



GREEN ACTIVITIES CRITERIA PROPOSAL

2026

Public Hearing 1.5.-1.6.2026

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Proposed imperative and guideline criteria and explanatory texts for the criteria

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THE CRITERIA STRUCTURE:

The new Green Activities criteria consist of three chapters:

Chapter 1 combines chapters 1-4 of the current criteria, and also includes a broader obligation to monitor the company's environmental impact.

Chapter 2 covers the production of Program Services

Chapter 3, which is divided into 2 parts, deals with the working conditions and care of tourism animals.

Imperative and guideline criteria

The imperative criteria are mandatory and must all be met to receive the Green Activities certificate. Guideline criteria are optional, but a company must meet at least 5% more of them in each re-application to retain its Green Activities certificate until it has reached 50% of all available guideline criteria. After that it has no obligation to meet more guideline criteria.

1. MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING / IMPERATIVE CRITERIA		
	Proposed new criterion	Explanatory notes
1	The establishment has a designated Green Activities contact person who is responsible for coordinating the company's sustainability work.	<p>The company's management must appoint a person to this role who is permanently employed by the company. This person must be granted access to all information necessary for completing the application and carrying out sustainability work, and the time required for the role must be taken into account in their other duties.</p> <p>The Green Activities contact person must present the status of the company's sustainability work to management at least twice a year.</p> <p>Name of the Green Activities contact person is to be informed in the application.</p>
2	The establishment has prepared a written sustainability plan that identifies its key environmental and social impacts and defines the priority areas of its sustainability work.	<p>A sustainability plan must include at least the following sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of the establishment's operations and operating environment. • A list of subcontracting establishments if any of the establishment's activities/services are outsourced. • Identification and assessment of the severity of the establishment's most significant environmental and socio-cultural impacts.* • Definition of the establishment's sustainability priorities based on the above. • The establishment's Code of Conduct, including ethical commitments regarding the environment, local communities, employees, and the proper treatment of any animals involved in tourism activities. <p>*The assessment must include a description of the types of environmental degradation, pollution, or disturbance to local communities that the establishment's operations may cause, how serious/likely these impacts are, and how they are mitigated.</p>

		<p>The assessment must evaluate the impacts of the establishment’s operations and activities, both direct and indirect, on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water bodies (eutrophication, pollution, water resource availability, etc.) • Soil (erosion, especially on trails, slopes, and shore areas) • Air and climate • Vegetation (invasive species, endangered/threatened species, etc.) • Wildlife (invasive species, endangered/threatened species, etc.) • Local communities (e.g. noise, light or odor pollution, congestion, littering, infrastructure wear, invasion of privacy, etc.) <p>The following commitments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The establishment confirms that it complies with all applicable laws and regulations. • The establishment ensures that all employees, trainees, and volunteers have accident insurance. • If the establishment uses or sells plants, animals, or historical and archaeological artifacts, this is done within the limits of the law. • The establishment requires its subcontracting establishments to comply with legislation and the basic criteria of the Green Activities certification. • If the establishment has animals, it commits to caring for them in accordance with animal welfare recommendations and to continuously improve staff knowledge of animal behavior, training, and care. <p>The sustainability plan must be no more than 3 years old.</p>
3	<p>The establishment has set itself at least three sustainability objectives aimed at reducing the</p>	<p>The establishment sets at least three objectives in line with the priorities defined in its sustainability plan, aiming to reduce its environmental impacts and/or promote social responsibility. The objectives must cover different areas of sustainability (environmental, social,</p>

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	environmental or social impacts caused by its operations.	and economic responsibility), and the resources allocated to achieving each objective (working time, budget, equipment) must also be specified. Progress on the objectives is reported annually, and new objectives are set at the same time. Objectives that have already been achieved cannot be included as objectives for the following year, as they must contribute to genuine development.
4	The establishment cooperates annually with the local stakeholders it has identified as important.	<p>The aim of the cooperation is to ensure that the needs and views of stakeholders are taken into account in the establishment's operations. The application must identify the parties representing local stakeholders with whom the establishment collaborates in developing tourism services and products.</p> <p>The application must identify the local stakeholders with whom the establishment collaborates.</p>
5	The establishment monitors its monthly energy consumption and reports it in the Green Activities application.	<p>In reporting, all energy consumption resulting from the establishment's operations must be taken into account (electricity consumption, heating, and fuel for any vehicles).</p> <p>The application must include an invoice or summary of purchased energy provided by the energy supplier. The electricity consumption report must indicate the production method of the purchased electricity, if necessary confirmed with a certificate of origin (electricity produced entirely from renewable energy sources and/or nuclear power).</p>
6	The establishment monitors its monthly water consumption and reports it as part of the Green Activities application.	<p>Regular monitoring of water consumption helps identify possible leaks and increases awareness of the impact of operating practices on total consumption.</p> <p>It is also recommended that consumption be adjusted in relation to a selected production unit (e.g. sold activity services, turnover, number of visitors, etc.).</p> <p>The application must include a water consumption report for the previous calendar year provided by the water utility. If the establishment uses its own well without a consumption meter, the initial application must include a justified estimate of water consumption.</p>

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7	<p>The establishment ensures that waste generated in its operations is sorted and treated in accordance with the Waste Act and municipal waste management regulations. Clear sorting instructions are provided to both customers and staff.</p>	<p>The establishment must itself ensure the sorting and transport of waste generated during its operations to a collection point, unless the waste management company's contract covers the site. Waste containers must be clearly labelled, and sorting instructions must be displayed in the most commonly used languages of customers and staff. Where necessary, pictogram symbols may also be used.</p> <p>The application must include a report on the types of waste collected and their further processing, as well as waste sorting instructions for customers and staff.</p> <p>During the audit, the visible placement of the instructions and the availability of collection options for the reported waste fractions will be verified.</p>
8	<p>The establishment monitors the amount of waste it generates and reports it in the Green Activities application.</p>	<p>The purpose of waste monitoring must be to reduce the amount of mixed waste and increase the recycling rate.</p> <p>The application must include a waste report for the previous calendar year, containing both a summary from the waste management company and an estimate of the total amounts of any waste fractions collected independently.</p>
9	<p>The outdoor areas under the establishment's management are litter-free. Litter is collected from the area regularly, and the area is equipped with covered waste bins.</p>	<p>If the establishment manages outdoor areas, it must ensure they are kept clean and tidy. Designated, covered waste bins must be provided for different waste fractions. Access by pests to the waste bins must be prevented as far as possible.</p> <p>During an audit, the outdoor areas under the establishment's control and the waste collection point are inspected.</p>
10	<p>The establishment calculates its annual Scope 1 and Scope 2 carbon footprint using a carbon footprint calculator that meets</p>	<p>The calculation must comply with the GHG Protocol and include at least all Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions of the establishment (energy consumption and any refrigerant-related emissions). The emission factors used in the calculations must be based on the most up-to-date available information.</p>

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	the requirements of the GHG Protocol.	In addition to the total result, the report must include a breakdown of emissions by category, as well as the consumption data used in the calculation and the most up-to-date and accurate emission factors available. If Scope 3 emissions are included in the calculation, the report must specify which emission sources are covered.
11	All detergents, cleaning agents, and tissue papers used in the establishment's daily operations are eco-labelled. Cleaning agents are used in accordance with dosing instructions, and their use is justified.	<p>Eco-labelled detergents and cleaning agents have undergone an independent assessment in which their cleaning performance and minimal environmental impact have been verified. Accepted ecolabels are those that have been accredited in accordance with the ISO 17065 standard.</p> <p>The application must include a list of detergents, cleaning agents, and tissue papers used in the establishment's daily operations. The list must specify the use of each chemical/tissue paper and the third-party certified ecolabel for each product.</p>
12	Before starting work, the establishment enters into a written agreement with all its employees, interns/their educational institutions, and volunteers, specifying the key terms and duties of employment, remuneration and any fringe benefits, as well as the employee's rights to support and guidance.	<p>In the case of trainees, the agreement may also be concluded with their educational institution.</p> <p>The agreement must clearly state that a volunteer or intern is never responsible for the establishment's operations, the production of programme services, the safety of customers or staff, or the welfare of tourism animals.</p> <p>For interns/their educational institutions, an agreement must be made that includes at least the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A designated workplace instructor with sufficient competence and resources to supervise the student • The student's placement and training period is communicated to staff • The establishment monitors the student's competence development and reports to the educational institution if the planned learning objectives cannot be achieved • The establishment is responsible for the student's occupational safety during the training period, even if the educational institution provides accident insurance

		<p>Tasks of the workplace instructor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the student receives proper induction • Participating in planning, implementation, and assessment of the training agreement and competence demonstrations • Providing goal-oriented guidance to the student • Giving feedback on the student's competence development <p>If the establishment uses volunteers, their agreement must include at least the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum daily/weekly working hours and main job duties • Days off and rest periods • Type of accommodation provided and/or other fringe benefits • Insurance coverage provided by the establishment (accident and liability insurance) • Right to induction, work supervision, and a designated workplace instructor <p>During the audit, the auditor must be shown a list of all current employees, volunteers, and interns. The auditor will randomly select at least 20 % of the contracts for review. If the establishment uses volunteers, at least one of the contracts selected for review must concern a volunteer.</p>
13	<p>The establishment inducts all its staff members in accordance with a written induction plan. The induction includes the presentation of the safety document, the requirements of the Green Activities</p>	<p>The establishment must have a written staff induction plan that includes a safety and responsibility section. All staff members must be provided with at least one annual training session covering the GA certification requirements, as well as the establishment's own sustainability objectives and their monitoring.</p> <p>The induction must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GA certification requirements

	<p>certification, and the establishment's own sustainability objectives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the establishment's own sustainability objectives and their monitoring • information on the GA reporting channel, where staff can report deviations from the criteria • presentation and review of regulations concerning movement in nature • presentation of local culture and conditions, especially for employees coming from different cultural backgrounds <p>If the establishment uses external subcontracted guides, they must also receive equivalent induction.</p> <p>The application must include the staff induction plan.</p> <p>Receiving of the induction must be confirmed with a signature in an induction record. The record will be reviewed during the audit.</p>
<p>14</p>	<p>All staff members receive annual training on responsibility-related matters relevant to their work. In animal tourism establishments, particular attention is paid to training that promotes animal welfare.</p>	<p>Continuous development of staff competence improves the quality, safety, and customer satisfaction of the establishment's services. Additional training must be provided at least once a year, and it must go beyond the content included in the initial induction of new staff.</p> <p>Training may be organized by the establishment itself or may include online training, webinars, themed days, or courses. If the establishment uses subcontractors who represent the establishment in customer-facing roles, they must also receive equivalent training.</p> <p>The establishment may choose the topics and content of the training, but in animal tourism establishments at least one training session must address measures that promote the welfare of tourism animals.</p> <p>The application must include a report on the additional training provided to staff during the previous certification period, as well as training planned for the next period.</p>

