

**GREAT
HIMALAYA
TRAILS**

**FIELD SURVEY
FORMS**

GREEN FLAG TRAILS



www.greenflagtrails.org

GREEN FLAG TRAILS

AUDITING AND ASSESSMENT

These forms are the basis of the Green Flag Auditing system for trails ensuring that the trail is accurately described and communicated so that the prospective trail users are aware of the trail product and the concomitant experience they are to have on completing the trail.

Standards for trail development can only be determined after the trail has been classified. By completing the series of assessment forms in this document a final TRAIL GRADING AND STANDARDS CHART is produced for any individual trail. These forms follow the same sequence of criteria as is summarized in the chart to produce a full Green Flag Trails overview of the trail type, descriptive criteria and trail attributes.

Green Flag certification is thus assigned to trails that prove that the standards laid down by Nepal (GHT) for specific trail types have been effectively applied.

Please ensure each section is fully completed and missing information noted.

For any questions, comments or feedback to help improve this system, please contact founder Leon Hugo: info@greenflagtrails.org

Author: Leon Hugo in association with Galeo Saintz.

Adapted for Nepal in consultation with Niki Shrestha.

May 2016 v2

Contact information: info@greenflagtrails.org

© Green Flag Trails International

Documents may only be reproduced with the written permission of the author.

SUMMARY OF AUDITING DOCUMENTS

	Title of Document	When to use	Number to use	Comments
Fieldwork Documents				
1	Trail facilities and booking worksheet	Pre-hike and after hike	Complete once for trail as a whole	Summary of service, pre-hike and on-trail facilities and contact information
2	Accommodation worksheet – self-catering	At accommodation	One form for each overnight facility	Also indicate types of catered units available at overnight
4	Environmental characteristics	On trail	One each day of trail	Complete after each day's hike
5	Path quality assessment sheet	On trail	One or more per day	Mark problems at GPS points, distances or on map
6	Safety (Risk assessment) checklists	On trail and at overnight	One per accommodation and day of hike	
7	Node/Destination Assessment	At overnight	One form for each overnight facility	See explanation sheet
8	Risk Assessment	On completion of hike	One per day; general summary at end	Summary of all findings
Self-study Documents				
9	Definition of elements at overnight accommodation	Read prior to report		See explanation sheet
10	Trail maintenance schedule for accommodation & path	Give to owner	for each accommodation unit	
11	Trail User Feedback Form Hikers' audit form	Send to hikers	One for each group	To be given to hikers at accommodation or at registration
12	Trail attributes for classifying trail	On completion	one	Summary of all findings
13	Field Tags	At problem points	At least 25 per day	barrier tape as back-up

Trail Description
 Defining the Type of trail
 ONE FORM FOR THE TRAIL AS A WHOLE

ATTRIBUTES FOR TRAIL CLASSIFICATION				
Primary Criteria				
Difficulty / Exertion Level (Energy Rating) See separate document for effect of height above mean sea-level. (@Integrate Pty(Ltd))				
Easy (See explanation sheet) (classes 1 – 4; < 1000 kCal)	Moderate (4 -7: – 2200 kCal)	Strenuous/hard (7 – 10); – 3300 kCal)	Very hard (10-13)	Ex-treme (>13)
Trail Format				
Loop (circular day walk); Link (joining two trails); Side-Trail (extension of a trail to a feature such as view point)	Circular (multi day trail, returning to start)	Clover Leaf / Network (multi day trail - single base camp)	Cul-de-sac (dead end; walk back same path or transport with vehicle)	
Trail Duration				
Ramble (<3 hours; no overnight)	Day Walk (3 – 6 hours; no overnight)	Hiking Trail/Trek (> one day; overnight accomm)	Traverse (no accommodation)	
Catering				
Fully catered (order from menu; 3 meals/day)	Semi-catered (breakfast and / or mid-day snack)	Self-catered (prepare own food)	No facilities (for food preparation)	
Guiding				
Guide – qualified and registered	Hike Leader - knowledgeable person	Self-Guided -signage; way marked	None or GPS coordinates	
Signage/way marking				
Trail head; way markers/ general info signage	Standard way markers only	Cairns / similar	None / infrequent	

