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## SIGNS *of* the SOUND

REPORT ON:

# CULTURAL, SUSTAINABLE, & RESPONSIBLE TOURISM



Signage at Porteau Cove Park Trailhead, B.C. (own photo).

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# REPORT: CULTURAL, SUSTAINABLE, & RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to act as an informative briefing to the Howe Sound Biosphere Reserve Initiative Society on **cultural, sustainable, and responsible tourism**. It is a compilation of research done at various parks and tourism sites that share similar characteristics to the Átl'ka7tsem Howe Sound region in that they are nature-based and are on lands belonging to Indigenous groups.

Two studies on sites in Australia and Iceland are presented with the main topic being signage. These sections discuss how these places have used and designed signs, to be more effective at promoting responsible tourism, and how to best design signage that had the highest chances of positively altering tourist behaviours.

The two remaining studies are set in Haida Gwaii, British Columbia, and an American National Park. The former gives serves as an example of how one place has had success collaborating with its Indigenous community regarding tourism, while the latter concerns a tool that sites can use to ensure more sustainable tourism within their boundaries.

## 2. FINDINGS

### *Promoting Cultural, Sustainable & Responsible Tourism through signage in other parks and places with Indigenous communities*

#### Signage at Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, Australia

Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park located in Australia is recognized as a World Heritage site by UNESCO. With a strong emphasis on the natural and cultural values of the land, Uluru-Kata Tjuta is the traditional land of the Anangu Aboriginal Peoples (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2023). A strong emphasis is placed on the large monolith formations and the iconic Ayer's Rock that outline the horizon. Parks Australia describes the park as, "A living cultural landscape where Earth and memories exist as one" (Parks Australia, 2023). Interpretive signage within the Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park is designed to allow the audience to gain a deeper connection and understanding for the parks geographical history, human history and culture, and rare indigenous species.



Interpretive signage at the Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park can be broken down into three categories: (1) Directional signage highlighting walking routes and the location of notable stops around the site; (2) Educational signage with a focus on wildlife and geographic features; and (3) Educational signage describing the history and culture of the local indigenous groups (Clarke & Waterton, 2015).

### **Directional Signage (Clarke & Waterton, 2015)**

Directional signage at Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park has several elements that are consistent throughout:

- Relevant locations
  - Signage can be found at the beginning of each route and near each alternative path along these routes.
- Representation of important spots
  - Key spots around the site are highlights on directional signage, this includes: The six main walking routes, lookouts, public washrooms, picnic areas, car parking, drinking water stations, and emergency exit routes.
- Image heavy, minimal written directions
  - Feature pen and ink drawings of maps with directional symbols as indicators of orientation. Words are used primarily for naming purposes (ex. The name of each route).

### **Educational Signage: Wildlife & Geographic Features (Clarke & Waterton, 2015)**

Educational signage with an emphasis on native wildlife and the geographic make-up are located along the six walking routes at the site and have the following consistencies:

- Relevant location
  - Educational signs are placed at popular lookouts and photogenic locations to maximize the the opportunity for interaction with visitors.
- Western and traditional perspectives
  - Signage features both traditional and scientific concepts in educating on the natural history.
- Storytelling
  - Incorporation of the history of notable wildlife species.



## Effective Signage

Key aspects of interpretive signage that have been effective for Uluru-Kata Tjuta National are: (1) Location; (2) Imagery; (3) Inclusive perspectives; and (4) Storytelling.

(1) **Location:** While placement of signage is primarily decided based on the relevancy to the immediate surroundings and/or the importance of the message, other factors are considered. Effective signage is placed in scenic and photogenic lookout points with the intention of provoking a deeper, emotional connection. Messages are conveyed in ways that are sensitive to the location to prevent miscommunication of messages.

(2) **Imagery:** All signage imagery around the site is consistently designed in pen and ink drawing styles. Images are clear and easy to interpret, complimenting the narrative of the sign. Images and symbols depict historical events, cultural practices, and geographic landscapes. The decision of using pen and ink illustrations is in reference to Albert Namatjira, an Indigenous artist popular in the 1930s-1950s for their western style art.

(3) **Inclusive Perspectives:** Signage is sensitive to the history and spiritual beliefs of the local indigenous population. Signage educates on western and traditional concepts, in addition to the importance of the land. Incorporation of traditional concepts on educational signage is meant to allow the audience to build an authentic appreciation for the past. Inclusive language is used throughout signage

(4) **Storytelling:** Executed through both imagery and script, there are two types of storytelling that is displayed around the park. Stories either have a focus on describing historical events that are relevant to the area, or are fictional with the purpose of educating on Indigenous culture and practices. Practical stories make information easier for the audience to digest and connect with.



## *Cultural, Sustainable & Responsible Tourism as practiced at other parks*

### The Global Sustainable Tourism Council Destination Criteria: proving the effectiveness of a framework for sustainability through a theoretical application at the Theodore Roosevelt National Park

The Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) was founded in 2007 to develop and manage global standards for sustainable travel and tourism. A global partnership of scholars and tourism practitioners founded this non-profit, neutral, and independent organization as a solution to the confusing proliferation of different certifications, a lack of standardization and accountability concerning sustainable tourism and labels, and the rising concern of greenwashing (Bricker et al., 2022).