		<p>During an audit, auditor will review the list of trainings and the staff members who participated in them. In the list, participants must confirm with their signature that they have received additional training.</p>
15	<p>The establishment adheres to the principles of a safe space in its operations.</p>	<p>The establishment must ensure that all participants in its activity services and all individuals working in the establishment can feel welcome and respected, and that no one feels excluded, afraid, or belittled during the service. Staff must be able to address discrimination, microaggressions, and inappropriate behaviour.</p> <p>The establishment must have written safe space principles available to both customers and staff. The principles must be communicated to participants before the start of the program, either verbally or by being clearly displayed on signs, boards, or similar materials.</p> <p>During the audit, it will be verified that the safe space principles are visible and accessible to both customers and staff.</p>
16	<p>The establishment communicates the Green Activities certification and its requirements clearly to its customers.</p>	<p>The Green Activities certification/logo and information about its requirements must be clearly displayed in the establishment's premises, marketing materials, and digital communication channels. Suitable locations may include, for example, a customer waiting or changing area, a resting hut, vehicles used for transport, or similar spaces.</p> <p>Customers must also be clearly informed about the GA reporting channel, through which they can report any deviations from the criteria they may observe in the establishment's operations. Information about the reporting channel and a link to it may be provided in the booking confirmation and on the website, but it must also be visible in the establishment's premises, vehicles, or similar locations.</p> <p>During the audit, it will be verified that information about the GA certification, its key requirements, and the reporting channel is clearly visible and accessible to customers.</p>

16	<p>The establishment offers its customers the opportunity to provide feedback on its operations and activity services. Feedback is processed in accordance with a predefined procedure.</p>	<p>Feedback may be collected either through the establishment's own customer feedback survey, sent to all customers and including questions related to responsibility work, through a clearly visible electronic feedback channel link, or through an external feedback channel (e.g. Tripadvisor). If feedback is received verbally, it must also be recorded.</p> <p>Regardless of the channel used, the results must be reviewed monthly in a staff meeting or management meeting, and necessary corrective actions must be taken immediately.</p> <p>The application must describe how feedback is collected and processed, as well as how necessary actions based on the feedback are recorded.</p> <p>A summary of feedback received and processed during the previous certification period must be presented during the audit.</p>
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1. MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING / GUIDELINE CRITERIA		
	Proposed new criterion	Explanatory notes
1	The establishment sets a concrete target to reduce its carbon footprint, evaluates it annually, and defines measures to achieve the target.	<p>The criterion encourages the establishment to take proactive measures to reduce its climate impact by setting clear and measurable greenhouse gas emission reduction targets based on its calculated carbon footprint. Regular evaluation and strategic planning promote responsibility and continuous improvement.</p> <p>The establishment uses its calculated carbon footprint as the basis for setting a target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by a defined percentage. It defines a baseline year and a target year, along with the associated values, the emission scopes included, and the unit of the target. The target is updated and evaluated annually, and priority must be given to reducing Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions before taking measures to reduce Scope 3 emissions.</p> <p>The establishment defines the actions it will take to achieve emission reductions, such as reducing energy consumption, improving energy efficiency, or installing renewable energy systems.</p> <p>Carbon sinks or avoided emissions are not included in gross greenhouse gas emission reductions.</p> <p>During the audit, the establishment presents its annual greenhouse gas emission reduction target, the methods used, and the measures defined to achieve the target.</p>
2	The carbon footprint per person of the activity service is communicated in connection with its marketing.	In connection with the carbon footprint, the calculator used and the emission sources included in the calculation must be clearly indicated. At a minimum, the calculation must include all Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions of the establishment, and the emission factors used must be based on the most recent verified data available. If Scope 3 emissions are included in the calculation, the boundaries and assumptions must be justified. If the establishment offers customers the option to offset emissions, this must not be made a condition for achieving the stated carbon footprint.

<p>3</p>	<p>At least 50% of the energy used by the establishment is produced from renewable energy sources.</p>	<p>To reduce the establishment’s environmental burden and greenhouse gas emissions, an increasing share of the energy used in its operations should come from renewable sources. Transitioning from systems based on fossil fuels to renewable energy supports climate objectives, improves energy self-sufficiency, and promotes the long-term sustainability of operations.</p> <p>This criterion covers all energy required for the establishment’s own operations (heating, electricity, and possible vehicle fuels). It also applies to energy used for hot water production and cooking.</p> <p>Renewable energy may be produced on-site or procured from external suppliers.</p> <p>Examples of options compliant with the criterion as alternatives to fossil fuel- and nuclear-based systems include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) solar thermal systems (e.g. solar collectors for domestic hot water or space heating) b) ground-source or air-source heat pumps c) biogas and biomass fuels d) wind power e) hydropower f) solar electricity-based heating and cooling systems g) certified renewable electricity h) district heating or cooling networks whose primary energy sources include geothermal energy, heat recovery, biomass, and/or industrial waste heat utilised within a renewable energy framework i) certified sustainable biofuels (e.g. biodiesel) j) biomass fuels (e.g. wood pellets, wood chips, or briquettes) <p>Peat is not considered a renewable energy source and is not included in the required 50 % share.</p> <p>During the audit, the establishment must present documentation demonstrating that it produces or purchases at least 50 % of its operational energy from renewable energy sources. This may</p>
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		<p>include documents such as energy source specifications, electricity or heating contracts, fuel delivery invoices, or renewable energy certificates for biofuels or electricity when energy is procured from a service provider.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>The establishment produces or procures all of its energy from renewable sources.</p>	<p>Switching from systems based on fossil fuels to renewable energy supports climate objectives, improves energy self-sufficiency, and promotes the long-term sustainability of operations.</p> <p>This criterion covers all energy required for the establishment’s operations (heating, electricity, and possible vehicle fuels). It also applies to energy used for hot water production and cooking.</p> <p>Renewable energy may be produced on-site or procured from external sources.</p> <p>Examples of systems compliant with the criterion as alternatives to fossil fuel- and nuclear-based energy include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) solar thermal systems (e.g. solar collectors for domestic hot water or space heating) b) ground-source or air-source heat pumps c) biogas and biomass fuels d) wind power e) hydropower f) solar electricity-based heating and cooling systems g) certified renewable electricity h) district heating or cooling networks whose primary energy sources include geothermal energy, heat recovery, biomass, and/or industrial waste heat utilised within a renewable energy framework i) certified sustainable biofuels (e.g. biodiesel) j) biomass fuels (e.g. wood pellets, wood chips, or briquettes) <p>Peat is not considered a renewable energy source.</p>

		<p>The application must include documentation demonstrating that the establishment produces or purchases all energy used in its operations from renewable energy sources. This may include, for example, energy origin certificates, fuel delivery invoices, or renewable energy certificates for biofuels or electricity when energy is procured from a service provider.</p>
5	<p>At least 90 % of the energy used in the establishment's operations is produced without fossil fuels.</p>	<p>To combat climate change by reducing its carbon dioxide emissions, the establishment uses fossil-free energy for heating.</p> <p>Fossil-free heat energy sources include hydropower, wind power, solar energy, geothermal and ambient heat energy recovered by heat pumps, biogas, nuclear power, the biodegradable fraction of recycled and waste fuels, wood-based fuels, and other plant- and animal-based fuels. Although peat is not classified as a fossil fuel in general categorisations, its climate impact is higher than that of brown coal and hard coal, and therefore it cannot be considered fossil-free.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, the establishment must use electricity produced with at least 90 % fossil-free energy sources, and the fuel, district heating, and district cooling it procures must be produced with at least 90 % fossil-free energy sources.</p> <p>During the audit, the establishment must present documentation showing that at least 90 % of the energy it has used during the past 12 months is fossil-free.</p>
6	<p>The establishment uses reusable towels or hand towel rolls in its sanitary facilities.</p>	<p>Disposable paper towels are often a major contributor to mixed waste produced by tourism businesses. In addition, disposable towels support a throwaway culture and increase waste management costs, as they require more frequent emptying or a greater number of waste bins. Washable, reusable towels or hand towel rolls are a hygienic and sustainable solution that significantly reduces the amount of mixed waste generated by the establishment.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, reusable towels or towel rolls must be used in at least 50 % of the establishment's public and staff toilet facilities.</p>

		The application must include a report showing the number of handwashing points in public and staff toilets, and the proportion of those equipped with reusable towels or towel rolls.
7	The establishment promotes the use of environmentally friendly modes of transport for staff commuting.	<p>To reduce the environmental burden caused by transport and to improve staff wellbeing, the establishment provides support for employees to use environmentally friendly modes of transport for commuting.</p> <p>Environmentally friendly transport modes in this context include public transport (buses, trains, trams, ferries, etc.), vehicles powered by electricity or 100 % renewable fuels, carpooling, and staff shared transport services.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, the establishment must provide concrete support for the choice of transport mode. This may include, for example, providing secure bicycle storage and shower facilities for cycling commuters, charging points for electric vehicles, financial support for public transport tickets or electric vehicle parking and charging costs, free shared transport, or similar measures.</p> <p>During the audit, the establishment must present the measures it has used over the past 12 months to encourage staff to choose environmentally friendly modes of transport for commuting. The audit visit will also verify that concrete actions have been implemented.</p>
8	The establishment offers its staff free/subsidized exercise opportunities and/or facilities during working hours and/or outside working hours.	To improve staff wellbeing and reduce sick leave, the establishment encourages its employees to adopt an active and physically engaged lifestyle. This encouragement may include offering free or subsidized exercise programmes, or access to facilities and equipment that staff can use free of Charge. Exercise may take place outside working hours, but Green Activities encourages providing guided exercise sessions also during working hours. The option may be provided either on the company's premises or at external service providers' facilities/areas.

		<p>To meet the criterion, the establishment must have offered its staff weekly exercise opportunities for at least the past six months. The exercise opportunities must be available to all permanent employees.</p> <p>During the audit, the establishment must present the practices it has used to support employees' physical activity over at least the past six months.</p>
9	<p>The establishment has carried out a marketing or communications campaign related to sustainability during the past 12 months.</p>	<p>Sustainability communication campaigns aim to encourage customers or stakeholders to take environmental action. To meet the criterion, the campaign must stand out from the establishment's everyday sustainability communication, focus on a single sustainability theme, last at least two weeks, and draw attention to actions that the target group can influence themselves.</p> <p>The campaign may be directed at customers, suppliers, or other stakeholders, and it must be visible and encourage active participation and action.</p> <p>Campaign materials must be included in the application.</p> <p>During the audit, the establishment must present its campaign, its target group, and the results achieved.</p>
10	<p>The establishment has prepared an annual communication plan, which includes at least three annual sustainability-related messages.</p>	<p>Sustainability work is an integral part of the establishment's business and communication. To increase customers' and stakeholders' environmental awareness and involve them in sustainability efforts, the establishment must plan its sustainability communication in advance. The plan must define the main target groups of communication (e.g. conference guests, leisure travellers, business travellers, families with children, etc.), communication channels, sustainability themes, and the timing of communication activities.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, the establishment must have prepared an annual communication calendar that extends at least to the end of the current year. The plan must include a schedule for at least three sustainability-related messages.</p>