TRAIL ATTRIBUTES

Secondary Classification Criteria

Trail Access			
Fly-in (only)	Public road to start (tar)	Rural “back roads” gravel	Problematic or Poor Access - difficult to find
Environmental character (classified according to checklist)			
Wilderness - pristine environment	Natural -; some land use activities	Rural - farming environment; local villages	Semi-urban urban Green Belt or similar
Conservation status			
Special conservation. site – international status (e.g. Ramsar)	National park or proclaimed wilderness area	Nature reserve – e.g conservancy	No conservational status
Cultural-historic			
International (one or more proclaimed world heritage sites)	National (one or more national sites)	Traditional (urban or rural villages of some cultural significance)	None of special value
Accommodation			
Hotel	Tea house/ Lodge	Homestay	Tent/shelter/ none
Technical difficulty rating - Terrain type			
Walk – hands in pocket mostly; some steep sections possible	Scramble - uncomfortable; slide/crawl in places	Climb/Scary -scary heights; river crossings; narrow ledges; high ladders, etc.	Challenging – technical support required
Safety (Risk management)			
Safe	Safe but heed warnings	Risky -take precautions	Unsafe -No Green Flag
Trail Information			
Map - correct info.; scale; contours	Printed - book / brochure	Website	Apps

Path type																			
Vehicular road - paved					Track (two strips of road; 4x4 track)					Village commuter footpath (3m)					Footpath (< 1m wide)				
Path surface																			
Smooth (paved or hard soil)					Stony (sections of stones >5cm diameter; "Ankle twisters")					Rocky (sections feet to be lifted to climb over rocks)					No path ("off-path hiking")				
Special features																			
Handicapped facilities (for blind; wheel chairs; deaf; injured; pregnant; etc.)					Limitations (extreme cold, wet, hot; storms; fog; height a.m.s.l.)					Portaged – By porter/ animal/ vehicle					Multi-functional (hike, commute, trade)				
Dominant Experience (Goal of trail)																			
Adventure (wilderness environment)					Relaxation (general trail – for average hikers & families)					Education (interpretative - guided or curriculum based)					Cultural (interaction with local way of life)				
On Route Facilities																			
Water (Available to drink – all seasons)					Food and Beverages					Sanitation / recycling					Emergency shelter; medical post; etc.				
Quality of Experience gauge																			
Scenic Value scoring: 1 being negligible / absent, 5 = excellent / dominant feature of the trail and its environment					Variation / Diversity of Landscape (Score 1 to 5)					Special Features (Score 1 - 5) (describe)					Uniqueness (Score 1 - 5) (describe)				
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Environmental Characteristics Assessment

One form for each day

TO BE FILLED IN AFTER THE DAYS' WALK

Trail Name:

Trail section – Day (encircle)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
-----------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

From: **To:**

Indicate by means of a "x" in the shaded blocks should the following characteristics typifies/describes the trail. Only one mark per section. In excessive cases, the certified auditor may double the weight of a criterion but has to motivate fully.	Pristine	Rural	Semi-Urban
1. No contact with non-hikers on route – only other hikers			
Possible contact with non-hikers/local inhabitants while on route			
Regular contact with locals			
2. No villages/light industries/towns/public roads/visible			
Limited occurrence (max. 5)			
In close proximity most of time			
3. Noise: Only natural sounds			
Intermittent foreign noise			
Noise most of the time			
4. No agriculture (field, farmhouses, dams); camp-/picnic sites			
Some agriculture in environment			
Passes through urban/residential/light industrial landscape			
5. Erosion/quarries/landslides not present in the landscape around the trail			
Some erosion/quarries/landslides in the landscape around trail visible			
Environmental degradation prevalent			
6. No use made of vehicle or animal roads (excl. near start/end)			
Some distance on rural/tertiary roads – village commuter roads			
Sub-urban pathways, sidewalks			