#### **GSTC Criteria**

The GSTC is best known for its two published criteria and guidelines: the Industry Criteria for individual hotel and tour operators (first released in 2008); and the Destination Criteria (first released in 2013). The GSTC Criteria will be the focus of this report. The guidelines, according to GSTC (2019), were developed and built from decades of prior work and experience. Created by considering guidelines and standards for sustainable tourism from every continent, they reflect ideas from different certification standards, indicators, criteria, and best practices from different cultural and geo-political contexts.

Bricker et al. (2022) state that the GSTC Destination Criteria can be considered as a framework that can help tourism sites evaluate sustainability performance without managers and agencies having to create their own evaluation frameworks. As a framework, it can be used to identify specific areas of success and improvement within a site, helping to improve strategic plans and to identify and prioritize future sustainability initiatives. The Destination Criteria also adhere to ISO environmental codes of conduct, as well as to standards-setting code of ISEAL Alliance which provides guidance for the development and management of sustainability standards for many sectors (Bricker et al., 2022).

One use of the globally recognized framework, according to Bricker et al. (2022) can be use by “tourism managers and policy makers to guide sustainable tourism destination management” (p. 137), and by “tourism professionals and their collaborators to guide tourism development and achieve increasingly higher levels of sustainability within their destination” (p. 137). Treated like “an evaluation of how and to what extent a park is meeting each indicator within and near its boundaries” (p. 151) and not applied as a simple checklist, it can help gauge a destination’s



sustainability thus far, and where it can address weak points for improvement. It Can also be applied to wide range of destinations, anywhere in the world, large or small (GSTC, 2019).

The Destination Criteria consist of four areas of sustainability (minimum standards a destination must meet to be considered sustainable): Sustainable destination management; Economic benefits to host communities; Benefits to communities, visitors and culture; and Benefits to the environment (Bricker et al., 2022). Within these four areas are 41 criteria with 104 related indicators. It should be noted that the criteria are meant to signal to tourism site managers what should be done, and not how to specifically do such identified things. The how must be developed by a destination's managers themselves, enlightened by their findings after conducting an evaluation of their site according to the Criteria.

### **Theoretical Application at Theodore Roosevelt National Park**

he GSTC Destination Criteria has, according to Bricker et al. (2022), has not been widely adopted and applied to parks and protected areas. The researchers therefore decided to study its potential application at the Theodore Roosevelt National Park in North Dakota, United States of America. The park, established in 1947 and redesignated as a national park under the management of the country's magisterial National Parks Service, consists of three units totalling 285 square kilometres (Pletcher, n.d.). The researchers were aiming to test the utility of the GSTC Destination Criteria (version 1) and its use as a framework for creating a park-level sustainability plan at Theodore Roosevelt National Park (North Dakota).

Their results were promising, demonstrating how well-suited the Criteria could be for evaluating the level of sustainability of parks and protected areas. They took the framework and adopted it to make it more relevant to their research, and to better fit the context of the national park: include indicators of whether the criteria point was complete, in progress, needs improvement, or not applicable were added (see Table 1). Bricker et al.'s (2022) evaluation showed that the park was meeting much of the criteria and had reached a high level of destination sustainability (see Tables 3 to 9 in *Index* for full results).





Section A: Sustainable Destination Management				
14 Criteria, 43 Indicators				
GSTC Criteria	Indicator Status			
	Complete	In Progress	Needs Improvement	Not Applicable
<b>A1: Sustainable destination strategy (4 indicators)</b> Destination has established and is implementing a multi-year destination strategy that is publicly available, is suited to its scale; that considers environmental, economic, social, cultural, quality, health, and safety, and aesthetic issues; and was developed with public participation.	100% (n=4)			
<b>A2: Destination management organization (5 indicators)</b> Destination has an effective organization, department, group, or committee responsible for a coordinated approach to sustainable tourism, with involvement by the private sector and public sector. This group is suited to the size and scale of the destination, and has defined responsibilities, oversight, and implementation capability for the management of environmental, economic, social, and cultural issues. This group's activities are appropriately funded.	40% (n = 2)	60% (n = 3)		
<b>A3: Monitoring (3 indicators)</b> Destination has a system to monitor, publicly report, and respond to environmental, economic, social, cultural, tourism, and human rights issues. The monitoring system is reviewed and evaluated periodically.	67% (n = 2)	33% (n = 1)		
<b>A4: Monitoring (1 indicator)</b> Destination has a system to monitor, publicly report, and respond to environmental, economic, social, cultural, tourism, and human rights issues. The monitoring system is reviewed and evaluated periodically.		100% (n = 1)		

Table 1. Section A results of Bricker et al.'s Sustainable Management Table for Theodore Roosevelt National Park. Note. Reprinted from "A framework for sustainable tourism development in and around national parks", by Bricker et al, 2022, *Journal of Park & Recreation Administration*, 40(1), p. 140



## Relevance to HSBRIS

The GSTC Destination Criteria is a framework that can aid HSBRIS in its goal of developing/maintaining sustainable and responsible tourism in the Átl'ka7tsem Howe Sound region. It is a credible sustainability standard that can help identify strengths and weaknesses in sustainable destination development plans and initiatives and can help with the prioritization of sustainability goals when planning. By working with its many partners and the numerous groups within the region, the society can use the evaluation to gauge how environmentally sustainable the region currently is, identify areas of weakness, and develop ways to address those weaknesses. **Of additional interest to HSBRIS might be that, in October 2020, GSTC granted "GSTC-Recognized Standard" status to GreenStep's Sustainable Tourism Standard** (Global Sustainable Tourism Council, 2020) . This gives HSBRIS two ecologically oriented consultancies it can look to to help guide their sustainability efforts.