		<p>The application must include the communication calendar, clearly showing the required three sustainability messages.</p> <p>During the audit, the establishment must present its communication plan, or the part of it that covers environmental communication. The plan must describe communication channels, target groups, timing of communication activities, and the key message of environmental communication.</p>
11	<p>The establishment rewards its customers for environmental actions.</p>	<p>A good way to encourage customers to make environmentally friendly choices is to reward them for such actions with a product, service, discount, or other form of recognition. Encouraged choices may include, for example, using bicycle rental services, arriving at the destination by public transport, choosing vegetarian food, or collecting litter during an outdoor activity.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, the establishment must take customers' choices into account and reward environmentally friendly actions. The reward may, for example, be a gift card or discount voucher.</p> <p>During the audit, the establishment must present the practices used to reward customers for environmental actions.</p>
12	<p>The staff guiding customers have received training related to inclusivity or cultural sensitivity within the past 12 months.</p>	<p>As the customer base of activity services becomes increasingly diverse and international, the varied cultural backgrounds of travellers pose challenges to staff competence. To operate in a culturally sensitive and inclusive manner, employees must be able to take into account customers' cultural practices, limitations, and needs in guidance, services, and route planning.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, the staff responsible for guiding customers must have received training in culturally sensitive interaction, inclusivity, consideration of minority needs, or similar topics within the past 12 months. In addition, the establishment must be able to explain how cultural</p>

		<p>practices (e.g. clothing, gender-related interaction, dining, religious practices) are taken into account in customer guidance.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, the establishment must have provided cultural sensitivity training to at least one member of the guiding staff, and the content of the training must be made available to other staff members involved in customer guidance.</p> <p>The application must describe which training has been attended and how the training content has been shared with other staff responsible for customer guidance.</p>
13	<p>The establishment provides accessible services and communicates them clearly and visibly.</p>	<p>To enable access for employees and customers with reduced mobility to its premises and services, the establishment must ensure barrier-free access. Accessibility must be communicated clearly to customers, staff, and other users. By providing information on accessibility and its level of implementation, users are informed of what to expect.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, the establishment must provide accessible access to at least one regularly offered activity service, as well as to at least one customer break area and at least one toilet facility. In addition, accessibility must be clearly and visibly communicated in the service description, and this information must be available to customers before making a purchase decision.</p> <p>The application must include a link to the establishment’s website or digital channel where accessibility is described.</p> <p>During the audit, the establishment must describe its procedures regarding customers with reduced mobility and how it communicates this information on its website and on-site.</p>

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14	The establishment has taken sensory impairments into account in the design of its premises, products, and services.	<p>The establishment has taken the needs of customers with sensory impairments into account in the design of its premises, products, and services. The facilities, products, and services are planned to accommodate the needs of customers with sensory disabilities or limitations.</p> <p>This may include, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> designing an activity service or route that is suitable for customers with sensory impairments improving the accessibility of digital communication (e.g. descriptions of visual elements and captions for images) <p>The application must describe how the criterion is implemented in the establishment.</p> <p>During the audit, the establishment must demonstrate how customers with sensory impairments have been taken into account in its operations.</p>
15	The establishment offers internship opportunities and/or part-time or flexible working arrangements for long-term unemployed or otherwise hard-to-employ job seekers.	<p>The establishment offers internship opportunities and/or part-time or flexible working contracts for long-term unemployed or otherwise hard-to-employ job seekers. To meet this criterion, the establishment must have provided an internship placement or a minimum three-month employment contract to a long-term unemployed or otherwise hard-to-employ job seeker within the past year. Internships that are part of standard tourism education programmes do not meet the requirement.</p> <p>The application must describe how this criterion is implemented within the establishment.</p> <p>During the audit, the establishment must demonstrate how this criterion has been fulfilled in practice.</p>
16	The establishment actively supports at least two regional projects that promote	To promote sustainable development and increase customer awareness, the establishment actively supports environmental actions or social development initiatives within the local community.

	<p>environmental or social development.</p>	<p>These measures are preferably focused on the area surrounding the establishment’s location, but they may also support projects in other geographical areas. Support may be directed, for example, to the following types of activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tree planting • establishment or restoration of green areas • biodiversity conservation projects, including those related to water or marine areas, ecological corridors, or the restoration of open habitats (e.g. meadows or traditional landscapes) • protection of culturally sensitive natural areas • projects addressing the impacts of climate change • outdoor activities (e.g. creation of nature trails accessible to the public) • cooperation with schools or other organisations engaged in environmental or educational work • cooperation with persons in need of special support (vulnerable or low-income groups) • actions promoting social justice and equal rights • provision of meeting or event spaces for local communities, such as schools or NGOs, free of charge or at a reduced cost • support for infrastructure-related projects (e.g. water supply systems) <p>To meet this criterion, the establishment must actively support at least two of the above actions or initiatives.</p> <p>During the audit, the establishment must present documentation demonstrating that it has actively supported at least two environmental or social community development initiatives within the past 12 months.</p>
17	<p>The establishment provides local small businesses with the opportunity to sell sustainably produced products based on the</p>	<p>To support local socio-cultural and economic development, the establishment sells products from local small businesses and/or provides them with the opportunity to sell sustainably produced goods based on the region’s nature, history, or culture. Sales may take place through a small shop or dedicated section on the premises, or via the company’s website.</p>

	<p>region’s nature, history, or culture.</p>	<p>The products may include food items, souvenirs, art, handicrafts, or utility items. To meet the criterion, they must be locally produced and sustainably made, drawing on the region’s nature, history, or cultural heritage.</p> <p>During the audit, it is verified that products from local small businesses are available for sale at the establishment’s premises and/or on its website.</p>
<p>18</p>	<p>The establishment has established a responsible procurement policy that guides its purchasing decisions.</p>	<p>The purpose of the procurement policy is to favour environmentally friendly and socially sustainable suppliers and products, and to minimize resource use, waste generation, and unnecessary transport. It may also define other guiding principles for procurement, such as local sourcing, the promotion of human rights, or biodiversity protection.</p> <p>A responsible procurement policy sets out the principles for selecting food products, construction materials, consumables, and services required in the company’s operations. In addition, it may address the company’s investment activities by defining the criteria for selecting investment targets and how any returns are used. The aim of the procurement policy is to ensure a shared understanding of sustainable procurement and to outline the general requirements for sustainable purchasing that staff must follow in all goods and service procurement directly from suppliers to the site. It must take into account both environmental and social sustainability aspects.</p> <p>The procurement policy must be updated at least every three years. If the company is part of an international or national chain, the chain may prepare a responsible procurement policy and distribute it to other sites within the same chain.</p> <p>Once the responsible procurement policy has been established, all company staff must be informed of its content.</p>

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		<p>The application must include the company's procurement policy, which must be less than three years old.</p> <p>During the audit, the establishment must present its procurement policy and explain how staff involved in purchasing decisions have been trained in its content.</p>
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2 ACTIVITY PROGRAMS / IMPERATIVE CRITERIA		
	Proposed new criterion	Explanatory notes
1	5.1 The establishment is committed to complying with the principles of sustainable tourism, regulations concerning outdoor recreation, and the rules and regulations of its operating area. This commitment is stated in the establishment's sustainability plan and on its website or in other communications.	<p>The establishment is committed to complying with regulations concerning movement in nature, and taking into account the species-specific behaviour of wild animals in the planning and implementation of its operations. The establishment operates in all its activities in a manner that prevents wildfires.</p> <p>The establishment identifies the key species-specific behavioural characteristics of wild animals occurring in the area and takes them into account in its operations. This includes, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintaining sufficient distance from animals • prohibition of feeding wild animals • consideration of breeding, nesting, and calving seasons • ensuring undisturbed resting and feeding areas • avoiding noise and sudden movements • planning routes so that sensitive habitats are avoided <p>The establishment must also plan its operations and activity services in such a way that they do not alter the natural behaviour of wild animals or cause them repeated disturbance responses. This consideration is included in staff induction.</p> <p>The establishment ensures that wildfire prevention is taken into account in all its operations, and that wildfire warnings are always checked before using fire when moving in the terrain.</p> <p>During the audit, it will be verified that this commitment is stated in the establishment's sustainability plan and on its website or in other communications.</p>
2	The establishment only provides activity services in which the physical, psychological, and social risks to service users and	The establishment is familiar with the legislation, standards, authority guidelines, and current codes of practice applicable to the services it provides. The establishment has identified in advance the hazards and risks related to its activity services and has sought to eliminate or reduce them to an acceptable level. The identification of hazards and risk management are documented, for example as part of the safety plan.

	<p>third parties are at an acceptable level.</p>	<p>The establishment must have a written description of how the safety of the service is ensured. This description must, where applicable, include the methods used in the service, equipment, gear and protective equipment, operating procedures, operating environment and safe conditions, staff duties, qualification criteria and staffing levels, as well as supervision during operations.</p> <p>The document must specify all risks related to the offered activities or the establishment's operations that are of at least moderate severity or likelihood. Risks must be assessed from the perspective of customers, staff, and any tourism animals used in the operations. The risk management plan must clearly describe the concrete measures used to reduce the likelihood of the most serious risks. The plan must designate a person responsible for possible crisis communication and for submitting notifications to the Finnish Safety and Chemicals Agency(TUKES).</p> <p>To meet the criterion, a risk management plan must be attached to the application, including the above-mentioned elements.</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>The establishment keeps records of near-miss and accident incidents, develops its practices based on them, and regularly reviews the lessons learned with its staff .</p>	<p>The establishment keeps records of accident and near-miss situations and continuously monitors changes in service safety.</p> <p>During the audit, the establishment will present the method by which lessons learned from near-miss and accident situations are recorded and taken into account in the development of operations.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, the application must include a report on hazardous situations that have occurred in the establishment's activity services during the previous certification period. The report must describe how each incident was reviewed with the guiding staff and what improved practices were implemented afterwards.</p> <p>The incident register must be accessible to all guiding staff, and familiarisation with it must be included in the induction plan.</p> <p>If any hazardous situations have occurred in the activity services or operations during the past 12 months, the TUKES notification made for such incidents must be included in the application.</p>

4	<p>The establishment describes the content of its programs and informs customers about their level of difficulty and the required equipment before the purchase decision is made</p>	<p>The establishment must have a written or visual product description as part of its marketing material or other pre-purchase information provided to customers, enabling them to assess the suitability of the service for themselves. The description must provide sufficient detail, in text and/or images, about the route/activity and its level of difficulty.</p> <p>If participation in the activity service requires specific skills, equipment, or physical fitness, this information must also be made available. The description must be accessible to the customer before the purchase decision is made.</p> <p>During the audit, it will be verified that the required information is available to customers before the purchase decision is made.</p>
6	<p>The guiding staff providing activity services have sufficient training and knowledge in relation to the level of difficulty of the offered program/service.</p>	<p>The establishment must ensure that its employees have sufficient competence for the activity services provided and are familiar with the operating area and local conditions. If subcontractors representing the establishment in customer-facing services are used, the establishment must also ensure their competence.</p> <p>Sufficient professional competence can be achieved through at least a vocational qualification or a minimum of two years of relevant work experience. With less experience or training than this, an employee may not independently act as a guide in activity services.</p> <p>In addition, employees must have adequate knowledge of local conditions and the ability to convey an understanding of local culture, taking into account the cultural backgrounds of customers arriving from elsewhere.</p> <p>If trainees or apprentices are used, an individual competence assessment and a related training plan must be prepared for them, based on which their responsibilities and level of independence in work tasks are gradually increased. An employee working under a trainee or apprenticeship contract may never be solely responsible for the implementation of activity services, customer safety, or the welfare of tourism animals.</p> <p>If volunteers are used in the establishment, they may not carry out activity services, guide customers, or be responsible for the care of tourism animals.</p>

