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# Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands

## TriAl of ‘Site Inventories’ and ‘Site checklist’

### **Background**

In June 2022, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands were designated as Specially Protected Areas (SPA). The Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands (GSGSSI) are now in the process of developing management plans and improved monitoring.

A key goal of the South Georgia SPA is sustainable tourism so an obvious first step is to improve the information held for popular visitor sites.

As part of this process, GSGSSI has started to develop ‘site inventories’. These are a consolidation of existing information available including descriptions of the natural environment, wildlife status, heritage items and known pressures such as invasive or areas of erosion.

However, we understand that in some cases this information will be incomplete, or may change over time, or through the season. We will therefore ask those using a site to complete a ‘site checklist’ which will help GSGSSI in refining the information, and helping us track how sites change over time.

At the moment, we have only developed ‘site inventories’ for a small number of sites and are asking for assistance in the 2022/23 season to trail the methodology and get feedback on the concept.

The trail will be across a range of different groups including the tourism industry, visiting scientists and government staff.

### **Instructions**

Who – the site checklist can be completed by anyone but ideally should be a someone who has some knowledge of the site and is able to identify wildlife with confidence. It is not expected any one person will have expertise in everything so it’s okay just to complete the areas people feel confident in

When – the information for the inventory should be collected during a landing although the form could be completed back on the vessel if easier. We estimate it will take approximately 30 – 45 min to gather the information

How – the idea of the checklist is to compare what you see on the ground, with what is written in the site inventory.

* Prior to starting the checklist, familiarise yourself with the inventory for that site
* Environmental description - this is a general text but if you note any errors or omissions, it would be helpful to add note these
* Wildlife inventory - designed to capture information on what species are present at a site, which breed there, how they are distributed and how these changes over time. Only note species you see AT THE TIME of the current visit
* Heritage – if a heritage item is noted on the inventory, please photograph so we can record change/degradation and seek expert advice where needed.
* Pressures – This section is to help us understand what pressures there are at a site and share information so they can be better managed.
* Visitor Experience – helps understand what is special about a site so it can be promoted and preserved and also if there are any particular challenges faced that could be shared to help make operations smoother

What next – Where possible, transfer information onto an electronic version of the form and e-mail this to [permits@gov.gs](mailto:permits@gov.gs) . At the end of the season, GSGSSI will consolidate responses and update the site inventory. The intention is that ultimately, there will be a site inventory for every visitor site and these will form part of the replacement for the ‘visitor site guides’

At the end of the season, we will ask for feedback on:

* How long on average the checklist took to complete
* How easy was it to complete the checklist
* Is there any additional information that could usefully be captured
* If, once fully developed, the inventories would be a useful tool in planning and managing a visit