Using the Criteria is beneficial because it mitigates the need for a destination to create their own framework to evaluate their sustainability, which is excellent because it saves them time and resources, and can be helpful if they do not have the internal expertise. It can also help a destination and its destination management organizations when asking for funding because a completed evaluation can act as evidence for need and provide justification. As noted by GSTC (2019) itself, the benefits of the Destination Criteria are as follows:

- **Serve as basic guidelines for destinations that wish to become more sustainable**
- **Help consumers identify sound sustainable tourism destinations**
- **Serve as a common denominator for information media to recognize destinations and inform the public regarding their sustainability**
- **Help certification and other voluntary destination level programs ensure that their standards meet a broadly-accepted baseline**
- **Offer governmental, non-governmental, and private sector programs a starting point for developing sustainable tourism requirements**
- **Serve as basic guidelines for education and training bodies, such as hotel schools and universities (GSTC, 2019)**



It should be noted that in 2019, updates were made to the Destination Criteria. Version 2.0 included changes that included performance indicators to provide guidance in measuring compliance with the criteria, and the identification of the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) most relevant to each criterion, helping destinations contribute to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (GSTC, 2019). See table 2 for an example of this newer version 2.0. The inclusion of the SDGs in the framework makes it even more relevant for the society, which is keen to better adhere to and espouse the values of these goals to the visitors of the Átl'ka7tsem Howe Sound region. **A full copy of the GSTC Destination Criteria Version 2.0 has been included as a separate item independent of this report for reference.**

### GSTC DESTINATION CRITERIA v2.0




Criteria	Indicators	SDGs
<b>SECTION A: Sustainable management</b>		
<b><u>A(a) Management structure and framework</u></b>		
<p><b>A1 Destination management responsibility</b></p> <p>The destination has an effective organization, department, group, or committee responsible for a coordinated approach to sustainable tourism, with involvement by the private sector, public sector and civil society. This group has defined responsibilities, oversight, and implementation capability for the management of socio- economic, cultural and environmental issues. The group is adequately funded, works with a range of bodies in delivering destination management, has access to sufficient staffing (including personnel with experience in sustainability) and follows principles of sustainability and transparency in its operations and transactions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Documentary evidence showing relevant make-up and responsibilities of the group.</li> <li>b. A financial plan and budget showing current and future funding sources.</li> <li>c. Evidence of links and engagement with other bodies.</li> <li>d. Records of permanent staff and contracted personnel, indicating relevant experience.</li> <li>e. Management guidelines and processes, which demonstrate awareness and adherence to sustainability principles and transparency in operations and letting of contracts.</li> </ul>	 
<p><b>A2 Destination management strategy and action plan</b></p> <p>The destination has established and is implementing a multi-year destination management strategy and action plan that is publicly available, is suited to its scale, was developed with stakeholder engagement and is based on sustainability principles. The strategy includes an identification and assessment of tourism assets and considers socio-economic, cultural and environmental issues and risks. The strategy relates to and influences wider sustainable development policy and action in the destination.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A published document setting out the current destination strategy and action.</li> <li>b. The strategy/plan clearly visible and available on-line.</li> <li>c. Evidence of stakeholder consultation, meetings etc. in developing the plan.</li> <li>d. Reference to sustainability principles and an assessment of assets, issues and risks, contained in the strategy and action plan.</li> <li>e. Specific references in the strategy/action plan to wider sustainable development policy (including pursuit of the SDGs), and vice versa.</li> </ul>	

Table 2. A portion of section A of GSTC’s destination criteria version 2.0. Note. Reprinted from “*GSTC destination criteria (Version 2.0)*”, by GSTC, 2019, p. 4)



## *Encouraging Responsible Tourism through Signage*

### Signs and Seals in Iceland: Research-based advice for how to make effective signage that protects wildlife and the natural environment

Signage is an important component in outdoor and nature-based tourism. It has many different purposes, both for the managers of the spaces where tourism takes place, and for the visitors to those spaces. A sign can be used to confer information about a space's history, cultural significance, geography, and species of flora and fauna. It can also be used to confer information that is meant to keep a space safe and protected, such as rules, regulations, codes of conduct, and acceptable ways to interact with its more delicate elements.