		<p>Staff responsible for guiding tours/services must hold at least a valid first aid qualification (EA1 or equivalent), corresponding to at least 16 hours of basic first aid training. Depending on the operating environment of the activity service, it is also recommended that at least the lead guide holds an EA2 or equivalent qualification.</p> <p>The establishment maintains an up-to-date register of staff first aid training and its validity. The establishment monitors the validity of training and ensures refresher training is completed before expiration.</p> <p>During the audit, the establishment will present an up-to-date report on staff professional and first aid competence.</p>
7	<p>At the beginning of each activity service, the establishment instructs participants on the safe implementation of the service and on how they should act to protect the environment and biodiversity.</p>	<p>In addition to the instructions required for safe participation in the activity service, the establishment must instruct customers on responsible movement in nature in a way that does not damage vegetation or cause disturbance, stress, or harm to animals.</p> <p>The guidance may be provided either as part of general safety instructions or as a separate section. The instructions must include at least the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smoking and any other use of fire • Consideration of traffic and other users of the route • Waste collection and sorting • Toilet instructions • Prevention of environmental wear and erosion • Water use and water protection • Picking of wild plants • Prohibition of disturbing or feeding wild animals • If the establishment provides animal-based activity services, instructions on approaching, handling, and photographing tourism animals

		<p>The application must include a written checklist for staff on instructing customers. The checklist must be reviewed as part of staff induction.</p> <p>During the audit, the auditor will participate in the customer briefing held at the beginning of the activity service and verify that the points listed above are covered.</p>
9	<p>The establishment seeks to mitigate the harm caused by its operations to nature and local communities.</p>	<p>The establishment assesses the extent of the environmental and social harms defined in its sustainability plan at least once every two years. In addition, the establishment must annually provide the local community with an opportunity to give feedback on its operations and must seek to reduce perceived impacts.</p> <p>If the establishment’s activity services include activities that make use of local culture, it must ensure that they are not used in a misleading or inappropriate manner. The local community must be given the opportunity to participate in the development of cultural activities to ensure that they are authentic and respectful of the local community.</p> <p>The application must include the results of an impact assessment no older than two years, as well as written evidence that the views of the local community have been consulted within the past 12 months for the purpose of minimizing the impacts of the establishment’s operations.</p>

2 ACTIVITY PROGRAMS / GUIDELINE CRITERIA		
	Proposed new criterion	Explanatory notes
1	If the establishment offers snowmobile safaris or other motorised vehicle activities, these must always include guidance on topics such as economical driving, erosion prevention, and noise pollution reduction	<p>Economical driving (eco-driving) saves fuel, reduces emissions, and lowers vehicle maintenance costs. The key principles are anticipatory, smooth, and calm driving, avoiding unnecessary braking and acceleration. The most important measures include maintaining sufficient safety distances, using engine braking, selecting the correct gear, and maintaining a steady speed.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, all activity services carried out with motor vehicles must begin with driving instructions. The instructions must include at least the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steady speed and low engine revs: avoid sudden acceleration and aggressive driving. A smooth and moderate speed keeps engine noise at a lower level. • Anticipation: observe the terrain and route ahead. Anticipatory driving reduces the need for sudden braking and re-acceleration, which is the quietest way to travel. • Use of engine braking • Staying on designated routes: driving is permitted only on marked tracks and routes. • Prohibition of off-route driving, as it causes the greatest disturbance to nature and the environment. • Consideration of nearby settlements: significantly reduce speed near residential areas, cabins, and areas requiring natural tranquillity. • Driving times: avoid unnecessary driving late in the evening or early in the morning near residential areas. • Switching off the engine: during stops, the engine must be turned off if the waiting time is prolonged.
2	All motor vehicle-based activities offered by the establishment are carried out using electric vehicles.	<p>The environmental benefits of electric vehicles are primarily related to operational emissions and energy efficiency. The most significant benefits include:</p> <p>No tailpipe emissions during driving (carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxides, particulate matter), which significantly improves air quality.</p>

		<p>Lower life-cycle carbon footprint: although battery manufacturing is energy-intensive, the overall carbon footprint of an electric vehicle is considerably lower than that of a combustion-engine vehicle.</p> <p>Energy efficiency: electric motors are significantly more energy-efficient than combustion engines.</p> <p>Possibility to use electricity generated from renewable energy sources (wind, solar, or hydropower) or nuclear power for charging.</p> <p>Recyclability of batteries: the minerals and materials used in batteries can be recycled, reducing the need for virgin raw materials.</p> <p>Quiet operation: electric vehicles are quieter, which reduces traffic noise pollution.</p>
3	All activity services offered by the establishment are carried out without motorised vehicles.	<p>The company's program offerings are checked for compliance with the criterion on the company's website/other marketing material.</p> <p>The criterion does not refer to transportation to the starting point of the program service or maintenance or support vehicles.</p>
4	The establishment encourages customers to travel to the destination in an environmentally friendly way.	<p>To meet the criterion, the establishment must include guidance in all booking confirmations on how the programme can be accessed using public transport or other environmentally friendly modes of transport. This information must also be clearly displayed on the company's website.</p> <p>If the company operates in an area where there is no regular public transport, or where public transport schedules do not allow customers to participate in the activity services, this criterion does not apply.</p>
5	All of the establishment's activity services are accessible using public transport.	<p>CO₂ emissions from participants' travel to the activity location significantly increase the environmental impact of programme service operations. By designing activity services so that they are accessible by public transport, the establishment can contribute to a low-carbon society and the green transition.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, all regularly offered activity services must be accessible by public transport. When planning the services, the schedules of local public transport must be taken</p>

		<p>into account in relation to the start and end times of the activities, and nearby public transport stops should be used as departure points for excursions.</p> <p>If the company operates in an area with no regular public transport, or where public transport schedules do not allow customers to participate in the activity services, this criterion does not apply.</p> <p>The application must include information on the accessibility of all regularly offered activity services using public transport.</p>
6	<p>Local and/or organically produced food products and ingredients are regularly used in customer catering services.</p>	<p>The establishment's sustainability work must be reflected in the meals it offers and their ingredients. In addition to environmental criteria, the production of organically labelled food products also complies with requirements related to animal welfare. The Fair Trade label, in turn, focuses on ensuring fair and sufficient livelihoods for agricultural producers. By using locally produced food products, it is possible to reduce the environmental impacts of food transport and significantly support the local economy.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, the Green Activities activity service provider must offer daily meals that include organic, Fair Trade, or locally produced products, ingredients, or raw materials. To ensure meaningful impact, the share of organic, local, and Fair Trade products should be significant in relation to all ingredients used.</p> <p>Organic and Fair Trade products must be nationally or internationally certified (Fair Trade, Rainforest Alliance, Organic). Local products are defined in this context as products and ingredients produced within the same region or a neighbouring region within 100 km of the establishment. Food produced on-site, as well as wild berries or mushrooms collected within 100 km of the establishment, are also considered local products.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, the establishment must regularly use local, organic, or Fair Trade products from at least three (3) different product categories.</p>

		<p>During the audit, the establishment must present a list of the organic, Fair Trade, or local products it regularly uses as ingredients in meals related to the activity service. At least three different product categories must be represented.</p>
7	<p>The catering included in the activity services is also available as a vegetarian option.</p>	<p>Vegetarian food generally has a lower climate impact than meals containing meat, especially red meat, and its fibre content supports digestion and overall wellbeing. Vegetarian diets are also becoming increasingly common, and more customers expect a meat-free or fish-free option at meals.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, the establishment must either include a vegetarian option in all its catering services or clearly inform customers of the possibility to pre-book a vegetarian meal.</p> <p>In this context, vegetarian food is defined as food that does not contain meat or fish (eggs and dairy products are permitted). If the main meal includes meat or fish, the vegetarian option must include a comparable source of protein.</p> <p>The application must include a description of the catering provided in connection with the activity services and its vegetarian option, including a comparable protein source where applicable.</p>
8	<p>Kaikki yrityksen ohjelmapalveluja opastavat työntekijät ovat saaneet turvallisuuteen liittyvää täydennyskoulutusta edellisen 24 kk aikana.</p>	<p>Safety training may include, for example, MATUPA training, fire safety and first response training, rescue exercises, or other supplementary training that enhances safety competence. Basic first aid training is not considered supplementary training as defined by this criterion, as it is included in the basic requirements of the certification.</p> <p>If a member of the guiding staff has graduated within the past two years from vocational education that has included equivalent safety training, this also meets the criterion. If the company's staff included subcontracted freelance guides during the reporting period, the training requirement must also apply to them.</p> <p>The application must include a description of the safety training that guiding staff have received within the past 24 months.</p>

9	<p>All employees guiding nature activities have completed a qualification that certifies competence in nature guiding.</p>	<p>To ensure guides' knowledge of nature and the quality of nature-based guiding services, staff providing such services must have appropriate education.</p> <p>Qualifications referred to in this criterion include, for example, Nature and Wilderness Guide qualifications, National Park Guide qualifications, other relevant vocational qualifications, and higher education degrees (university or university of applied sciences) in biosciences or related fields.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, each lead guide responsible for nature guiding services must hold one of the above-mentioned qualifications. If the company uses subcontracted freelance guides as lead guides, this requirement also applies to them.</p> <p>During the audit, the company must present a list of its lead guides and the qualifications verifying their nature expertise.</p>
10	<p>The establishment does not organise fireworks displays or take its tourism animals to events that include fireworks.</p>	<p>Fireworks cause significant harm to both wild and domestic animals, as the noise and flashes trigger escape reactions, panic, and even life-threatening stress. The greatest fear and flight responses occur within a five-kilometre radius of the firing site, but disturbances can extend up to ten kilometres.</p> <p>To protect animals from stress, the establishment refrains from organising fireworks itself or taking its tourism animals to events that include fireworks. Particularly during the New Year period, the establishment must ensure that its tourism animals are not exposed to fireworks during transport or while waiting with customers.</p> <p>This criterion does not apply to situations where tourism animals are exposed to noise or light pollution from fireworks occurring outside the company's premises while the animals are in their accommodation. However, the company is encouraged to minimise stress caused by such disturbances, for example by temporarily relocating the animals.</p>

		<p>Even if the company does not own the tourism animals itself, it must still refrain from organising fireworks in order to meet the criterion.</p> <p>The application must include a description of the measures the company uses to prevent or avoid stress to animals caused by fireworks.</p>
11	If the establishment offers northern lights tours, a maximum duration for the driving route/time is set in advance for those tours	<p>The environmental impact of northern lights tours increases directly in relation to the distance driven during the activity. A pre-given promise to customers of finding the northern lights (a so-called “aurora guarantee”) creates and reinforces a misleading perception of the predictability and commodification of a natural phenomenon and places unreasonable expectations on staff.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, the establishment must define and communicate in advance a maximum distance and/or duration that may be driven during its tours in search of the northern lights. Marketing materials and booking confirmations must clearly state that the visibility of the northern lights is uncertain and cannot be guaranteed.</p> <p>The application must include a booking confirmation and a link to the website or booking channel where this information is clearly presented in languages understood by customers.</p>
12	If the establishment markets activity services produced by subcontractors, those services are also sustainability certified.	<p>Subcontractors are commonly used in the activity service sector, especially during peak seasons when demand may increase significantly over a short period. Some companies focus on producing certain programmes themselves and regularly purchase others from subcontractors. From the customer’s perspective, however, the service is provided by the company from which it is purchased. To ensure subcontractors’ commitment to responsibility, it is recommended that the company requires them to hold sustainability certification as well.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, the establishment must be committed to requiring sustainability certification from all its subcontractors. If subcontractors provide animal-based activity services, they must hold a Green Activities or equivalent certification that takes into account the working and living conditions of tourism animals.</p>

		The application must include a list of all subcontractor companies used to provide activity services, as well as electronic copies or images of their valid sustainability certificates.
13	The establishment offers an activity service whose main objective is to promote the circular economy, biodiversity, ecosystem wellbeing, or local cultural heritage.	<p>Sustainable activity services increase participants’ understanding of the importance of preserving biodiversity, ecosystem services, and cultural heritage. At the same time, they encourage customers to apply these principles in their everyday lives.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, the establishment’s regular programme offering must include at least one guided activity whose main content focuses on at least one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identification of natural phenomena (weather, tracks, plants, animals, terrain features, etc.) responsible use of materials (avoiding synthetic materials, favouring recycled and natural materials) invasive species control improving habitats or nesting conditions for wild animals handicrafts (e.g. repair, restoration, and maintenance skills that help reduce overconsumption and a throwaway culture) traditional skills (e.g. preparation of traditional foods and beverages, traditional crafts or farming practices, traditional music and dance) making art or utility objects from natural or recycled materials <p>To meet the criterion, the programmes must include active participation by customers (not only listening or observation) and provide information on how the activity supports sustainable everyday practices (e.g. energy saving, recycling of materials, respect for nature, traditional skills).</p> <p>The application must include a description of the activity services offered by the establishment that meet this criterion.</p>
14	The establishment has participated in regenerative tourism training within the past 12 months or has developed at least one	The establishment’s activity service offering regularly includes at least one regenerative tourism product.

	<p>regenerative tourism product based on it</p>	<p>Regenerative tourism is a form of tourism that aims to leave a destination in a better state than it was before the visit. It goes beyond sustainable tourism by actively seeking to repair, improve and revitalize local nature, culture and communities.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, a company must demonstrate that it has implemented at least 1 of the following measures in the previous 12 months:</p> <p>The company has participated in training on the basics of regenerative tourism The company has participated in a training package on regenerative tourism, of at least 3 days, which included theory and practical workshops The company has identified the uniqueness of its operating environment and the needs for renewal from a natural and/or community perspective and recorded them (what needs to be revitalized, preserved and renewed) The company has at least one commercialized product that promotes regenerative tourism that increases the well-being of the local community and/or nature in a verifiable way. For verification, a report must be attached to the application, which presents the identified starting situation, e.g. eutrophication of the water body -> products that include measures to reduce and ultimately prevent eutrophication -> achieved/targeted outcome The company is involved in a multi-actor community promoting innovative tourism In successive years, more must be done in accordance with the presented list of measures to meet the criterion.</p> <p>An explanation of how the criterion is met must be attached to the application.</p>
<p>15</p>	<p>The company offers nature program services outside the most popular nature destinations/trails in its area of operation.</p>	<p>The concentration of nature tours by program service companies in the most popular areas causes congestion, wear and tear of nature and structures, and increases the dissatisfaction of the local population. The quality experienced by customers also suffers if signs of overtourism are clearly visible in a nature destination.</p>

		<p>By directing its own tours and program services to areas or routes that are located outside the most popular nature destinations, the company can reduce congestion and wear and tear of nature and even out the distribution of tourism income.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, the company must offer at least one nature program service that is implemented outside the most popular destinations in the area. The program must be implemented using existing routes and must not cause littering or make it difficult for other users to use the nature area. In addition, the company must have a written permit/agreement from the landowner to implement program services in the area/route.</p> <p>A description of the nature activity and route that meets the criterion and justification for why it is considered to be located outside the most popular nature destinations in the area are attached to the application. The audit checks the agreement made with the landowner regarding the use of the area for program service activities.</p>
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3 A SLED DOGS / IMPERATIVE CRITERIA		
	Proposed new criterion	Explanatory notes
1	Each dog has a safe kennel that provides adequate warmth and ventilation.	<p>Each adult dog must have its own kennel. The floor of the kennel must be raised off the ground and must not stand in water during the snowmelt season. In addition, the kennel must be fully insulated (roof, floor, and walls) with insulation equivalent to at least 5 cm of polystyrene. If a company uses short/ thin-coated dogs for sledding, they must be provided with heated kennels in cold conditions.</p> <p>Kennels must be cleaned regularly and disinfected annually. Disinfection must be recorded in a logbook, which will be reviewed during the audit.</p> <p>On overnight trips, dogs must have at least a light kennel or other weather/wind protection with a thermally insulated bottom. If the company offers trips lasting more than 2 nights, dogs may not be accommodated in transport trailers or cages from which they do not have the opportunity to get out and walk in the kennel/on a leash if they wish.</p> <p>During the audit, 2–5 kennels will be inspected on a random basis. During the transition period (1 October 2026–30 September 2027), at a minimum, the floors of all kennels must be insulated. From 1 October 2027 onwards, kennels must be fully insulated (walls, roof, and floor).</p>
2	Dog enclosures are cleaned at least once a day, and kennel bedding is added or replaced as needed.	<p>The application must specify the types of bedding used in the kennel. There must always be a dry resting surface in the kennel, such as sawdust, peat, wood fibre, or similar material. The bedding must be sufficient to cover the entire floor to a depth of at least 5 cm. The bedding in the kennels must not be frozen.</p> <p>If any dogs are kept on chains, their use must always be separately justified. No more than 25% of all kennel dogs may be kept on chains.</p> <p>During the audit, 2–5 kennels and enclosures will be inspected on a random basis. If some dogs are kept on chains, all such locations will be inspected. At the time of the audit, there must not</p>

		<p>be more visible feces in an individual dog’s enclosure than could have accumulated within one day. The kennels must contain bedding equivalent to at least a 5 cm layer, and the floor must not be bare.</p>
3	<p>The dog enclosures are safe and sufficiently spacious.</p>	<p>The size of the enclosure must exceed the minimum requirements set by the Animal Welfare Act, taking into account the size and number of dogs. The fencing structures of the enclosure must not have sharp or weak points that could injure a dog. The enclosure must be located so that its ground is not entirely covered by water during the snowmelt season.</p> <p>When grouping dogs, their social behavior and special needs must be taken into account.</p> <p>During the audit, 2–5 enclosures will be inspected on a random basis.</p>
4	<p>Staff live in the immediate vicinity of the kennel, and the enclosure is supervised around the clock.</p>	<p>The kennel must be located in the immediate vicinity of residential housing, and it must have 24-hour supervision. Staff must be able to detect if the dogs are exposed to any danger.</p> <p>The kennel must have an emergency plan for crisis situations (such as fire, flooding, or other situations posing a risk to the dogs). The plan must define where and how the dogs can be evacuated to safety.</p> <p>The application must include the emergency plan.</p> <p>During the audit, it will be verified that the kennel is supervised around the clock and that someone lives in its immediate vicinity. Immediate vicinity is defined as an area where the kennel can be reached within 10 minutes if necessary.</p>
5	<p>Dog feces are collected in a centralized location where their environmental impacts can be controlled.</p>	<p>Dog feces and bedding must be collected, for example in a trailer or on a sealed surface from which leachate does not directly enter water bodies. The manure storage area must be covered, or the stored material must otherwise be protected so that rainwater cannot enter it. Access of wild mammals to the manure storage area must be prevented where possible.</p>

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		<p>If the kennel composts the waste itself, the composting site must be located at least 50 m from any water body, a well used for household water, or a spring, and at least 25 m from open ditches.</p> <p>If the kennel is located in a groundwater area and composts dog waste itself, an environmental permit must be included in the application.</p>
6	The dogs' equipment is clean, intact, and appropriately fitted.	<p>The pulling lines are protected (no exposed cable). If necessary, additional equipment such as jackets or paw protection is used. Taking wind chill into account, in temperatures below -20°C jackets must be used for short-haired dogs, especially when waiting between customer groups. The jackets must be padded and windproof. On overnight excursions, dogs must wear lined jackets during rest periods.</p> <p>During the audit, the establishment will present all jacket models it uses.</p>
7	The equipment used for transporting dogs is in good condition and complies with animal transport legislation requirements. If the establishment transports dogs over distances exceeding 65 km, it holds the appropriate animal transport authorisation	<p>Dog transport must use trailers or transport crates that are appropriately sized for the dog. A maximum of two adult dogs may be transported in the same transport crate or compartment. The transport space must be protected from drafts. During transports lasting more than 30 minutes, the temperature in the transport space must not fall below -10C.</p> <p>The transport equipment must be in good condition with regard to both road safety and animal welfare. The floor of the transport crate must be non-slip and solid (when using cages, a mat or similar must be placed on the bottom so that the dog is not required to stand on bare metal mesh).</p> <p>If the company regularly transports dogs from the kennel to the area where safaris are offered, the daily time spent in the transport box may not exceed 3 hours.</p> <p>During the audit, the establishment will present the equipment used for transporting dogs.</p> <p>If dogs are regularly transported more than 65 km away from the kennel, or if the establishment imports dogs, a valid animal transport authorisation must be presented during the audit.</p>

8	The staff have written instructions for the individual feeding and watering of the dogs.	During the cold season, dogs should be watered at least three times a day (nursing mothers and dogs under one year old should have water available at all times). During the summer season, dogs should have water available at all times when they are in the kennels. During the working day, dogs should receive fluids; eating snow does not replace watering. On longer safaris, liquids should be offered at least every 40 km. In warm weather, water must be changed in water bowls at least twice a day. Water bowls should be washed at least once a day.
9	The establishment has defined temperature limits for its activity services and principles for adjusting the load pulled by dogs according to weather conditions. This information is provided to customers in the booking confirmation.	<p>The establishment must inform customers in advance of the temperature limits it has defined for the winter and (if it offers activity services during the summer season) summer seasons, beyond which the activity services will be cancelled. The establishment must also state in its pre-information that the load/distance pulled by dogs is adjusted according to weather conditions.</p> <p>During the audit, the establishment will present the pre-information provided to customers regarding temperature limits, such as a booking confirmation or subcontracting agreement in which these matters are clearly stated.</p>
10	The dogs receive regular exercise throughout the year.	<p>During the off-season, dogs must be exercised at least 16 times per 4 weeks, for at least 45 minutes at a time. Exercise may include pulling training, walking, free outdoor activity in a running enclosure of at least 500 m², or use of a dog treadmill.</p> <p>Dog exercise must be recorded in working time records, which will be reviewed during the audit on a random sampling basis (at least 5% of the dogs).</p>
11	Records are kept for each dog regarding training, work, and rest days. A dog's daily working time is a maximum of 6 hours. Each dog must have at least 8 rest days per month.	<p>Dogs work a maximum of 7 hours per day (total pulling time during the working day, excluding rest breaks).</p> <p>Dogs must have at least 8 rest days per month throughout the year. During the high season, rest days may be distributed unevenly within the month, but each dog must have at least 1 rest day per week.</p>

