \

*: selecting, organising, adding  
value, and presenting; using  
professional or expert  
knowledge*

EarthCheck have introduced a new data insights service for our clients across the world. We are always mindful of the need to keep our clients and partners up to date on new and emerging industry and consumer trends. Data as a service is now being offered by our new market insights specialist.

**How big is Big Data?** In 2020, according to Domo, data was created at the rate of 1.7MB per second per day, for every human on the planet – 2.5 quintillion data bytes per day. Some say that the IPv6 standard created enough internet IP addresses for every molecule on the surface of the planet. In 2021, there were approximately 2 trillion searches on Google globally or 6 billion searches per day. Like most data, that's all very interesting but is it useful? While data is important, the right data is essential and understanding what data is important to each business is critical.

Forrester reports 74% of businesses say they want to be “data-driven”, but only 29% are actually successful at connecting data to insights to action. Actionable insights can be the missing link for companies that want their data to drive business outcomes and create business value. The solution? Curated data and insights partnered by EarthCheck.

In contrast to all this data, insights are relatively rare. Delivering insights can be defined as the ability to perceive the inner character, illusive patterns, and underlying truths within Big Data, to create actionable, data-driven findings that create business value. Delivering real insights requires different thinking, distinctive capabilities, and people with deep domain knowledge. And they're hard to find. Oddly, curating data and insights is fundamentally a human process.

The EarthCheck team with thirty years' experience across the world, provides curated data and insights across the interconnected ecosystems related to the tourism and sustainability domains – from business to government to destinations of 10 million visitors a year.

Curation begins with available client, sector, and industry related data, with the team discovering, gathering, organising, connecting, assessing and analysing the data, to reduce the 'noise' of the simply interesting and the irrelevant; as well as isolate and focus on the meaningful and the valuable. With insights, success is dependent upon the business knowing the right questions to ask of data and EarthCheck has developed insight definition into a combination of art and science – it's a skill that requires the art of creativity, persistence, and deep thinking, while maintaining the rigour and analysis of science, translating large amounts of data into concise and compelling findings. The team then adds context, perspective and relevance, to help businesses and destinations gain a deeper understanding of the content of the insights, the significance of their meaning and guidance on next actions to deliver meaningful outcomes. To keep insights real and relevant, the team works closely with clients to increase the accessibility and usability of insights, creating a platform for the future organic development of insights through a process that is scalable and repeatable and continues to add value.

What do successful insights look like? To paraphrase **Thrivethinking**:

- They **connect** with consumers on an emotional level and elicit the **reaction** "you understand me."
- They **solve** a real problem that **results** in the creation of new customers.
- They **re-examine** existing conventions and **challenge** the status quo.
- They **inspire action** by giving business clear **objectives** to aim for.
- They make a clear **statement of what** to do next and **how** it will deliver value.
- They bring a new level of **perception** to the management team and **inform** strategy and decisions.

**What do your insights look like?**

If you'd like to talk about your curated data and insights and how we can create business value. Please feel free to reach out to Wayne via [wayne.carlson@earthcheck.org](mailto:wayne.carlson@earthcheck.org).



# MICRO-CREDENTIALS IN SUSTAINABILITY

YOUR SECRET TO RECRUITING, RETAINING AND UPSKILLING WORKERS



EarthCheck has partnered with Typsy, one of the world's leading online training providers, to develop and deliver micro-credential courses on sustainability and responsible business practices. The first courses are currently being filmed in Brisbane and are due for release in July 2022.

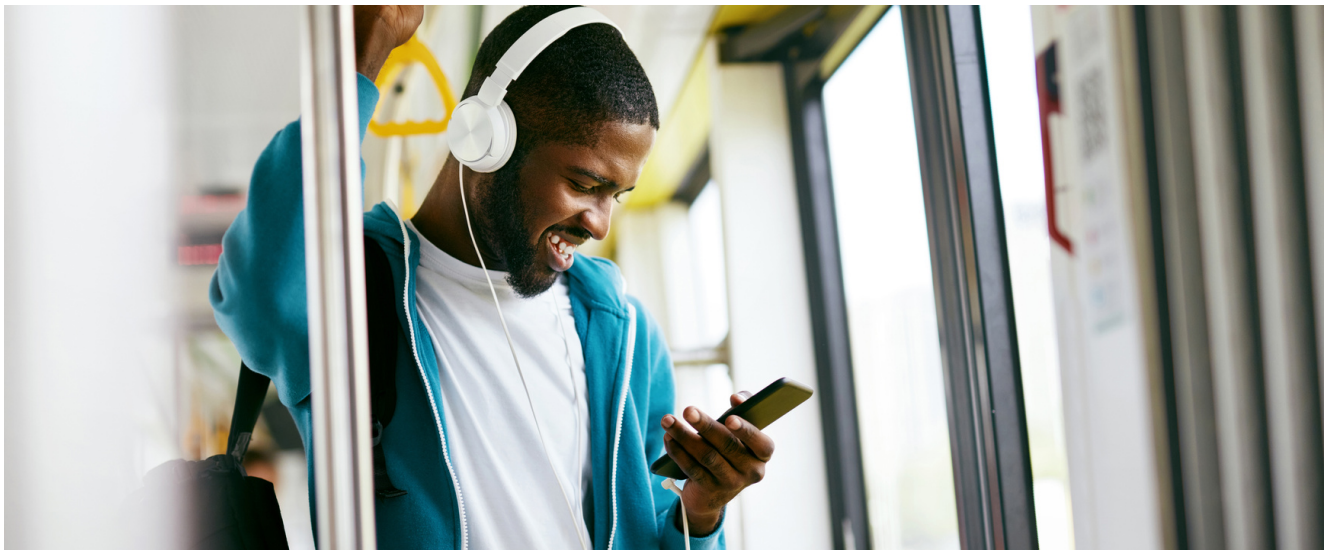
The courses have been designed with the advice and guidance from EarthCheck clients across the world and are created to be:

- **Personalised:** You can create your own learning journey based on your interests and career goals, gaps in your skills, and your organisation's specific needs.
- **Flexible:** You can study when convenient for you, alone or with your peers.
- **Competency-based:** EarthCheck micro-credentials are awarded based on demonstrated understanding of the subject matter.

The bite-size short courses and lessons are an easy, accessible and engaging way to deliver professional development to learners at any stage of their career. Micro-credentials are unlocking career opportunities for learners globally. They offer practical skills from industry experts that can be learned and applied instantly, creating strong knowledge retention.

You may have heard the term micro-credential before. They can also be known as online certifications, online short courses, nanodegrees or digital badges. Whatever you call them, these mini-courses offer bite-sized training for busy professionals looking to refresh and update skills and progress in their careers. **Micro-credentials are an incredibly effective way to implement a competency-based learning model.**





From a social point of view, education leads to better and happier living conditions. From an economic viewpoint, certifications of learning make the economy tick and the labour market function building a resilient workforce. Micro-credentials are a spin-off from the traditional qualifications industry – and they operate at the intersection of education and industry. They present an excellent opportunity to achieve better work-integrated learning and better learning-integrated work (Deakin 2019).

#### **Micro-credentials break learning into manageable chunks.**

Meaningful learning needs to focus on discrete units that can be practised. This kind of “micro-learning” often involves a series of sessions that take 45–90 minutes each and are delivered over time. This places ambitious projects within reach. It also provides a sense of accomplishment when each unit is practised and implemented.

#### **EarthCheck’s micro-credentials include:**

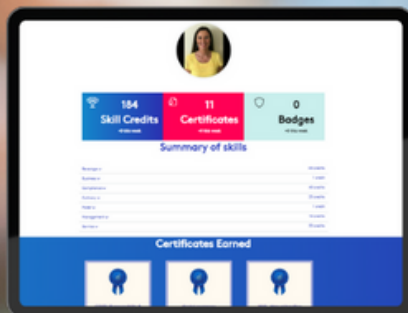
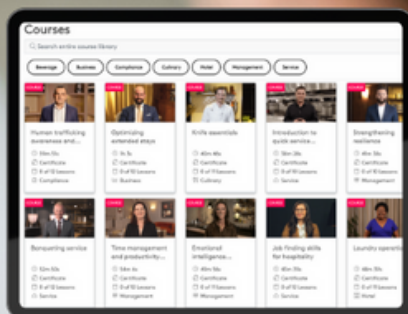
- 1. Introduction to sustainability:** By the end of this course, learners will understand sustainability principles and why we should look to sustainable models of practice to create a better future for the industry. The module will overview all aspects of sustainability (economic, social, environmental and cultural) and explore the governance principles required for successful implementation.
- 2. Principles of Sustainable Tourism Management:** This course will explain how to take action to embed sustainable practices in your business. Participants will learn about the key measurement areas for an organisation and how to benchmark operational performance. It will explain the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the role an organisation can play in delivering meaningful and measurable outcomes.
- 3. The Role of Sustainability in Experience Development & Marketing:** This course will explore the five stages of travel and where sustainability sits across the customer travel journey. It will explain the power of storytelling and the importance of engaging with visitors to create memorable experiences.

Reach out to the EarthCheck Training Academy to learn more about future knowledge initiatives at [training@earthcheck.org](mailto:training@earthcheck.org).

**“WHAT I LIKE THE MOST ABOUT THIS TYPE OF TRAINING IS THAT IT’S SIMPLE AND EASY TO USE, IT’S MULTI-PLATFORM FRIENDLY, AND OPERATORS AND STAFF CAN OPEN IT AT ANY TIME AND LOCATION. MOST IMPORTANTLY, YOU CAN TRACK YOUR TEAMS’ PROGRESS AND HELP STAFF PROGRESSIVELY DEVELOP THEIR SKILLS AND BUILD THEIR CREDENTIALS.”**

*Stewart Moore  
CEO & Founder, EarthCheck*

# Learn and grow with Typsy



## Learning platform

Complete courses, test your knowledge, and earn certificates. Watch lessons on-demand and reduce time spent training.

## Video content

Watch 1000+ expert-led video lessons by industry professionals, plus add your own operational videos.

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# IN CRISIS SITUATIONS, TIMING IS EVERYTHING!

Knowing how and when to act can be critical in saving time, money and even your business. Are you ready for the next crisis?

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Follow the QR link to help us better understand how we can help. Alternatively, please feel free to contact us directly via [info@earthcheck.org](mailto:info@earthcheck.org)



**SUSTAINABILITY  
IS NO LONGER  
ABOUT DOING  
LESS HARM.  
IT'S ABOUT  
DOING MORE  
GOOD.**

- JOCHEN ZEITZ PRESIDENT, CEO  
AND CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD,  
HARLEY DAVIDSON, INC.



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