Signs are everywhere in our everyday lives. They are so ubiquitous that one cannot expect the average person to be interested in every sign they come across, and to have the patience to read the entirety of its contents. This can be a challenge in the tourism industry, and especially to operators of outdoor and nature-based tourism spaces. These operators, who usually have vast amounts of land to manage and protect, depend on signage as a strategy to communicate with its visitors. They rely on signs to welcome visitors at entry points, and to lay out guidelines for proper use (and therefore protection) of these natural spaces. There are then questions of how to make signs that are less likely to be ignored by visitors. Say, for instance, one has a sign with content on it that is meant to encourage a positive behaviour in its visitors, such as following the seven Leave No Trace Principles. What are some effective ways to design and format that sign to heighten its chances of successfully influencing the visitors who read it? How does one make it interesting enough to catch the attention of visitors in the first place?

#### **Modifying Visitor Behaviour with Effective Interpretive Signage**

Marschall et al. (2017) sought to find ways to design interpretive signs that would result in positive visitor behaviours at nature-based tourism sites. They did so from July-September 2014 by observing 2,440 seal watching visitors on Vatnsnes peninsula (at Illugastaðir) in North West Iceland. In an empirical study, they wanted to find out how interpretive signage could be used to modify their visiting behaviours. Their goal was to reduce negative impacts on wildlife by “modify[ing] tourist behaviour to facilitate sustainable wildlife tourism” (p. 11).



For the study, two sets of signs were created (see Table 10): ontological and teleological.

- Ontological signs – these contained instructions for how to behave properly when seal watching without explanations of why they should be followed (telling visitors the desirable behaviours but not explaining the reasons for the guidelines)
- Teleological signs – these contained instructions for how to behave properly when seal watching with explanations of why they should be followed (telling visitors the desirable behaviours and explanations and reasons for the guidelines)

Comparison of ontological and teleological text on the signs.	
Ontological message	Teleological message
<p><b>Sign 1</b> Please take time to read the signs on your way. Please refrain from disturbing the seals. Please <b>follow the path</b> where possible.</p>	<p>Please take time to read the signs on your way. Please refrain from disturbing the seals. Seals come on land to rest, give birth, feed their pups and moult. <b>Disturbance can stress the seals</b> and prevent them from performing these activities. This has a <b>negative effect</b> on the well-being of <b>the seals and their pups</b>. A stressed seal is alert holding up its head and may return into the sea. Please <b>follow the path</b> where possible for your <b>own safety and to protect wildlife and plants</b>.</p>
<p><b>Sign 2</b> You are getting closer...            – Please <b>move slowly</b> and <b>avoid sudden movements</b>.            – Speak quietly and <b>avoid loud noises</b>.</p>	<p>You are getting closer...<i>The seals can see and hear you from this point on.</i>To avoid disturbing them, please <b>move slowly, avoid sudden movements and loud noises</b>. These actions might <b>scare the seals</b>.</p>
<p><b>Sign 3</b> Please pay attention.            – Walk slowly and keep your voice down.            – Avoid big hand movements like waving or pointing.            – Use only <b>natural light</b> when taking pictures            – Please <b>do not</b> throw objects into the water or towards the seals.</p>	<p>Please pay attention.<i>Do you want to see how seals behave naturally?</i>To experience <b>authentic wildlife</b>, you should <b>refrain from disturbing</b> the seals since it <b>changes their natural behaviour</b>. Therefore, please:            – Walk slowly and keep your voice down.            – Avoid big hand movements like waving or pointing            – Use only <b>natural light</b> when taking pictures            – Please, <b>do not</b> throw objects into the water or towards seals. It might scare or hurt them.</p>

Table 10. A comparison of ontological and teleological text on signs. Note. Reprinted from “Interpretation in wildlife tourism: Assessing the effectiveness of signage on visitor behaviour at a seal watching site in Iceland”, by Marschall et al., 2017, *Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism*, 17, p. 4.

They then divided the visitors into three sample groups for observational study: one group engaged in seal watching with ontological signs present; one group engaged in seal watching with teleological signs present; and one group engaged in seal watching with no signs present.

## Findings

Marschall et al. (2017) found that, under some conditions, teleological signs are more effective than ontological ones, and are therefore more recommended for use when trying to influence visitor behaviour. It is important to communicate the background of a guideline to ensure better understanding and rationale for optimal behaviour. For instance, it might not mean very much to someone if they are only told to “move slowly and avoid sudden movements”. They might not know or realize that moving suddenly will scare the seals. But by explicitly telling them this, the visitor



obtains a more comprehensive understanding of why the behaviour is recommended. When given a rationale for why one should or should not do something, they are likelier to comply.

The study also found which distinct group in their samples was most affected and influenced by signs: families. While visitors were, in general, more likely to verbally instruct others to behave correctly in the presence of signage, this was especially apparent and pronounced within families; parents would use the information on the signs to communicate to their children how to behave correctly. This led to a conclusion that special focus should therefore be put on families when designing signs: they are the group most likely to experience the highest effects that signs have on visitor behaviour, and the group to be most influenced by them.