		<p>The following must be recorded in each dog's working time records:</p> <p>each dog's working, training, and rest days, as well as duration of working time walking/exercise days during the summer season Entries must be made daily.</p> <p>The application must include one week of working time records from December and February.</p> <p>During the audit, a four-week record will be reviewed on a random sampling basis.</p>
12	<p>For each dog, all essential information related to health care, medical treatment, reproduction, and euthanasia is recorded and kept up to date.</p>	<p>At a minimum, the following information must be recorded:</p> <p>The dog's pedigree, if it can be used for breeding (it has not been neutered/spayed) Information related to health status, illnesses, injuries, and medication General condition and dental condition assessment In the case of sale/adoption, the new owner's contact details In the case of death/euthanasia, the reasons leading to it The application must include an extract from the logbook for at least two dogs.</p> <p>During the audit, it will be reviewed how record-keeping is organized and how it is ensured that all relevant information is properly documented.</p>
13	<p>The kennel and any subcontracted kennels have been registered in the register of animal holdings, and all their dogs have been registered in the Finnish Food Authority's dog register.</p>	<p>The application must include the most recent extracts from both registers. If the kennel uses subcontracted kennels, their register extracts must also be presented during the audit.</p> <p>During the audit, it will be verified from the register extracts that the most recently born puppies and sold/deceased dogs have been registered in the Finnish Food Authority's dog register.</p>

<p>14</p>	<p>The establishment has an annual plan for dog health care. The health status of the dogs, in particular their dental condition, is monitored and treated regularly.</p>	<p>The establishment must have a structured annual health care plan for dogs, which includes regularly scheduled preventive health care measures, general condition and dental health check-ups, and visits by a supervising veterinarian to the kennel.</p> <p>The body condition score of the dogs must be assessed and recorded in the logbook at least twice per year. If a dog is found to be underweight, its feeding must be adjusted. Dental health must be monitored at least once per year (however, for older dogs, monitoring is recommended twice per year). The establishment must define threshold values for general condition and dental health, as well as the actions to be taken when these thresholds are exceeded.</p> <p>The plan must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recurring measures related to monitoring and maintaining dog health (e.g. vaccinations, deworming, weighing and other measurements, dental care) the classification scale used for assessing general condition and dental health, the monitoring schedule, and threshold values that trigger corrective actions a commitment that veterinary procedures are performed only by qualified persons. Suturing of wounds, surgeries, or similar procedures may only be performed by a veterinarian instructions for recording monitoring data: what is recorded, how often, and who is responsible for the records instructions on when a dog must be taken to a veterinarian instructions on the criteria for euthanasia and how it is carried out <p>The annual plan must be included in staff induction.</p> <p>The application must include the annual dog health care plan and the most recent inspection report from the official supervising veterinarian, which must not be older than two years. If the establishment has not had any veterinary inspection, the certificate cannot be granted. If the report includes a recommendation to correct any animal welfare deficiencies, these must be corrected before the certificate can be granted.</p>
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15	<p>If the kennel breeds dogs, breeding must be planned and systematic.</p>	<p>Individuals selected for breeding must have health, temperament, and conformation suitable for sled dog work.</p> <p>Unplanned litters must be prevented by all possible means. In the sustainability plan, the kennel must commit to not euthanising healthy and viable unplanned litters.</p>

		<p>Planned breeding during the winter season is not recommended unless there is sufficient time and staff available for the socialisation of puppies.</p> <p>During the audit, the establishment will present the principles used for selecting breeding individuals, as well as how it ensures that unplanned litters are prevented.</p>
16	<p>Separate indoor facilities are designated for whelping and for sick dogs.</p>	<p>The kennel must have a dry and warm space where convalescent dogs, litters, and a nursing dam can be kept separately from other dogs.</p> <p>The nursing dam must have free access to an outdoor enclosure.</p> <p>The facility will be inspected during the audit.</p>
17	<p>Puppies and young dogs are socialised and trained in a planned and systematic manner.</p>	<p>If the establishment breeds / trains young dogs, it must have a written plan for puppy socialisation and training.</p> <p>The purpose of socialisation must be to accustom the dog to the most common handling procedures, humans, and other dogs before starting pulling training. There must be a sufficient number of staff to ensure that puppies receive regular human contact.</p> <p>The training plan must describe how the education of young dogs for work is implemented. A dog must be at least 18 months old when starting actual work.</p> <p>No violence, coercion, or intimidation may be used in training or socialisation.</p> <p>The person responsible for puppy training must have appropriate training for the field or at least 3 years of work experience in sled dog operations. Suitable training includes, for example, a specialist vocational qualification in animal training, which includes modules on training working and competition animals.</p>

		The application must include a plan describing how socialisation and training are carried out: when it starts, what is taught to the dogs, how often it takes place, and who is responsible for it.
18	The establishment has a written training plan for dogs.	<p>The plan must cover at least the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual training plan for dogs (regular pulling training, conducted at least twice a week, must begin no later than 3 months before the start of the winter season) • Principles for monitoring and maintaining the dogs' willingness to work • A commitment that dogs are not coerced in any way into working <p>In addition, the plan must define who is responsible for training and how it is ensured that staff have sufficient understanding of dog behaviour and training.</p>
19	The establishment has a predefined procedure for the retirement or rehoming of dogs if and when they are no longer suitable for sled dog work.	<p>The establishment must commit to ensuring that ageing dogs are not euthanised without a medical justification. The establishment may choose an appropriate method for the retirement or rehoming of dogs, but it must communicate this procedure publicly on its website and/or social media channels, as well as to customers during general briefing.</p> <p>If dogs are rehomed, the procedure must define the conditions for rehoming and the method for monitoring the success of the placement. The new placement must have the possibility to return the dog to the kennel if the rehoming is not successful.</p>

3 A SLED DOGS / GUIDELINE CRITERIA		
	Proposed new criterion	Explanatory notes
1	The dog exercise/enrichment area includes a cooling pool or sprinkler system.	<p>During the summer months, when temperatures rise, thick-coated sled dogs are exposed to heat stress, especially when they become excited while running with other dogs in a larger exercise area. By adding a sprinkler system or a cooling pool to the exercise enclosure, the establishment gives the dogs the opportunity to cool down by getting wet and thus regulate their body temperature.</p> <p>The water in the cooling pool must be changed when necessary. In addition, the dogs must have access to clean drinking water in a separate container.</p> <p>The application must include a photo of the installed sprinkler system or cooling pool.</p> <p>The cooling pool/sprinkler system will be inspected during the audit if weather conditions require it.</p>
2	The establishment has at least a 1,000 m ² exercise enclosure, where all dogs are allowed to move at least every other day.	<p>Sled dogs are typically highly active and require a great deal of exercise and social interaction to maintain their wellbeing. Especially outside the winter season, they must be able to exercise in a spacious enclosure together with other dogs.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, the establishment must have an exercise enclosure with a minimum size of 1,000 m². In addition, the establishment must be able to demonstrate that all dogs are allowed to use the exercise enclosure at least every other day.</p> <p>During the summer season, drinking water must be continuously available in the exercise enclosure.</p> <p>The application must include a description of the size and location of the exercise enclosure.</p> <p>The exercise enclosure and exercise log will be inspected during the audit.</p>
3	The establishment has at least a 1,000 m ² exercise enclosure,	Sled dogs are typically highly active and require a great deal of exercise and social interaction to maintain their wellbeing. Especially outside the winter season, they must be able to exercise in a spacious enclosure together with other dogs.

	where all dogs are allowed to move at least every other day.	<p>To meet the criterion, the establishment must have an exercise enclosure with a minimum size of 1,000 m². In addition, the establishment must be able to demonstrate that all dogs are allowed to use the exercise enclosure at least every other day.</p> <p>During the summer season, drinking water must be continuously available in the exercise enclosure.</p> <p>The application must include a description of the size and location of the exercise enclosure.</p> <p>The exercise enclosure and exercise log will be inspected during the audit.</p>
4	The establishment has a dog treadmill/ automatic walker.	<p>Sled dogs are typically very active and require a great deal of exercise to maintain their wellbeing. Regular exercise, especially outside the winter season, helps maintain muscle condition and thereby improves their welfare. A dog treadmill or automatic walker can also be used to warm up the dogs' muscles before runs.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, the establishment must have a dog treadmill or automatic walker which is used regularly at least outside the winter season. The machine cannot replace free exercise.</p> <p>The application must include a photo of the treadmill/walker and a description of how often and in which situations it is used.</p>
5	All dogs are kept in enclosures.	<p>To meet the criterion, the establishment must demonstrate that no dogs are kept tethered on chains.</p> <p>During the audit visit, it is verified that all dogs are housed in enclosures that meet the requirements of the criteria set.</p>
6	The size of the enclosures is at least twice the minimum required under animal welfare legislation.	<p>A larger enclosure size increases dogs' opportunity for movement and thereby improves their wellbeing. By doubling the minimum enclosure size required under animal welfare legislation, the establishment can concretely improve the living conditions of dogs, particularly during the summer season when they spend most of their day in the enclosure.</p>

		<p>To meet the criterion, the establishment must demonstrate that all dog enclosures are at least twice the minimum size required by animal welfare legislation.</p> <p>During the audit, 5–10 enclosures are checked on a sample basis.</p>
7	<p>During rest periods, dogs are provided with varied enrichment/stimulation at least every three days.</p>	<p>Enrichment must support species-typical behaviour of dogs, such as sniffing, digging, or searching. Enrichment items may include, for example, sticks, balls or other toys, scent-based or digging activities, and they must be varied to maintain the dogs' interest.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, the establishment must present an enrichment plan and logbook showing what types of enrichment are provided and how often, as well as how the enrichment is varied to maintain the dogs' interest. Enrichment must also be provided during the winter season for dogs that are not participating in work activities.</p> <p>During the audit, the auditor will discuss enrichment practices with the employee responsible for enrichment activities and review the log entries related to enrichment.</p>
8	<p>On overnight tours, the dogs are provided with insulated kennels and an enclosure.</p>	<p>The criterion is met if the establishment offers overnight tours in which the dogs are provided with a kennel and enclosure at the overnight accommodation that meet the same requirements as the home kennels. The kennel must be fully insulated, and the dogs must have the opportunity to move into the enclosure for exercise.</p> <p>During the audit, the establishment must present the kennels and enclosures where the dogs are housed during overnight tours. All dogs must have access to their own fully insulated kennel and an enclosure that exceeds the minimum size required under animal welfare legislation.</p>
9	<p>During the summer season, all dogs are allowed to move freely in the exercise enclosure every day.</p>	<p>The summer season refers to the snow-free period when dogs are not engaged in pulling work. To meet the criterion, the establishment must be able to demonstrate that each dog is allowed to exercise freely in the exercise enclosure daily for at least 45 minutes, unless prevented by excessively high daytime temperatures. A dog treadmill or pulling training does not replace free exercise.</p>