7. No power/telephone/pipe lines nor fences or gates to pass through			
Power and telephone lines or fences visible and gates.			
Main power supply/substation; High voltage power lines			
8. No crossing public road - except at start/ end			
Crossing of district road (gravel/tar)			
Crossing of urban street			
9. Indigenous vegetation only - pristine			
Indigenous vegetation with some alien vegetation; e.g. exotic plantations			
Intensive growth of Exotic species/ or deforested plantation			
10. No artificial structures on the trail			
small structures (bridges, boardwalks, ladders, dams, pipes, fences)			
Obtrusive structures, (E.g. quarries, large bridges, large pipe lines, etc.)			
11. Only indigenous animals			
Indigenous and Farm or portaging animals along with alien animals			
Domestic animals only (dogs, donkeys, etc)			
12. Number of hikers allowed per day <50			
50 – 100			
No limit on access			
13. Path surface: Mostly natural soil or no path			
Combination of paved, soil and natural stone.			
Surfaced artificial with tar, cement (for vehicles)			
14. Pollution: NO rubbish; animal dung; air pollution; graffiti;			
Some scattered occurrences throughout OR one or two major concentrations			
Prevalent or recurring throughout			
Score (14)			
(%)			

Accommodation Assessment

(Type: **SELF CATERING**)

COMPLETE ONE FORM FOR EACH OVERNIGHT UNIT. One mark per section.

TRAIL Name of locality:	CLASSES		
No. occupants Location (grid ref.)			
Should item be applicable, tick off one shaded box in each section. For catered accommodation, see separate questionnaire.	Com- fortable	Basic	Rustic
1. Accommodation type: Basic hut – shelter against elements			
Tent provided for hire			
Own tent			
2. Toilet: Flush toilet in ablution facility with toilet paper provided			
Pit toilet or alt. hygienic system			
None (uses of own spade)			
3. Washing: Hot Shower on site			
Hot Shower next to/nearby site			
Running tap (cold) or nearby stream/dam			
4. Fire wood: Ample chopped wood (also for campfire)			
Limited wood; Dry twigs and leaves available for use			
No fires allowed			
5. Site Characteristics: Scenic <u>and</u> sheltered location			
Scenic <u>or</u> sheltered location			
Open/ Flat/ Exposed			
6. Water Availability : Safe drinking water			
Water on site - not safe			
No water available - carry own water			

7. Cooking: Basic structure for cooking			
Loose stones/rocks available to make a "stove" (cooking place)			
None of these			
8. Safety: Health post and/or Helipad near by			
Cell phone network available			
Nothing			
SCORE (maximum 8)			
%			
Class: (Mark dominant class with X)			

Accommodation Assessment

(Type: **CATERING ESTABLISHMENTS**)

(One form only)

The checklist is for the list of facilities available only; not a classification system for grading accommodation.

FOR EVERY ACCOMMODATION POINT/VILLAGE A LIST OF ACCOMMODATION TYPES (SEE CLASSIFICATION TABLE BELOW) IS TO BE MADE AND TRAIL USERS INFORMED AS TO THE TYPICAL FACILITIES AVAILABLE AT EACH TYPE – AS SPECIFIED BELOW

Trail Name: Location Name: Number of Accommodation Types: Hotel: Teahouse-Lodge: Homestay: Camping Sites:		Classification			
		Hotel	Lodge or Tea House	Homestay	Camp
1	Bedding: Full complement of luxury bedding provided (e.g. electric blankets)	√			
	Standard bedding (blankets/sheets & pillow)		√	√	
	Provide own bedding (sleeping bag)				√
2	Beds: Double Beds	√	√		
	Twin Beds	√	√	√	
	Dormitory		√		
3	Food: Menu available	√	√		
	Set meals / Basic Meals provided		√	√	
	Self-catering or off the shelf buying				√
4	Setting: Nature predominates	√	√	√	√
	Rural environment	√	√	√	√
	Semi-urban (concentration of accommodation units)	√	√	√	√