### Researcher Recommendations

Marschall et al. (2017) make the following recommendations to tourism operators and managers looking to design signage that successfully communicates what they want their visitors to know, and positively alters their behaviours when visiting. They can be especially useful for places that need sustainable development and proper management of wildlife:

- **Visitors should be provided with teleological, rather than ontological, information.**
- **Signs should include illustrations with informative text.**
- **The information provided should take care to address families because they show the most intrusive behaviour.**
- **Information should be offered in multiple languages, as appropriate, to make information accessible to the greatest number of visitors.**
- **The content of the information should include practical information about wildlife protection, take home messages and comparisons between wildlife and humans to enable visitors to more readily establish a psychological connection with the wildlife. Although signage has many advantages, other methods for conveying information, such as guided tours with educated guides, are suggested as a way of supplementing signs (Marschall et al, 2017, p. 11).**

### Relevance to HSBRIS

The findings of Marschall et al. (2017) are relevant to HSBRIS because they can help the society better communicate with the visitors of the Átl'ka7tsem Howe Sound region. One of the society's goals is to raise awareness of the importance of protecting and cherishing ecological biodiversity, both in the region and elsewhere. Utilizing signs is a major part of a broader strategy to achieve



these goals, but only if they are designed well and in ways that visitors will engage with them.

A large amount of signage already exists in the region, but it is a jumbled mix of old and new, relevant and out of date, and well maintained and neglected. Should the society and its partners decide to pursue a project that updated the region's signs, the recommendations of Marschall et al. (2017) would be worth keeping in mind. They could also be useful if in the future, HSBRIS pursues a project that is inline with the GreenStep Sustainable Tourism recommendation of, “work[ing] with local, regional, provincial, and national parks, local First Nations, and other partners to improve interpretive natural and cultural signage and education” (personal communication, January 19, 2023). See Figure 1.

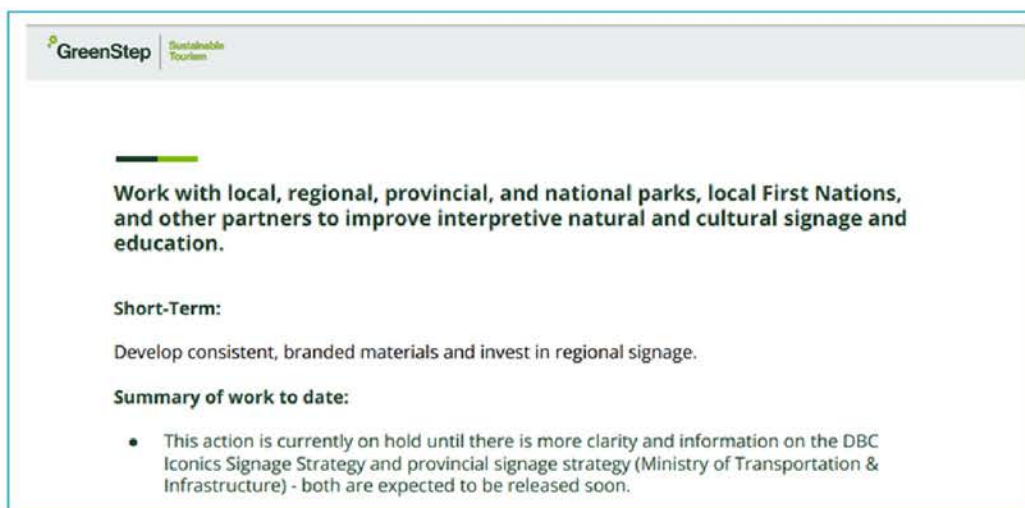


Figure 1. A slide from a presentation by GreenStep Sustainable Tourism to Vancouver, Coast & Mountain Tourism Region on January 19, 2023.



[Photograph of existing signage at Illugastaðir, Iceland]. (n.d.). <https://icelandthebeautiful.com/illugastadir-seal-watching/>



## *Cultural, Sustainable & Responsible Tourism in places where collaboration with Indigenous communities has been successful*

### Haida Gwaii: Honouring Indigenous Language as a Community-based Tourism Initiative

The research of Whitney-Squire (2016) highlights a place that successfully collaborates with its Indigenous community to create culturally authentic and responsible touristic experiences.

#### **Respecting the Language of the Haida**

Language is intrinsic and foundational to maintaining local identities and heritage (Whitney-Squire, 2016). When a group loses their language, it can lead to irreversible damage and permanent change to the very foundation of who they are. The Indigenous Haida of British Columbia's Haida Gwaii region face this threat with their language Xaayda kil (Skidegate dialect) or Xaad kil (Masset dialect) at risk of endangerment.

Xaayda kil and Xaad kil are regarded by its speakers as “containing the collective knowledge of the Haida” (Whitney-Squire, 2016, p. 1164), and is, “an inseparable part of being Haida – created and maintained within the cultural context of relationships” (p.1165). It is closely connected and bound to place, therefore its use in community-based tourism is seen as expanding and extending the means of community engagement.

Haida Gwaii, which is a series of large islands off the B.C. coast with its islands, has been popular with eco-cultural tourists and recreationists for decades. It is a place of natural beauty and wonders. In 1981, UNESCO designated the village of SGang Gwaay Llnagaay on the extremely remote island of SGang Gwaay as a World Heritage Cultural Site. The Haida people want tourism that is economically, culturally, and environmentally sustainable, and the managers of the Haida Heritage Centre and Haida Gwaii Museum have respected these wants. Realizing that tourism has the potential to be a tool for cultural preservation, in 2016 they launched the following key initiatives at their respective institutions to protect and keep the Haida dialects alive and relevant:

- **Paid staff time to learn the language;**
- **Encouraging tour guide to use the language;**
- **Social media, e.g. word of the day;**
- **Greeting visitors in Xaayda kil/Xaad kil;**





- **Working with elders to develop tour content;**
- **Evening language talks for visitors;**
- **Increasing language content in interpretive and promotional materials (Whitney-Squire, 2016, p. 1158-1159).**

Through these immersion-based initiatives, they aimed to make the language it more visible and accessible to the broader community and visitors to the region. These initiatives and programs were crafted through collaboration with members of the Haida community (Xaayda kil speakers in particular). The Haida Language Break, for instance, provided tour guides at the Haida Heritage Centre time weekly to engage in activities to learn and develop their Xaayda kil language skills. The Language Break was run with support from Elders of the Skidegate Haida Immersion Program (SHIP) who help with pronunciation and the development of introductions and conclusion for the centre's tours in Xaanya kil.

### **Relevance to HSBRIS**

The key-initiatives developed between the Haida of Haida Gwaii, the Haida Heritage Centre, and the Haida Gwaii Museum stand as excellent examples of how tourism can contribute to the protection of culture. It is also an example of responsible tourism development where local, traditional, and Indigenous knowledge and input is integrated at every step.

For HSBRIS, what the Centre and Museum of Haida Gwaii have created can be regarded as examples of places where collaboration with Indigenous communities has been successful. If it is a goal of HSBRIS to ensure more culturally authentic and responsible tourism, then the promoted use and increased visibility of the Squamish language within the Átl'ka7tsem Howe Sound region would be an initiative worth pursuing. It is encouraging to see that many signs in the region, such as highway markers and some at key scenic areas, already display and make use of Squamish. The initiatives as studied by Whitney-Squire (2016) can act as inspiration for similar ones within Átl'ka7tsem Howe Sound, which could be created in similar fashion: with close collaboration between HSBRIS, its many stakeholders and regional partners, and –crucially– members of the Squamish Nation.



## 3. CONCLUSION

This mini report has provided four examples of how cultural, sustainable, and responsible tourism is practiced at other parks, tourism focused locations, and places where collaboration with Indigenous communities has been successful.

At the **Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park in Australia**, their signage is broken down into the three categories of:

- Directional signage highlighting walking routes and the location of notable stops around the site;
- Educational signage with a focus on wildlife and geographic features; and
- Educational signage describing the history and culture of the local indigenous groups

There are four key aspects to their signs that can be relevant information for HSBRIS should they wish to work with their partners to update or create new signage for the region:

- Location;
- Imagery;
- Inclusive perspectives; and
- Storytelling.

The **Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) Destination Criteria** is an existing framework that can be used to evaluate and gauge a destination's sustainability credentials by comparing them to identified indicators. It can aid HSBRIS in its goal of developing/maintaining sustainable and responsible tourism in the Átl'ka7tsem Howe Sound region. It is a credible sustainability standard that can help identify strengths and weaknesses in sustainable destination development plans and initiatives and can help with the prioritization of sustainability goals when planning.

**Marschall et al.'s (2017) study on signage in Iceland** can guide HSBRIS in future projects regarding updating or creating signage in the Átl'ka7tsem Howe Sound region. The researcher's findings can be applied, for instance, to make signs that have a higher chance of persuading visitors to be more ecologically conscious during their journeys through the region.

**Whitney-Squire's (2016)** research shows how tourism can be a positive force for cultural preservation. It highlights a place where collaboration with Indigenous groups is successful, and lists the practical ways that the managers of the Haida Gwaii Cultural Centre and Museum went about incorporating the Haida language in efforts to preserve, protect, and promote it.



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<p><b>A5: Climate change adaptation (3 indicators)</b>          Destination has a system to identify risks and opportunities associated with climate change. This system encourages climate change adaptation strategies for development, siting, design, and management of facilities. The system contributes to the sustainability and resilience of the destination and to public education on climate for both residents and tourists.</p>		<p>100% (n = 3)</p>		
<p><b>A6: Inventory of tourism assets and attractions (1 indicator)</b>          Destination has an up-to-date, publicly available inventory and assessment of its tourism assets and attractions, including natural and cultural sites.</p>	<p>100% (n = 1)</p>			
<p><b>A7: Planning Regulations (4 indicators)</b>          Destination has planning guidelines, regulations and/or policies that require environmental, economic, and social impact assessment and integrate sustainable land use, design, construction, and demolition. The guidelines, regulations and/or policies are designed to protect natural and cultural resources, were created with local inputs from the public and a thorough review process, are publicly communicated, and are enforced.</p>	<p>75% (n = 3)</p>	<p>25% (n = 1)</p>		
<p><b>A8: Access for all (2 indicators)</b>          Where appropriate, sites and facilities, including those of natural and cultural importance, are accessible to all, including persons with disabilities and others who have specific access requirements. Where such sites and facilities are not immediately accessible, access is afforded through the design and implementation of solutions that take in to account both the integrity of the site and such reasonable accommodations for persons with access requirements as can be achieved.</p>	<p>100% (n = 2)</p>			

Table 3. Section A results con't of Bricker et al.'s Sustainable Management Table for Theodore Roosevelt National Park. Note. Reprinted from "A framework for sustainable tourism development in and around national parks", by Bricker et al, 2022, *Journal of Park & Recreation Administration*, 40(1), p. 141



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<b>A9: Property acquisitions (2 indicators)</b> Laws and regulations regarding property acquisitions exist, are enforced, comply with communal and indigenous rights, ensure public consultation, and do not authorize resettlement without prior informed consent and/or reasonable compensation.	100% (n = 2)			
<b>A10: Visitor satisfaction (2 indicators)</b> Destination has a system to monitor and publicly report visitor satisfaction, and, if necessary, to take action to improve visitor satisfaction.	100% (n = 2)			
<b>A11: Sustainability standards (4 indicators)</b> Destination has a system to promote sustainability standards for enterprises consistent with the GSTC Criteria. The destination makes publicly available a list of sustainability certified or verified enterprises.	25% (n = 1)		50% (n = 2)	25% (n=1)
<b>A12: Safety and security (5 indicators)</b> Destination has a system to monitor, prevent, publicly report, and respond to crime, safety, and health hazards.	80% (n = 4)			20% (n=1)
<b>A13: Crisis and emergency management (5 indicators)</b> Destination has a crisis and emergency response plan that is appropriate to the destination. Key elements are communicated to residents, visitors, and enterprises. The plan establishes procedures and provides resources and training for staff, visitors, and residents, and is updated on a regular basis.	60% (n = 3)	40% (n = 2)		
<b>A14: Promotion (2 indicators)</b> Promotion is accurate with regard to the destination and its products, services, and sustainability claims. The promotional messages treat local communities and tourists authentically and respectfully.	50% (n = 1)	50% (n = 1)		

Table 4. Section A results con't of Bricker et al.'s Sustainable Management Table for Theodore Roosevelt National Park. Note. Reprinted from "A framework for sustainable tourism development in and around national parks", by Bricker et al, 2022, *Journal of Park & Recreation Administration*, 40(1), p. 142



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Section B - Maximize economic benefits to the host community and minimize negative impacts: 9 Criteria, 21 Indicators				
GSTC Criteria	Indicator Status			
	Complete	In Progress	Needs Improvement	Not Applicable
<b>B1: Economic monitoring (3 indicators)</b> Direct and indirect economic contribution of tourism to the destination's economy is monitored and publicly reported at least annually. To the extent feasible, this should include visitor expenditure, revenue per available room, employment and investment data.	67% (n = 2)	33% (n = 1)		
<b>B2: Local career opportunities (4 indicators)</b> Destination's enterprises provide equal employment, training opportunities, occupational safety, and fair wages for all.	100% (n = 4)			
<b>B3: Public participation (2 indicators)</b> Destination has a system that encourages public participation in destination planning and decision making on an ongoing basis.	100% (n = 2)			
<b>B4: Local community opinion (3 indicators)</b> Local communities' aspirations, concerns, and satisfaction with destination management are regularly monitored, recorded and publicly reported in a timely manner.		100% (n = 2)		
<b>B5: Local access (2 indicators)</b> Destination monitors, protects, and when necessary, rehabilitates or restores local community access to natural and cultural sites.	50% (n = 1)	50% (n = 1)		
<b>B6: Tourism awareness and education (1 indicator)</b> Destination provides regular programs to affected communities to enhance their understanding of the opportunities and challenges of tourism, and the importance of sustainability.		100% (n = 1)		
<b>B7: Preventing exploitation (2 indicators)</b>				

Table 5. Section B results of Bricker et al.'s Sustainable Management Table for Theodore Roosevelt National Park. Note. Reprinted from "A framework for sustainable tourism development in and around national parks", by Bricker et al, 2022, *Journal of Park & Recreation Administration*, 40(1), p. 143



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Destination has laws and established practices to prevent commercial, sexual, or any other form of exploitation and harassment of anyone, particularly of children, adolescents, women, and minorities. The laws and established practices are publicly communicated.	100% (n = 2)			
<b>B8: Support for community (1 indicator)</b> Destination has a system to enable and encourage enterprises, visitors, and the public to contribute to community and sustainability initiatives.	100% (n = 1)			
<b>B9: Supporting local entrepreneurs and fair trade (4 indicators)</b> Destination has a system that supports local and small-and medium-sized enterprises and promotes and develops local sustainable products and fair-trade principles that are based on the area's nature and culture. These may include food and beverages, crafts, performance arts, agricultural products, etc.	25% (n = 1)	75% (n = 3)		

Table 6. Section B results con't of Bricker et al.'s Sustainable Management Table for Theodore Roosevelt National Park. Note. Reprinted from "A framework for sustainable tourism development in and around national parks", by Bricker et al, 2022, *Journal of Park & Recreation Administration*, 40(1), p. 144



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Section C - Maximize economic benefits to communities, visitors, and culture; minimize negative impacts 6 Criteria, 13 Indicators				
GSTC Criteria	Indicator Status			
	Complete	In Progress	Needs Improvement	Not Applicable
<b>C1: Attraction protection (2 indicators)</b> Destination has a policy and system to evaluate, rehabilitate, and conserve natural and cultural sites, including built heritage (historic and archaeological) and rural and urban scenic views.	100% (n = 2)			
<b>C2: Visitor Management (1 indicator)</b> Management system to protect natural and cultural sites, including built heritage and rural and urban scenic views.	100% (n = 1)			
<b>C3: Visitor Behavior (2 indicators)</b> Destination has published and provided guidelines for proper visitor behavior at sensitive sites. Such guidelines are designed to minimize adverse impacts on sensitive sites and strengthen positive visitor behaviors.	100% (n = 2)			
<b>C4: Cultural heritage protection (2 indicators)</b> Destination has laws governing the proper sale, trade, display, or gifting of historical and archaeological artifacts.	50% (n = 1)	50% (n = 1)		
<b>C5: Site interpretation (5 indicators)</b> Accurate interpretive information is provided at natural and cultural sites. The information is culturally appropriate, developed with community collaboration, and communicated in languages pertinent to visitors.	40% (n = 2)	20% (n = 1)	40% (n = 2)	
<b>C6: Intellectual property (1 indicator)</b> Destination has a system to contribute to the protection and preservation of intellectual property rights of communities and individuals.	100% (n = 1)			

Table 7. Section C results of Bricker et al.'s Sustainable Management Table for Theodore Roosevelt National Park. Note. Reprinted from "A framework for sustainable tourism development in and around national parks", by Bricker et al, 2022, *Journal of Park & Recreation Administration*, 40(1), p. 145





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Section D: Maximize benefits to the environment and minimize negative impacts 12 criteria, 28 indicators				
GSTC Criteria	Indicator Status			
	Complete	In Progress	Needs Improvement	Not Applicable
<b>D1: Environmental risks (2 indicators)</b> Destination has identified environmental risks and has a system in place to address them.	50% (n=1)	50% (n=1)		
<b>D2: Protection of sensitive environments (3 indicators)</b> Destination has a system to monitor the environmental impact of tourism, conserve habitats, species, and ecosystems, and prevent the introduction of invasive species.	100% (n = 3)			
<b>D3: Wildlife protection (2 indicators)</b> Destination has a system to ensure compliance with local, national, and international laws and standards for the harvest or capture, display, and sale of wildlife (including plants and animals).	100% (n = 2)			
<b>D4: Greenhouse gas emissions (2 indicators)</b> Destination has a system to encourage enterprises to measure, monitor, minimize, publicly report, and mitigate their greenhouse gas emissions from all aspects of their operation (including emissions from service providers).		50% (n=1)	50% (n=1)	
<b>D5: Energy conservation (2 indicators)</b> Destination has a system to encourage enterprises to measure, monitor, reduce, and publicly report energy consumption, and reduce reliance on fossil fuels.		100% (n = 2)		
<b>D6: Water Management (1 indicator)</b> Destination has a system to encourage enterprises to measure, monitor, reduce, and publicly report water usage.		100% (n = 1)		
<b>D7: Water security (1 indicator)</b> Destination has a system to monitor its water resources to ensure that use by enterprises is compatible with the water requirements of the destination community.	100% (n = 1)			
<b>D8: Water quality (3 indicators)</b> Destination has a system to monitor drinking and recreational water quality using quality standards. The monitoring results are publicly available, and the destination has a system to respond in a timely manner to water quality issues.	100% (n = 3)			

Table 8. Section D results of Bricker et al.'s Sustainable Management Table for Theodore Roosevelt National Park. Note. Reprinted from "A framework for sustainable tourism development in and around national parks", by Bricker et al, 2022, *Journal of Park & Recreation Administration*, 40(1), p. 147



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<b>D9: Wastewater (4 indicators)</b> Destination has clear and enforced guidelines in place for the siting, maintenance and testing of discharge from septic tanks and wastewater treatment systems, and ensures wastes are properly treated and reused or released safely with minimal adverse effects to the local population and the environment.	100% (n = 4)			
<b>D10: Solid waste reduction (4 indicators)</b> Destination has a system to encourage enterprises to reduce, reuse, and recycle solid waste. Any residual solid waste that is not reused or recycled is disposed of safely and sustainably.	75% (n = 3)	25% (n = 1)		
<b>D11: Light and noise pollution (2 indicators)</b> Destination has guidelines and regulations to minimize light and noise pollution. The destination encourages enterprises to follow these guidelines and regulations.	50% (n = 1)	50% (n = 1)		
<b>D12: Low-impact transportation (2 indicators)</b> Destination has a system to increase the use of low-impact transportation, including public transportation and active transportation (e.g., walking and cycling).		50% (n = 1)	50% (n = 1)	

Table 9. Section D results con't of Bricker et al.'s Sustainable Management Table for Theodore Roosevelt National Park. Note. Reprinted from "A framework for sustainable tourism development in and around national parks", by Bricker et al, 2022, *Journal of Park & Recreation Administration*, 40(1), p. 148



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