		The application must include a four-month exercise log showing that all dogs have been given daily exercise during the most recent summer months.
10	All dogs that have retired within the past 12 months have been placed in the kennel or rehomed.	<p>To meet the criterion, the establishment must demonstrate that all dogs that have stopped working during the past year have been retired and have not been euthanised without a medical reason. If dogs have been euthanised, this must only have been done in cases where a veterinarian has determined it necessary to prevent the animal's suffering.</p> <p>If the establishment rehomes dogs for adoption, it must have a written plan describing how the suitability of adoptive homes is ensured and how the success of adoptions is monitored. The establishment must also offer adopters the possibility to return the dog to the kennel if the adoption is not successful and the dog does not adapt to home life. Information about adoption and its conditions must be clearly available on the company's website and/or other communication channels.</p> <p>If no dogs have been retired or euthanised during the past year, this criterion does not apply.</p> <p>The application must include a description of the dogs retired during the past 12 months and their placement (kennel or adoption).</p> <p>During the audit, the dog retirement plan and records will be reviewed.</p>
11	In safari operations, one guide is responsible for a maximum of four dog sled teams.	<p>As customer and dog numbers increase, a guide's ability to ensure safe and high-quality sled tours decreases. To ensure a high-quality and safe activity service, companies are encouraged to limit the number of sled teams under the responsibility of one guide.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, the establishment must state on its website or other pre-information materials that there is always at least one guide per four sled teams on its sled tours. The criterion is also met if staff members always drive the sleds during the tours offered by the company.</p>

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12	All animal caretakers employed by the establishment hold a vocational qualification in animal care, animal training, or another relevant qualification	The criterion aims to encourage companies to use only trained professionals in animal care. Suitable qualifications include a degree in animal care, animal training, or veterinary medicine, or another equivalent qualification that has provided the student with in-depth knowledge of animal care and behaviour.
13	If the establishment employs trainees in dog care duties, all of them are students in veterinary, animal training, or animal care fields.	<p>The criterion aims to encourage companies to offer internships in animal care to students in the animal care field, thereby supporting the training of qualified professionals for the sector.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, suitable education includes studies leading to a qualification in animal care, animal training, or veterinary medicine, or another equivalent programme that provides students with in-depth knowledge of animal care and behaviour.</p>
14	Female dogs used for breeding have a maximum of three litters during their lifetime.	<p>If the establishment breeds dogs, it must ensure the welfare of breeding females by limiting the number of litters produced by an individual female dog. In accordance with Kennel Club recommendations, a female should not have more than three litters during her lifetime.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, the establishment must demonstrate that none of its female dogs have had more than three litters at the time of application.</p> <p>The application must include information on all breeding females owned by the establishment and the number of litters each has had.</p> <p>The criterion also applies to accidental litters.</p>
15	All dogs used for breeding have undergone health examinations relevant to hereditary diseases of the breed.	<p>To prevent hereditary diseases, it is important to ensure that breeding dogs do not pass them on to their offspring. Knowledge of the most common inherited diseases in different sled dog breeds is continuously evolving, and in addition to the conditions listed below, screening for other diseases or genetic defects may also fulfil the criterion.</p> <p>Criterion fulfilment:</p>

		<p>If the establishment breeds Alaskan Huskies, all breeding dogs must be tested for AHE (Alaskan Husky Encephalopathy). AHE carriers must not be bred with other carriers.</p> <p>If the establishment breeds Siberian Huskies, all breeding dogs must be examined for glaucoma (intraocular pressure disease), and dogs that are carriers of the disease must not be used for breeding.</p> <p>During the audit, the results of the screening for the hereditary diseases specified in the criterion must be presented for all dogs used for breeding during the past 12 months.</p>
16	All dogs used for breeding have undergone X-ray examinations of the hips and spine, and a qualified authority has assessed them as suitable for breeding	<p>To meet the criterion, the establishment must be able to demonstrate that all dogs used for breeding during the previous year have undergone X-ray examinations of the hips and spine prior to mating, and that a qualified authority has issued a statement on their suitability for breeding. The statement may be issued by the Finnish Kennel Club (for pedigree dogs) or, for example, by the INCOC evaluation service.</p> <p>During the audit, the establishment must present veterinary reports on the hip and spine examinations of all dogs used for breeding in the previous year.</p>
17	All dog sled tours offered by the establishment are carried out by staff members driving the sleds.	<p>Customer inexperience or carelessness as sled drivers significantly increases the risk of injury to dogs. Although customers are instructed in driving before the tour begins, loss of attention during the ride can easily lead to hazardous situations and accidents. In addition, a sled running into the dogs can make them fearful and significantly reduce their willingness to pull.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, the establishment does not offer any dog sled tours where customers themselves drive the sleds. This must be clearly stated in booking confirmations and in programme descriptions across the company's various communication channels.</p>
18	Dog waste is composted under controlled conditions.	<p>Composting refers to the decomposition of organic matter by microorganisms in an aerobic (oxygen-rich) environment, which involves a rise in temperature. The end products of composting are water vapour, carbon dioxide, mineral salts, and humus. Composting converts all organic material into a form usable by plants. It also reduces odour problems and balances the fertilising effect of nutrients.</p>

		<p>To meet the criterion, the establishment must compost all dog waste it produces. Composting may be carried out either in a compost bin that is isolated from the environment or in a windrow system, provided that a formal windrow notification has been made.</p> <p>To facilitate composting, the waste must be mixed with other materials, such as bedding from kennels. Composting must take place in an area located at a sufficient distance from water bodies. If composting is carried out in a groundwater area, the establishment must have a valid environmental permit.</p> <p>The establishment must also have a written plan describing how the composted material will be finally disposed of.</p>
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3.B TOURISM ANIMAL WELFARE: REINDEER / IMPERATIVE CRITERIA		
	Proposed new criterion	Explanatory notes
1	During the winter season, all reindeer are released daily access to an enclosure with at least 200 m ² of space per reindeer. The enclosures include trees or other structures that provide shelter for the reindeer if they choose to use them.	<p>All reindeer used for pulling or other work must be released daily into an enclosure for at least 12 hours. If the establishment has reindeer in training, they must also be released daily.</p> <p>The enclosures must include trees or other structures that allow reindeer to rub their antlers. Reindeer must be able to seek shelter in vegetation or structures away from people if they wish. An area without trees or other visual barriers does not meet the certification requirements for reindeer housing.</p> <p>In order to ensure species-specific behaviour, at least 5 reindeer must be kept in the same permanent setting. Reindeer must be grouped so that individuals housed in the same enclosure are compatible with each other.</p> <p>During the audit, the size of the enclosures used for the company's tourism reindeer and the number of reindeer kept in them will be inspected. It will also be verified that the enclosures contain trees or other visual barriers, as well as structures for antler rubbing.</p>
2	All reindeer used in tourism are released into the wild every year for a period of at least three months.	<p>The establishment must keep a logbook showing the periods when reindeer are free-ranging. The reindeer's free-ranging must be verified with at least one GPS tracker reading from the previous summer season, demonstrating that the reindeer has been outside the establishment's area.</p> <p>The application must include an extract of GPS tracking data from one day within June-August showing the location data all tourism reindeer of the establishment.</p> <p>The logbook and location data will be reviewed during the audit.</p>

	<p>Reindeer training is carried out without violence or coercion.</p>	<p>Methods that are based on coercion or intimidation must not be used in reindeer training. Long-term restraint (more than 12 hours at a time) of a training reindeer is prohibited.</p> <p>The applicant must describe in the application the method used to accustom reindeer to humans and to train them for pulling work.</p>
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<p>3</p>	<p>The farm has a separate enclosure/other area for reindeer in recovery and training.</p>	<p>To prevent stress in reindeer, the establishment must strive to prevent customers from accessing reindeer without staff supervision or instructions.</p> <p>In addition, the farm must have a separate enclosure for convalescent and training reindeer, to which customer access is prevented. Prevention is considered to be achieved through a fence/gate blocking access routes and a sign prohibiting entry. The signage must use symbols and/or multiple languages so that it is understandable to customers of different language backgrounds.</p> <p>Reindeer that are tied must always be under staff supervision. If reindeer in the training phase must be kept tethered for longer periods, they must be continuously observable via surveillance cameras around the clock.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Reindeer are fed at least twice per day, after which they must have at least 2 hours of time for rumination.</p>	<p>Reindeer must be fed at least twice per day with as natural a diet as possible, consisting primarily of feed other than concentrate feed (the majority must be coarse fodder, such as hay, lichen, or tree lichen).</p> <p>All individuals must be able to feed at the same time without competition for food.</p>

		After feeding, reindeer must always have at least 2 hours of rumination time before performing work.
6	Reindeer must always have access to clean snow or drinking water.	During the snow-free season, the establishment must ensure that reindeer have continuous access to drinking water, which must be changed at least twice per day. During freezing conditions without snow, watering must be provided at least three times per day. During the snowy season, each reindeer must always have access to a sufficient amount of clean snow.
7	Reindeer castration may only be performed by a reindeer husbandry professional, and pain relief must always be used.	<p>A reindeer husbandry professional is considered to be a reindeer herder registered with the register of the Reindeer Herders' Association, a veterinarian, or another qualified reindeer specialist.</p> <p>Castration must be performed as burdizzo castration, and pain relief must always be used in accordance with the recommendations of the Reindeer Castration Guide of the Reindeer Herders' Association:</p> <p>the reindeer is given an oral pain medication at least 3 hours before castration, OR a veterinarian administers local anaesthesia to the spermatic cords and skin 20–30 minutes before the procedure, and at the same time the reindeer is given an injectable pain relief medication The application must include a description of how castration is carried out. The description must state:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • who performs the castration and how their qualifications are verified • what type of pain relief is used
8	The establishment has prepared a written plan for the feeding and health care of reindeer. The plan is reviewed with all staff working with reindeer before the start of the season.	<p>The plan must address the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeding schedule and feed for reindeer • Regular, scheduled visits by a veterinarian • Medication, deworming, and treatment of illnesses are carried out in accordance with veterinary instructions • A commitment that pain relief and anti-inflammatory medications are used only for the treatment of injury or illness, and never to maintain the performance of reindeer

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructions for arranging rest for sick or convalescent reindeer • A commitment that sick or convalescent reindeer are never used for work activities
9	The load pulled by reindeer is adjusted according to the individual animal and weather conditions. The weight of the load pulled by a reindeer does not exceed 200 kg.	The establishment must inform customers in advance, for example in the booking confirmation, that on rides the number of people per sled is adjusted according to the individual reindeer and weather conditions, but the weight of the load must not exceed 200 kg.
10	The daily working time of reindeer is a maximum of 8 hours. Reindeer always have rest breaks between customer groups.	<p>Working time is considered to be the period during which the reindeer is harnessed/attached.</p> <p>Between customer groups, reindeer must have a rest break of 15–60 minutes. If breaks are longer than 1 hour or if the reindeer are not under continuous supervision during the break, they must be secured separately.</p>
	The working and rest days of each reindeer are recorded. During the winter season, reindeer must have at least one rest day per week.	<p>Records must be made daily at least on the following matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reindeer working days and duration of working shifts • rest days <p>The application must include working time records for all reindeer for one week in December and one week in February.</p> <p>During the audit, the working time records of 5 reindeer will be reviewed on a random sampling basis.</p>
12	The establishment clearly communicates how it ensures the welfare of reindeer and how customers are expected to behave when interacting with them	<p>The information may be provided on the website, in the booking confirmation, on notice boards, or as part of guidance at the entrance to the premises, in addition to verbal instructions, enclosure solutions, signage, or similar means.</p> <p>The instructions must include at least:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • guidance on how to behave near reindeer and during rides • photography guidelines (e.g. prohibition of flash)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a prohibition on approaching reindeer without staff permission • a prohibition on feeding reindeer without staff permission <p>Customers must be informed at minimum about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the life cycle of reindeer • releasing reindeer into the wild during summer • reindeer training • reindeer feeding • If the establishment offers farm visits where customers can move freely around the premises, these must include guidance on how to behave near reindeer. <p>If individual tourists can purchase the service in advance through digital channels, the information must be available to them before making the purchase decision.</p> <p>If the service can be purchased on-site, the information must be clearly visible before customers are allowed to approach the reindeer.</p> <p>If the establishment only receives pre-booked groups, the information must be included in the guidance provided to customers before approaching the reindeer.</p>
13	Each reindeer has properly fitted harnesses, whose condition is regularly monitored and maintained.	Each reindeer must have designated, properly fitted harnesses. The condition of the equipment is monitored regularly, and the equipment is serviced at least once per year.
14	The equipment used for transporting reindeer is safe and sufficiently spacious. If the establishment transports reindeer over distances exceeding 65 km,	<p>When transporting reindeer, at a minimum the recommendations of the Guide to Good Practices for the Transport of Live Reindeer must be followed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interior height of at least 1.3 m, and a minimum space of 0.4 m² per individual reindeer • the floor of the transport compartment must be non-slip • reindeer must not be transported tied by the antlers or with their legs bound together

	the driver must hold a valid animal transport authorisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significantly different-sized or different-aged reindeer, or large males and females, must not be placed in the same compartment • the transport vehicle must have a window to the driver’s cabin and adequate ventilation • in winter, at least the front wall of the transport vehicle, and if necessary the side walls, must be sealed to reduce wind chill • if reindeer are transported in summer temperatures above +18°C, the transport compartment must have mechanical ventilation • the transport vehicle must have some form of interior lighting • the condition of the animals must be visually monitorable during transport <p>If tourism reindeer are transported for safari activities over distances exceeding 65 km, the establishment must hold a valid animal transport authorisation. The permit must be presented during the audit.</p>
15	The driving routes are designed to be safe for both reindeer and people. The routes are inspected and maintained daily.	The application must describe how the routes are maintained and kept in good condition, and whether an alternative route is available in case weather conditions change.
17	The care and training of the reindeer are the responsibility of a designated reindeer farm manager who has sufficient professional competence for the task	<p>The farm must have a designated reindeer farm manager who is a qualified reindeer professional.</p> <p>Reindeer training is always carried out under the supervision and guidance of the reindeer farm manager. The farm must have a written contingency plan in case the reindeer farm manager is unable to perform their duties, for example due to illness.</p>

3.B TOURISM ANIMAL WELFARE: REINDEER / GUIDELINE CRITERIA		
	Proposed new criterion	Explanatory notes
1	The establishment has registered the reindeer holding location in the animal keeping register.	<p>To meet the criterion, the establishment must submit a notification of the reindeer holding facility to the EPR (Animal Keeping Register). If it offers reindeer rides outside the reindeer herding area, this criterion is an imperative criterion. In such cases, the establishment must also ensure that an official supervising veterinarian has carried out an inspection visit to the holding facility.</p> <p>If the establishment does not operate outside the reindeer herding area, this is a voluntary guideline criterion.</p> <p>The application must include an extract from the animal keeping register and the inspection report issued by the supervising veterinarian.</p>
2	If the establishment rents reindeer to other operators, a staff member familiar to the reindeer accompanies them.	<p>To avoid stress in reindeer and maintain stable conditions, it is recommended that the establishment does not rent reindeer to external parties without a staff member accompanying them who is familiar to the animals.</p> <p>The criterion is also fulfilled if the establishment does not rent out its reindeer to external operators at all.</p> <p>The application must include a description of the reindeer rented out and the staff members who accompanied them.</p>
3	The establishment's reindeer rides are carried out by staff members as drivers or handlers.	<p>Inexperienced handling by customers stresses reindeer and increases the risk of panic and injury. To ensure the reindeer's safe and as stress-free working conditions as possible, the establishment does not allow customers to drive or lead the reindeer themselves.</p>
4	The establishment's reindeer rides are conducted at a single site, and the reindeer do not need to be transported regularly for them.	<p>Transport is always an additional stress factor for reindeer and reduces their quality of life. Instead of regular transport, it is recommended that reindeer rides are organised near the reindeer's place of keeping, allowing them to work from the farm area.</p>

		Regular transport refers to transportation carried out daily or weekly from the holding facility to the location where the rides are operated.
5	All of the establishment's sled reindeer are registered in the tourism reindeer register.	<p>The tourism reindeer register is a key part of quality control in reindeer tourism and monitoring of animal welfare. A three-year-old reindeer that has demonstrably been trained, habituated to human groups, and used in tourism activities may be registered as a tourism reindeer.</p> <p>During the audit, it is verified that all harnessed reindeer have a blue ear tag.</p>
6	The establishment is a member of the Reindeer Farm Tourism Association.	<p>The Reindeer Farm Tourism Association provides training and guidance to its members on matters related to reindeer farm tourism, reindeer husbandry, and animal handling. In addition, the association maintains a register of reindeer used in tourism activity services.</p> <p>Full membership in the association is open to shareholders of a reindeer herding cooperative operating in reindeer tourism within the reindeer herding area, or to a legally registered reindeer tourism company owned by such a shareholder. Upon separate application, membership may also be granted to a person who is not a shareholder of a reindeer herding cooperative but whose company produces products or services that support reindeer farm tourism.</p> <p>The company's membership is verified from the membership list of the Reindeer Farm Tourism Association.</p>
7	The enclosures provide at least 400 m ² of space per reindeer.	Larger enclosure sizes promote reindeer welfare, as they allow the animals to move and roam freely over a larger area when they choose to do so.
8	The reindeer are kept in enclosures without tethers.	<p>A loose tether on a released reindeer may become entangled in trees, fences, or the animal's legs, potentially causing panic or injury. Reindeer that are accustomed to handling allow themselves to be caught without the use of a tether.</p> <p>During the audit, it is verified that no tethers are attached to the bridles of reindeer kept in enclosures.</p>
9	Reindeer castration is performed in the presence of a veterinarian.	Castration performed under veterinary supervision is the safest, most painless and responsible way to carry out the procedure, which benefits both the reindeer and people.

		The application must include a veterinary invoice or other documentation confirming that a veterinarian was present during the castration procedure.
10	All tourism reindeer have at least two rest days per week.	<p>To meet the criterion, the establishment must demonstrate that all tourism reindeer have had at least two days off per week, including during the peak winter season. In this context, tourism use also includes being tethered for tourist photography, not only pulling sleds.</p> <p>During the audit, the working time records of two randomly selected reindeer from the December–February period are reviewed. Both reindeer must have had at least two days off per week throughout the audited period.</p>
11	A reindeer’s continuous pulling time is a maximum of one hour at a time.	<p>Most customers are satisfied with fairly short reindeer rides. In many cases, shortening the ride duration can provide the same experience, but give the reindeer more free time.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, the duration of all reindeer rides offered by the company must be no more than 1 hour. The reindeer must have a break of at least 15 minutes between customers. If the breaks are longer than 1 hour, the reindeer must be untied from the front of the sled.</p> <p>A description of the reindeer rides offered by the company or a link to a website/other channel where the offer is presented must be attached to the application.</p>
12	A reindeer’s working day is a maximum of six hours.	<p>Long working days increase the risk of strain injuries, muscle damage and abrasions. Excessive workload also causes fatigue, stress and weakens general fitness. An exhausted or stressed reindeer can also behave unpredictably, which increases the risk of accidents for both customers and drivers. Sufficient rest is essential for recovery, and a well-rested reindeer is calmer and easier to control. When working hours are limited, the reindeer's body has time to recover and the load does not become too great.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, the company must demonstrate that its reindeer's work shifts are always a maximum of 6 hours at a time. The reindeer must have a break of at least 15 minutes between pulling work. If the breaks are longer than 1 hour, the reindeer must be removed from the sled. The application must include the reindeer's working time records for December-February, from</p>

		<p>which the work shifts of 2 reindeer from this period are checked by random sampling during the audit.</p> <p>All time that the reindeer is harnessed and tied is considered working time.</p>
13	The working day for reindeer is a maximum of 4 hours.	<p>Shorter and more intensive working days allow the reindeer to behave in a species-like manner, as they can spend most of the day free in the enclosure.</p> <p>All the time that a reindeer is pulling, harnessed or tied up is considered working time.. To meet the criterion, the total time that a reindeer is harnessed and tied up must not exceed 4 hours.</p> <p>The application must include the website address/order confirmation/other proof that the information is available to customers before participating in the ride. The audit will check the winter season work records for two randomly selected reindeer.</p>
14	The establishment states on its website and in other communications the temperature limits above which reindeer rides are not carried out.	<p>The maximum permitted cold limit for tours is -35°C and the maximum permitted temperature is $+5^{\circ}\text{C}$, although the company may set stricter limits if it wishes. Information on temperature and cold limits must be visible to customers on the website or other booking channel before making a reservation. This information must also be included in the booking confirmation.</p> <p>The application must include a booking confirmation and the website / other channel address where information on temperature limits is available to customers before participating in the tour.</p>
15	The farm has alternative routes prepared, and the route used is selected based on daily weather and conditions	<p>Continuous use of one route wears it out: the snow becomes compacted, the rut deepens and the unevenness increases.</p> <p>Rapid changes in weather conditions can make certain routes slippery or difficult to travel. A heavier load (e.g. more passengers) also puts more strain on the reindeer. In this case, a shorter or flatter route can be chosen, with fewer climbs and difficult sections, so that the animal's stress remains reasonable. Varying routes also reduces one-sided load and makes the work more varied for the reindeer.</p>

		<p>By changing the route, the safest and easiest alternative can be chosen. Alternative routes increase flexibility, improve safety and support the well-being of the reindeer and the quality of service.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, the company must have at least 2 alternative routes in use or be able to be quickly put into use (during the same day). In the audit, the company presents the routes used, the reasons for changing the route, and the actions taken to keep them drivable.</p>
16	<p>If the company employs interns in reindeer herding tasks, the interns are students of reindeer herding, veterinary medicine or animal training.</p>	<p>By offering internships, the company participates in the development of the entire reindeer herding industry and demonstrates responsibility and commitment to the continuity of the traditional industry. The students bring with them current information, new practices and ideas (e.g. animal welfare, sustainable tourism, customer service), which can develop the company's operations. In addition, employing interns in the field acts as a recruitment channel, as the company can train employees from the students who are suitable for its own operations and hire the best of them later.</p> <p>To meet the criterion, the company must have at least one intern referred to in the criterion in its employ during the current winter season.</p>