5	Washing/Ablution: <i>Private</i> toilets /bathrooms	√			
	Communal toilets/bathrooms in sleeping units	√	√	√	
	Separate washroom/ablution block				√
6	Lighting: Electricity/gas/solar	√	√	√	
	Torch and Emergency lights/ Paraffin/Oil lamps/Candles or similar only				
	None				√
7	Heating. Interior heating (fireplace/heaters) and/or cooling (fan) in the rooms	√			
	Interior heating in the common room/dining area (fireplace/heaters) and/or cooling (fan)		√		
	None			√	√
8	Radio/TV: DSTV in the rooms	√			
	DSTV in the common rooms		√		
	None				√
9	Communications : Telephone and W-Fi	√	√		
	Telephone or W-Fi		√	√	
	No Services				√
10	Refreshments: Drinks/confectionaries service facilities in the accommodation unit	√			
	Way side stall/shop		√	√	√
	None				√
11	Room Services: Full room service (cleaning/meals/ drinks on order)	√			
	Cleaning and Laundry		√	√	
	None				√
12	Seating: Couch/chairs in lounge and in rooms	√			
	Chairs in bedroom OR in lounge only		√	√	
	Chairs or benches without backrest				√
13	Water Availability : Safe drinking water	√	√	√	
	Water on site - not safe				√

	No water available carry own water				√
	SCORE				
	% (Out of 13)				
	* CLASSIFICATION CATEGORY				
	Comment:				

Node/Destination Assessment
 (STATUS OF ENVIRONMENT AROUND ACCOMMODATION)
 (Only one form for whole trail)

NAME OF TRAIL:														
	Weight Factor	Destination 1			Destination 2		Destination 3		Destination 4		Destination 5		Destination 6	
C= (AxB)	A*	B**	C	B**	C***	B**	C***	B**	C***	B**	C***	B**	C***	
A: Environ-ment														
Vegetation damage on site	2													
Erosion: horizontal sheet	3													
Vandalism (on site)	2													
Littering (on site)	2													
Other pollution- noise; light (environment)	1													
Animal dung and odours	2													
Alien Vegetation (<u>except</u> lawn)	1													
Drainage (mud)	2													
Pollution of nearby water	3													
Total (out of 54 max)														
% Impact column C														

Key	
*	A: Weighting factor. (Some factors are regarded as more important than others)
**	B: Scoring criteria <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. minimal problems / negligible / of no consequence 2. few problems / attention needed to halt deterioration/impact; (May be bad but not relevant or possible to alter situation). 3. serious problem / immediate action needed to rectify situation.
***	(A x B =) C: Impact value

© Green Flag Trails

Risk Assessment
IDENTIFYING RISK AND SAFETY ISSUES (one form for each day)

Possible Hazard	Risk		Existing situation	Mitigation: suggested (severity level 1) or: required for GF (level 3)	Photo/Video/Comments/Explanation
	Severity	Extent			
Accommodation					
Theft					
Personal safety					
Fire control					
Safety on trail					
Mugging					
Animals					
Natural disasters/ dangerous places (describe/assess)					
Warning signs					
Clear trail markers (if self-guided trail)					
Guiding (certification)					
Water clean for drinking on the trail?					
River/pool/lake for swim?					
Map accuracy (if self-guided)					
Path constructions/layout					

Staircase/bridge tread surface and hand railings					
Trail obstacle: describe/assess (e.g. fallen trees, high steps, loose stones)					
Natural Crossings: rivers, roads, etc.(not bridges)					
Escape routes on map and on path/maintained					
Path clearly visible (pruning)					
Emergency					
Cell coverage on map (NTC,NCELL etc)					
Health posts / Emergency evacuation					
Environment					
Alien vegetation					
Natural obstructions (Fallen trees, rocks, landslides, slippery,					

Key	
<p>*Severity scoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No problem/irrelevant/N/A. 1. Slight or potential problem/precaution suffice. 2. Rectification required/warn hikers. 3. Major problem (no Green Flag accreditation). 	<p>**Extent scoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Whole trail./ Full Day walk B. Full day section on multi-day trails C. Localized (See Path evaluation form for WP's)

© Original document by Henk Liebenberg, adapted for ©Green Flag Trails by Leon Hugo

PATH QUALITY ASSESSMENT FORM

(approx. 3 forms for each day)

Trail Name Date

Weather Between hut &

Write WP and/or distance from start (m) under the registering points 1- 20 below

Day: 1 2 3 4 5		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
6 (encircle)																						
WAYPOINT / DISTANCE from beginning																						
A	Path surface	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
	1	Drainage																				
	2	Erosion																				
	3	Potential erosion hazard																				
	4	Trail drifting/ braiding																				
	5	Trail deviation																				
	6	Trail sagging																				
	7	Slippery																				
	8	Stoniness																				
	9	Rockiness																				
	10	Camber or cross angle																				
11	Sandy																					

H	Fa un a/ Inh abi tan ts	1	Sensitive / Endangered Species																
		2	Dangerous / Nuisance / Problem Ani- mals																
Evaluation Scores				1 = No / minor / uncomfort- able for hikers															
None/negligible problems				2 = Rectification to halt dete- rioration, may be hazardous to hikers .						3 = Immediate attention/ dangerous, no GF									

Auditor Signature Date

Trail Detailed Description
USED FOR WEB AND MARKETING MATERIAL

Description of trail: (approx. 100 – 200 words) layman’s description for hikers. Enticing and honest description is required.

Trail Type (Example only)

The “Kathmandu Valley Rim” is a moderately difficult, self-catering, 6 day circular trail with the option of a guide. It is a scenic trail with excellent interaction with the local community.

Other Attributes (Example)

The path surface is smoothly paved. Sudden cold spells occur in winter, ample food and beverages available on the route.....

Description of trail: (approx. 100 – 200 words) layman’s description for hikers.
For example,:

The Kathmandu Valley Rim starts at Chisapani. It winds steeply uphill inside the Shivapuri National Park and provides scenic views of the Himalayas. Along the way you will come across 100 m high waterfall.

(See other trail descriptions on: www.greenflagtrails.org for guidance)

For complete itinerary please follow the link

Booking Facilities / Information Office			
Contact Person:	Telephone / Cell:	Email:	Website:

Trail Users' Questionnaire Form
MADE AVAILABLE ON THE TRAIL AT HUTS OR END OF TRAIL

INVITATION TO OUR TRAIL USERS
(Help us to provide a *value for money* trail experience.)

The Trail is a Green Flag Trails accredited trail. Please help us, and fellow hikers, to maintain the quality of the trail by completing this form.

1.	Were there any places where the trail was not clearly marked?	Yes	No
----	---	-----	----

Comments:

2.	Were there sections where the trail was dangerous?	Yes	No
----	--	-----	----

Comments:

3.	Were the road signs and directions at the start of the trail clear?	Yes	No
----	---	-----	----

Comments:

4.	Did the information conform to the trail brochure and your expectations?	Yes	No
----	--	-----	----

Comments:

5.	Were the facilities and service acceptable?	Yes	No
----	---	-----	----

Comments:

6.	Were there any erosion/path deterioration? Be as specific as possible.	Yes	No
----	--	-----	----

Comments:

Name: (optional – but of value if we need more information; your name will not be disclosed to the trail owner unless so requested by you)

Date of hike:..... Tel no..... Club.....

E-mail



Send to: info@greenflagtrails.org

For the choice of your next hike, look at the website www.greenflagtrails.org for accredited trails. Remember an accredited trail ensures a safe hike and that the information provided will tell you exactly what to expect in terms of type of environment, difficulty rating, accommodation options and trail facilities.

Comments:


7.	Did this trail do justice to the Green Flag concept?	Yes	No
----	--	-----	----

.....

Field Tags
FOR DISPLAY ON TRAIL WHERE MAINTENANCE IS NEEDED

This tag should be duplicated and fastened at each place where the auditor feels that the trail has need of maintenance. The waypoint number on the tag should correspond with

GREAT HIMALAYA TRAILS



Green Flag Trails are trails under responsible management. Auditors are currently assessing this trails to ensure you get a trail experience that lives up to its promises.

PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE THIS TAG

PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED HERE:

Waypoint	Signage	Path Surface
Constructions	Flora / Fauna	Obstructions
Environ Degradation	Layout	Other

COMMENTS:

