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CENTRAL EUROPE



CEETO

European Union
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Central Europe Eco-Tourism: Tools for Nature protection

GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN PROTECTED AREAS

How policy makers can make tourism a real driver for nature protection and local socio-economic well-being!





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Terminology and list of acronyms

Visitor	For protected areas (PAs), a visitor is a person who visits the area of the PA, who is not paid to be in there and does not live there permanently either. The purpose to visit the area is typically recreational, educational or cultural ¹
Tourist	Any visitor whose trip to a protected area includes an overnight stay.
CEETO	Central Europe Eco-Tourism: tools for nature protection
EU	European Union
PA	Protected area: a clearly defined geographical space, recognized, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values. ²
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization

¹ UNWTO and UNEP (2005). Making Tourism More Sustainable: A Guide for Policy-Makers. Madrid and Paris: UNWTO and UNEP, <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284408214>

² Dudley, N. (ed.) (2008). Guidelines for Applying Protected Area Management Categories. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. <https://portals.iucn.org/library/efiles/documents/PAPS-016.pdf>. Accessed 2 January 2020.



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The present CEETO Guidelines are one of the main outcome documents of the CEETO project, whose objective is reinforcing sustainability in tourism planning and management.

An enormous number of international conventions and declarations have put forward principles and guidelines for sustainable tourism since the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development. Many countries say publicly that they are pursuing, or wish to pursue, policies for “sustainable tourism”. Still, many experts would argue that not enough actions have been taken and not enough goals have been reached to change tourism pressures.

These CEETO Guidelines, next to the CEETO “Handbook of successful and innovative practices for a sustainable tourism inside Protected Areas”, - using the lessons learned from the project - endeavour to help not only PA managers’ but also policy makers’, thus professional audience and stakeholders, daily work in taking a step towards more sustainable tourism.

Probably there is no other industry in the economy that is connected to so many different kinds of products and services as is the tourism sector³. This is why the role of governments is so unique to oversee and develop opportunities, to provide leadership, to establish mechanisms to coordinate the tourism industry. Policy-makers of different levels should also reduce uncertainty in tourism policy and to plan as well as to improve the relationships among the key stakeholders from the private and the public sector⁴.

Mass tourism has become a powerful industry worldwide in the last decades, able to generate many thousands of jobs and great amount of tax revenue for the states. No wonder that policy makers’ temptation is huge to focus on these considerations, with less regard for local impacts or awareness of sustainability. The CEETO Guidelines offer a procedural tool and case studies to encourage a type of tourism that is both sustainable and attractive. It can help PA managements, municipalities, local tourism service providers and tour operators to cooperate, and thus enable an adequate quality of life for local residents.

However, it should be noted that these Guidelines, which are the result of the work and experience gathered in the last two years with the CEETO project, are published in early months of 2020, in a global emergency caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. The social distancing measures that the entire population is required to observe, even in the coming months for a period that cannot be defined at present, will inevitably condition tourism and the enjoyment of the Protected Areas. At the moment there are no certainties about the measures to be adopted and the behaviour that people will have to maintain. Main experts from around the world predict that the world of Parks, for their open spaces and natural vocation for well-being, will constitute an “Oasis of Health” becoming a catalyst for visitors and one of the main attractors of tourist demand.

In the coming months, policy makers, managers of Protected Areas and all stakeholders involved in the supply chain will be called to control the fruition of the territories, so the monitoring systems identified and applied within the CEETO project will be invaluable and indispensable than ever. Although in a situation opposite to that of overtourism, not compatible with sustainable tourism and so far at the centre of our attention, the monitoring tools will be useful for the control and management of Protected Areas even in Coronavirus emergency, allow to detect the behaviour and new needs of people for a correct and better tourist experience.

³ Ihj Pforr, C. (2004) Policy-making for sustainable tourism, Curtin University of Technology, Australia, (in Sustainable Tourism, F. D. Pineda, C. A. Brebbia & M. Mugica ed.) <https://www.witpress.com/Secure/elibrary/papers/ST04/ST04007FU.pdf>

⁴ Pforr, C. (2004) Policy-making for sustainable tourism, Curtin University of Technology, Australia, (in Sustainable Tourism, F. D. Pineda, C. A. Brebbia & M. Mugica ed.) <https://www.witpress.com/Secure/elibrary/papers/ST04/ST04007FU.pdf>.



2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE CEETO PROJECT

CEETO Guidelines, on the one hand, summarizes the contents of the research implemented during the CEETO project and informs about the results and, on the other hand, it presents suggestions and ideas on how to gain more knowledge and gives examples on how to reduce the impact of tourism in protected areas.

2.1. Objectives

CEETO Guidelines serve as a tool designed to support policy makers at international/national/regional level in the process of shaping the tourism planning and management. The Guidelines are based on the activities and pilot actions conducted in six project partners' countries - Austria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Italy and Slovenia - and aim to provide an insight into trends and processes in sustainable tourism.

CEETO Guidelines can be useful for a broad audience, but mainly for:

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL POLICY MAKERS

to increase their capacity in developing sustainable tourism policies

PARK MANAGERS AND OTHER CONSERVATION PRACTITIONERS

to ensure that tourism in PAs is appropriate, well managed, and supports conservation objectives

With other words, the Guidelines are a support document for the above-mentioned stakeholder groups, that present a coherent strategy for the development of tourism, in order to balance growth and conservation, within the context of Central Europe's protected areas.

The CEETO Guidelines draw a number of conclusions and recommendations. They identify appropriate, cost-effective and low-impact models to manage sustainable tourism, such as an innovative governance system based on a participatory planning approach that improves the managing capacities of PAs.

2.2. Key challenges

Some global trends⁵ and increasing number of tourists require us to adopt a sustainable vision that considers management of key issues such as environmental, cultural and social impacts. Whatever the problems or solutions, sustainable tourism management is increasingly seen as a core agenda item and not something that can be ignored or pushed aside any longer.

Tourist Awareness

Minimizing damage to natural heritage from tourism is one of the key challenges for decision makers. In general, by providing better understanding of the natural heritage of the Protected Areas tourists can help reduce or prevent adverse impacts and encourage support for conservation. Sustainable policies should endeavour to minimize damage to habitats and disturbance of wildlife by visitors.

⁵ Koščak, O'Rourke, 2020.



The recommended measures include⁶:

- Raising awareness through the education (e.g. quality guiding, visitor centres containing creative interpretative facilities, providing pre-arrival information).
- Visitor management, controlling visitor numbers and behaviour; spatial zoning areas to separate human activities and key wildlife habitats with wildlife refuge areas to reduce disturbances and solutions for littering problems.

Destination planning and development of sustainable local tourism destinations

Tourism destination management can be seen as a continuous, long-term process, involving tourism products, services and protected areas stakeholders. Local tourism development and destination planning should be organized as a “creative way of tourism”. It is the tourism that is mainly connected with communities, with the natural attractions and with the area’s identity. In terms of management, it is the tourism that has no or minimum impact on the environment and is sustainably, preferably locally managed to allow tourists, communities and local people as well as affiliated persons, to participate in the management process. In terms of activity and process, the tourism facilitates the learning by educating on culture and local communities as well as on environment and ecosystem. In terms of participation, the tourism is aware of the participation from tourists, communities, local people and affiliated persons.

Tourism - your everyday life is someone else’s adventure

The capacity of tourism for promoting a more sustainable and inclusive development is based, among other factors, on its capacity to take place in a variety of environments, including rural or underdeveloped areas, on its impact on the economy resulting in driving local economies and on the creation of direct and induced employment. The trend is to give tourists the opportunity to live like a local when visiting a destination. Authenticity and more interaction with the local population improves contentment on both sides. Tourism is becoming a tripartite activity between providers, tourists, and locals. For a destination, it is important to live the brand, to run the values of the brand through every act of product creation or communication by all people in the destination.

Local supply chain and added value

Tourism generates economic opportunities by providing products and services. The more a tourism industry is supplied locally, the more it will induce economic growth and increase opportunities for new businesses. Local and sustainably sourced food contributes to community economic resilience reduces environmental impacts and may cultivate an authentic sense of place and culture for visitors. Food in all its forms is thus a potentially strong element in the branding of a destination.

Economic and social inclusion

At local level, tourism creates new business opportunities, which is strategic for reducing poverty in regions with low levels of development (rural areas). It can therefore offer a way out for the most disadvantaged groups. Tourism employment thus helps reduce poverty and economic and social exclusion, and may offer alternatives to migration to cities. Despite the beneficial effects of job creation, it must be kept in mind that tourism employment is very unstable, even in advanced economies, with high levels of seasonality, turnover and part-time work.

Inclusive tourism

Inclusive tourism is a growing sector within the industry that emphasizes the idea that tourism is for all, and the operators should actively strive to improve accessibility for all persons. An inclusive tourism destination is a destination that offers a tourism experience based on its own, singular attributes; transforms the industry by boosting its competitiveness; creates decent employment; and promotes equal opportunities for all - especially the most vulnerable groups - to participate in and benefit from tourism activity, all in line with the principles of sustainable development. Inclusion can become a factor for competitiveness, both

⁶ UNWTO and UNEP (2005). Making Tourism More Sustainable: A Guide for Policy-Makers. Madrid and Paris: UNWTO and UNEP, p. 43. <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284408214>



because of the inclusion of groups whose characteristics can help enrich the value proposition and because the inclusion of disadvantaged groups leads, in the medium term, to a healthier society in which tourism enterprises have a greater capacity for growth and success.

Climate change

Climate change is an ongoing challenge that has been around for many years and its impacts are becoming more and more evident. UN Climate Change Chief Patricia Espinosa launched at the World Travel & Tourism Conference (WTTC) in New York in September 2019, the WTTC Sustainability Action Plan - initiative by the travel and tourism sector, supported by UN Climate Change, to encourage and help the entire sector to take stronger and more ambitious action to address climate change. She said that while travel and tourism industry has grown to be a global economic force, generating⁷ 10, 4% of global gross Domestic Product (in 2017), it also accounts for around 8% of global greenhouse gas emissions that are contributing to climate change.

On the one hand, the travel industry helps local economies generating profits, while on the other it contributes to environmental damage. By now, it is impossible to ignore the reports underlining the devastating impact of tourism, the majority of which happen via air, car and sea transportation. One might argue that the travel industry desperately needs more regulation by policy makers, but tourists should also be prepared to take on some personal responsibility and reduce air travel.

“Over-tourism”

Over-tourism means unsustainable tourism, where the negative impacts for the destination environment and local community outweigh any positive impacts. It highlights the impacts on destinations of poor tourism planning and regulation. The phenomenon has produced a double effect: while this has also led to a negative backlash against tourism, which in some cases is harmful to destinations, it has also increased awareness among diverse stakeholders about the need for more inclusive tourism decision-making, planning and governance.

There is an increasing trend in tourism taxes - due to the over-tourism issue but more and more destinations are realizing that, through the revenue generated by these taxes, it is possible to carry out sustainability projects.

Technology will play an important role in finding sustainable solution, while it is only a tool to be used. However, we are already seeing the effective use of mobile data to influence visitor flows in some destinations. The opportunity of real time monitoring can ultimately assist capacity management, and the access to geo-location data, could help planning visitor flows and improve supply chain management.

Carrying capacity

Sustainable tourism development has to include a carrying capacity study; that is, an estimate of “the maximum number of people who can use a site without an unacceptable alteration in the physical environment and without an unacceptable decline in the quality of the experience to both visitors and residents”. The factors that need to be considered are a physical impact of tourists, ecological impact of tourists, perceptions of overcrowding, cultural, and social impact on local residents. This is essential if tourism is to contribute to the conservation of cultural and natural heritage through the realization of economic value and raising awareness of, and commitment to, the local patrimony.

Safety and security

Safety and security are one of the key components of travel planning for every tourist. Safety is considered as a state where risk and danger are minimal for an individual. In addition, security is considered as an active protection from threats to provide risk free situations. For tourists, safety and security are even more important, since tourists enter new and unknown situations on their journey. Despite significant medical progress over the last centuries, infectious diseases still represent significant threats to modern societies. While some have been fought successfully and are only found within a few geographical areas (endemics), others have the ability to spread quickly from an initially limited outbreak, becoming epidemics

⁷ New Action Plan Towards Achieving Climate Neutrality in Travel and Tourism by 2050, United Nations Climate Change, September 25, 2019, <https://unfccc.int/news/new-action-plan-towards-achieving-climate-neutrality-in-travel-and-tourism-by-2050>.



or pandemics (as we can see at present in case of COVID 19 pandemic). The first and most crucial aspect of an epidemic or pandemic is, and will always remain, human suffering and the loss of lives. Nevertheless, the spread of a virus can have tremendous economic implications and tourism is one of the most vulnerable sectors; presently the effects of the COVID 19 pandemic are already heavily felt the tourism sector and a set of new policies for a more sustainable and coherent product in the future is needed.

2.3. Methodology

The methodology, of the CEETO “Guidelines for developing a Sustainable Tourism in Proposed Areas”, is divided into the main tasks and final recommendations:

- Literature review - focusing on the following areas: academic literature, of guiding principles ad approaches, reports and other similar material.
- Methodologies for participatory process planning and definition of a sustainable development strategy in Protected Areas, and planning/management monitoring tools of tourist flows.
- Outcomes and lessons learned from the eight protected areas involved; testing a model of governance of tourism flows aimed at reducing environmental impact and pressure of tourism and enhance the socio-economic benefits that can come from a sustainable tourism approach.
- General recommendations and conclusions for Policy Maker at different stages of Sustainable and Responsible Tourism Development in Protected Areas, considering the experiences of the CEETO project action and evaluation.



3. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN PROTECTED AREAS

3.1. Definition of sustainable tourism

According to the UNWTO and UNEP, sustainable tourism is defined as:

“tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities”⁸.

It derives from the principles of sustainable development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992) applied to tourism in protected areas. Sustainable tourism are all forms of tourism development, management and activity, which maintain the environmental, social and economic integrity and well-being of natural, built and cultural resources in perpetuity, and contributes positively and equitably to the economic development and improvement of the quality of life of people who live, work or stay in protected areas.

According to the vision of the EUROPARC Federation:

“Sustainable Tourism in European protected areas provide a meaningful quality experience, safeguards natural and cultural values, supports local livelihoods and quality of life and is economically viable”⁹.

All forms of tourism should attempt to be more sustainable. Making tourism more sustainable is not just about controlling and managing the negative effects of the sector. Tourism is in a very special situation to benefit local communities, economically and socially, and to raise awareness of conservation of the environment. Policies and actions must aim to strengthen the benefits and reduce the costs of tourism.

3.2. Theoretical platform of sustainable tourism and its implementation in PA

From the policy makers' point of view, the successful implementation of sustainable tourism policy demands collaboration, coordination, decentralization and participation as well as information. Such method leads to a comprehensive, integrative and long-term strategy for sustainable tourism but also requires a high degree of political flexibility and the willingness to introduce far-reaching reforms in political structures¹⁰.

Governments have a crucial role in the transformation to a new, sustainable model of tourism. They must recognize that it is their long-term interest to persuade the tourism industry to take sustainability more seriously, pointing out the advantages for attracting new business and the overall profitability of a more sustainable approach¹¹.

How could different levels of policy makers improve sustainable tourism development and capacity of a tourism sector?

Protecting natural values is often a local task, which can result in considerable financial costs even though the benefits are felt far beyond the local level. Local policy makers have to provide multiple services simultaneously. These include public infrastructure; water and waste management; promotion of local economic development; education and health care. Their challenge is to maintain and improve the quality of life for citizens.

Protecting natural resources and biodiversity is sometimes perceived as an obstacle for local development when, in fact, it could actually enhance it:

⁸ UNWTO and UNEP (2005). Making Tourism More Sustainable: A Guide for Policy-Makers. Madrid and Paris: UNWTO and UNEP. <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284408214>.

⁹ EUROPARC Federation, Charter Principles, <https://www.europarc.org/sustainable-tourism/charter-principles/> (accessed Jan. 3 2020).

¹⁰ Policy-making for sustainable tourism, C. Pforr, School of Management, Curtin University of Technology, Australia, <https://www.witpress.com/Secure/elibrary/papers/ST04/ST04007FU.pdf>

¹¹ UNWTO and UNEP (2005). Making Tourism More Sustainable: A Guide for Policy-Makers. Madrid and Paris: UNWTO and UNEP. <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284408214>



“a municipality can save money by securing water provision, wastewater treatment, and protection against erosion or floods more effectively and efficiently through natural rather than technical solutions”.

Keeping and maintaining well-functioning natural ecosystems is the best strategy for local policy makers to deal with future pressures and threats, for example, those linked to climate change. Environmental concerns are often considered unpopular or costly, and the value of nature can be side-lined in policy debates for a variety of reasons:

“development strategies focus on economic growth without recognizing the role of functioning natural systems for local well-being”.

The local capacity to respond to the value of nature is constrained. Decision-making is often fragmented. Under the standard economic growth model, incentives are often provided for activities that can lead to destroyed ecosystems. Identifying and implementing policies that effectively protect and conserve ecosystems and biodiversity requires the collaboration of many stakeholders at different levels.

3.3. The importance of stakeholders in sustainable tourism¹²

Many different interests can and could benefit from sustainable tourism:

- Tourism businesses, while seeking long-term profitability, should be concerned about their corporate image, their impact on the global environment and that immediately around them.
- Local communities are seeking increased prosperity but without exploitation or damage to the quality of their life.
- Environmentalists and PA managers are worried about the harmful impacts of tourism but also see it as a valuable source of income for conservation.
- Visitors are seeking a high-quality experience in safe and attractive environments; they are becoming more and more aware of the impacts of their travelling.
- Governments on all levels should recognize the different positions and motivations of these stakeholders and work with them to achieve common goals¹³.

Sustainability is the responsibility of all participating in tourism. Most of the effects of tourism are the result of taken actions by private sector enterprises and by the visitors themselves. However, there is an obvious need for governments (on different levels) to take a leading role for a truly significant progress in making tourism more sustainable, because:

The tourism industry is very fragmented. It is difficult for the individual actions of many micro and small businesses to make progress towards sustainability unless there is government coordination in the sector. Governments must create an environment that enables and encourages the private sector, tourists and other stakeholders to respond to sustainability issues.

¹² UNWTO and UNEP (2005). Making Tourism More Sustainable: A Guide for Policy-Makers. Madrid and Paris: UNWTO and UNEP, <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284408214>.

¹³ UNWTO and UNEP (2005). Making Tourism More Sustainable: A Guide for Policy-Makers. Madrid and Paris: UNWTO and UNEP, <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284408214>.

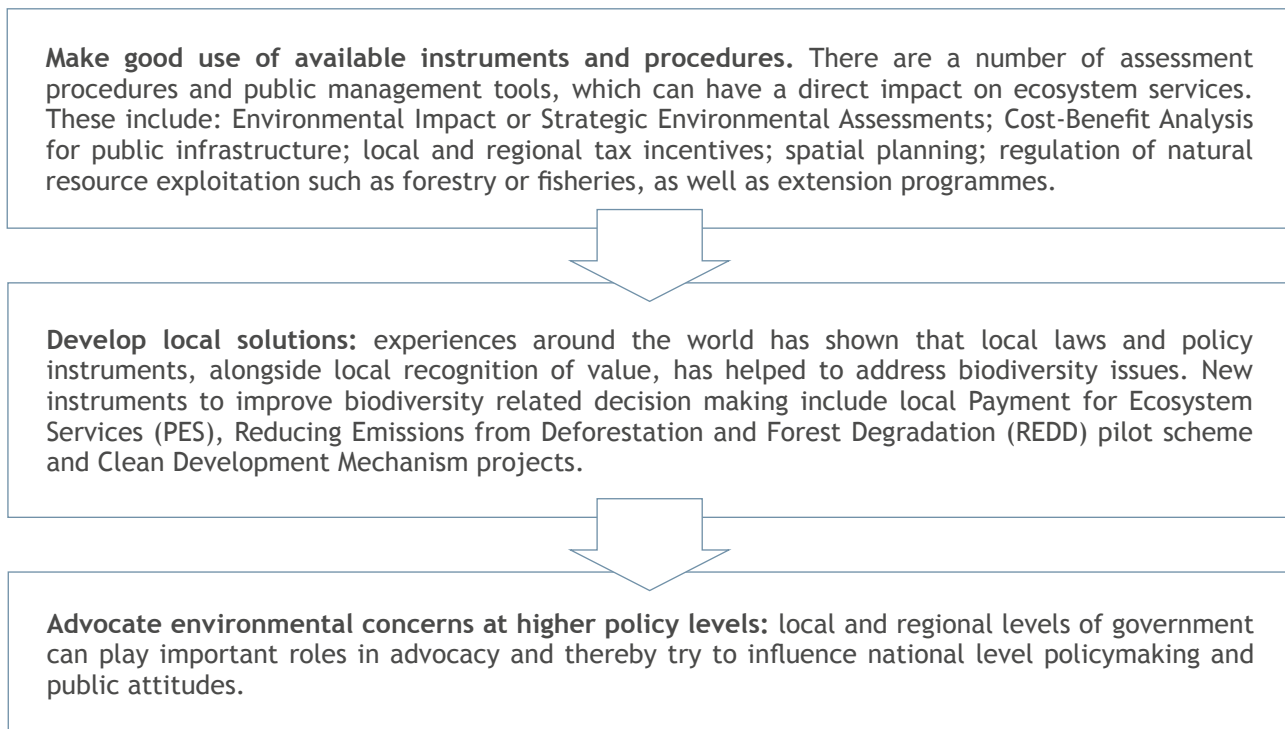


3.3.1. What can local policy makers do?

Environmental governance operates at different scales:

- international agreements from many areas of environmental policy;
- national legislation sets the legal framework for local decision-making and issues general directives¹⁴;
- decisions made at the local and regional level.

Local policy makers can fully utilize nature’s assets for local development. They can:



In many tourist destinations, the largest share of tourism-related income goes not to local service providers, while the costs are mostly borne locally. Local policy challenges are to channel tourism development in such a way that a fair share of income is retained locally, and that locals remain ‘sovereign’ owners of their home place. This takes careful government planning and marketing, capacity building and local regulation. One important tool to help this process is the development of various national and international certification systems to set basic standards for sustainable tourism. Such a scheme is the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism (ECST) in Protected Areas, coordinated by the EUROPARC Federation and the Pan Parks certification system¹⁵.

The UNEP suggests eight key areas for local engagement of policy makers¹⁶:

Planning: land use and sectoral planning present opportunities to combine agriculture and forest management with other land uses. Planning can also balance productive industry with maintaining a landscape attractive for tourism.

Management: local governments can identify ways to integrate the economic benefits of ecosystem services into management practices.

¹⁴TEEB - The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity for Local and Regional Policy Makers, UNEP, (2010) <http://docs.niwa.co.nz/library/public/TEEBguide.pdf>.

¹⁵ TEEB - The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity for Local and Regional Policy Makers, UNEP, (2010) <http://docs.niwa.co.nz/library/public/TEEBguide.pdf>.

¹⁶ TEEB - The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity for Local and Regional Policy Makers, UNEP, (2010) <http://docs.niwa.co.nz/library/public/TEEBguide.pdf>.



Regulation and protection: local governments play a crucial role in interpreting and implementing regulations that encourage best practices and ecosystem protection.

Coordination and collective action: negotiation and coordination between different interest groups inevitably takes place at the local level. Local governments can support the formation of resource management committees; they can integrate formal and informal institutions to ensure effective participation and outcomes.

Investment: local governments can invest in ecosystem services through purchasing policy. They can choose to buy local timber for government buildings, supports buying locally produced food, for example through local labels for local products etc.

Incentives: local governments can create positive incentives for improved ecosystem services management. For example, funds to help promoting green business projects or investments that aim to secure the long-term viability of ecosystem services.

Extension services and capacity building: many environmental problems occur because people do not understand the full implications of their actions or the available alternatives. Farmers may not be aware of alternatives that allow for a more sustainable land use, while at the same time being economic from their perspective.

Research and promotion: local agencies often carry out research in order to assess the role of local ecosystem services. The success of monitoring and other measures often depends on collaborating with well-informed local stakeholders. Once benefits are assessed, this information can be used to promote local products or services.

3.3.2. What can central administrations, national policy-makers do?

For policy makers it is important to be aware and to weigh the benefits and costs of protected areas. While specific benefits from individual sites will vary depending on location, ecosystem and management strategy, the importance of protected areas is great for human livelihoods and well-being. Benefits can be derived from the following:

Market-based sources of protected area income: these include international tourism, in particular ecotourism, markets for environment-friendly product.

Supply clean water: well-managed natural forests provide higher quality of water with less sediment and fewer pollutants. Protected areas are a key source of such water worldwide.

Maintain food security by increasing resource productivity and sustainability: protected areas provide habitat and breeding grounds and can also support food and health security by maintaining genetic diversity of crops.

Support nature-based tourism: Natural and cultural resources in protected areas (e.g. biodiversity, landscape and recreational values) are an important driver of tourism. The World Tourism Organization of the United Nations (UNWTO) estimated that international tourist arrivals grew 5% in 2018 to reach the 1.4 billion mark. Such a high number of visitors entail certain needs for fundamental infrastructure and requirements for employment and human services, all of which have consequences for the economy, society, culture and the environment. All of these trends are affecting protected areas.

Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation: 15% of global terrestrial carbon stock is contained in protected areas with a value understood to be in the trillions of dollars¹⁷. With deforestation accounting for an estimated 17% of global carbon emissions¹⁸, maintenance of existing protected areas and strategic expansion of the global protected area system can play an important role in controlling land use related emissions.

Preserve future values: Protected areas are crucial for future generations.

¹⁷ Campbell, A.; Miles, L.; Lysenko, I.; Hughes, A. and Gibbs, H. (2008) Carbon storage in protected areas: Technical Report. UNEP-WCMC. http://www.gibbs-lab.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Campbell_2008_Carbon_storage_in_protected_areas.pdf (accessed Jan 2020).

¹⁸ IPCC- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2007) The Physical Science Basis, In Solomon, S.; Qin, D.; Manning, M.; Chen, Z.; Marquis, M.; Tignor, K. B. M. and Miller, H. L. (eds.) Contribution of Working Group I to the Fourth Assessment Report of the IPCC. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom and New York, NY, USA.



4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND APPROACHES

The CEETO project has been affected by numerous policy guidelines. Among others, both policy-makers and sustainable tourism managers should observe four internationally accepted policy guides. These are:

- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and its guidelines on biodiversity and tourism development;
- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) guidelines for a planning and management of sustainable tourism;
- European Commission's guidelines, initiatives and good practices in Europe for sustainable tourism and Natura 2000;
- European Charter for Sustainable Tourism (ECST).

4.1. The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) guidelines

The Convention came into effect on 29 December 1993 and currently has 188 Parties. The principal goals of the Convention on Biological Diversity are:

- the conservation of biological diversity;
- sustainable use of its components;
- fair and equitable sharing of the benefits resulting from the utilization of genetic resources, including appropriate access to genetic resources and transfer of relevant technologies, as well as proper funding.

The Convention has understood the necessity to get involved in tourism development procedures, which therefore led to the development of international recommendation focusing on sustainability.

These guidelines can be seen as support tool to all stakeholders of tourism development and biodiversity conservation (including policymakers, managers, whether in national or local government, the private sector, local communities, NGOs or other organizations) as they define areas of application, management processes, tasks and responsibilities of the respective institutions, environmental impact assessment and monitoring.

Elements of the guidelines¹⁹

In the literature, it is written that guidelines can cover all forms and activities of tourism and are relevant for tourism and biological diversity in all geographical locations and tourist destinations.

4.1.1. Policy-making, development planning and management process

Framework for the management of tourism and biodiversity

One-step of the management process is engagement of stakeholders, including indigenous and local communities to ensure their participation government bodies, and tourism sector, NGOs to increase their awareness and promote the exchange of information and best practices. The policy-making, development planning and management process consist of the following steps:

- Baseline information and review (from survey and/or monitoring);
- Vision and goals (Action Plan);
- Objectives;
- Review of legislation and control measures;
- Impact assessment;

¹⁹ Anna Iványi: Linkages between biodiversity and tourism, 2011, An introduction, http://www.ceeweb.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/bidi_tourism.pdf.



- Impact management and mitigation;
- Decision making;
- Implementation;
- Monitoring and reporting;
- Adaptive management.

Notification process in relation to a management framework

All stakeholders, who may be affected, including indigenous and local communities should be informed about the tourism development plans, taking into account local, regional and national impacts. The recommended measures include the list of information to be disclosed to guarantee appropriate transparency.

Public education, awareness raising and capacity-building concerning tourism and biodiversity

Education and awareness-raising activities should focus on a wide range of stakeholders, including the public, the professional sectors, all levels of governments. As well as the tourism, sector itself, along with the tourists, to encourage the conservation of natural and cultural heritage, and avoid unfavourable effects. Capacity-building activities should contribute to the effective implementation of the guidelines by allowing stakeholders on all levels to participate in the process.

4.2. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) guidelines

“Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas: Guidelines for Planning and Management”²⁰ aim to assist protected area managers and other stakeholders. These guidelines provide a conceptual background for understanding park tourism and its management, providing a theoretical basis for the management, including practical advice. The report concludes that protected area managers need to make continuous efforts to communicate with all stakeholders. The guidelines suggest that national and international organizations need to encourage governments to make improvements in the following critical areas:

- Support for effective legislation, with adequate resources for implementation;
- creation of national policies for protected areas and the management of tourism;
- development of a management plan;
- tourism should contribute to the purposes of protected areas. Guidelines should help increasing the benefits of tourism in all kinds of protected areas;
- measurement of park tourism activities, volumes and impacts must be accurate, as complete as possible and effectively communicated;
- match the services and products available in the park and locally with tourist travel motives;
- make products and services available for tourists’ expenditure;
- aim for high service quality in all tourist services;
- develop a constituency of satisfied and supportive park visitors, people who will argue for park objectives in the large political debates in society;
- develop opportunities for park visitors to play a positive role in park management (through membership in Friends Groups, by providing donations to targeted programs, or providing personal assistance to staff);
- ensure that all information create appropriate expectations;
- minimize local leakage (retain local expenditures through maximum local self-sufficiency) by developing linkages with local industries;
- provide local accommodation options;

²⁰ Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas: Guidelines for Planning and Management, Eagles, Paul F. J., Haynes, Christopher D., McCool, Stephen F., 2002. http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/pag_008.pdf.



- provide recreation activity options;
- encourage consumption of locally-grown foods;
- ensure local participation and control (e.g. local guide services);
- ensure revenue-sharing or direct payment programs;
- understand the role of the protected area in regional and national tourism activities;
- understand the fiscal and economic roles of park tourism;
- host special events;
- provide opportunities for local people to celebrate their cultural traditions;
- where needed, assist in the education of local people in the skills necessary for tourism;
- evaluate all tourism services provided by the private sector to ensure service quality and adherence to park policy;
- ensure that the park has staff trained in tourism planning and management;
- continuously evaluate all tourism programs to ensure that goals are met;
- ensure that tourism programs are based upon competent financial management;
- price appropriately;
- earmark the income from fees appropriately.
- tourist facilities and programs within protected areas should act as standard-setters in environmentally sensitive design and operation.

4.3. The European Commission's guidelines (directives)

The EU has a range of policy mechanisms that, in turn, may be integrated with international policies and institutions²¹. For example, EU nature conservation policy is made upon a combination of international agreements, the most important of which is the Convention of Biodiversity and European policy measures such as the Birds Directive (1979) and the Habitats Directive (1992). These agreements provide the institutional basis for European biodiversity programs such as Natura 2000 and wider EU conservation policy. Under Natura 2000, all EU states must take steps to ensure that natural habitats and species in the network receive “favourable conservation” status. The aim was to create a coherent ecological network of protected areas in the EU. In Natura 2000 sites, tourism activities can be carried out, as long as they are properly managed within the carrying capacity.

The article 6 of the Directive obliges the Member States to set up conservation measures. Although there are no appropriate regulations, it is important to include the local community in planning and management, because human activities will remain an organic part of the network.

The areas that make up the Natura 2000 network are not strictly protected reserves where human activities are excluded. However, restrictions are possible and can be prescribed for each individual area to maintain the favourable conservation status of the special conservation goods.

²¹ C. Michael Hall: Policy, Planning and Governance in Ecotourism, Department of Tourism, School of Sciences, University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand, CAB International 2006., Ecotourism in Scandinavia: Lessons in Theory and Practice (eds S. Gössling and J. Hultman).



4.3.1. Natura2000 priorities for sustainable tourism in protected areas (Strategy - Policy - Planning)

Assessing resources, recognizing vulnerability, choosing appropriate tourism²².

- **Reflect existing designations and plans:**
Integrate Natura 2000 sustainable tourism strategy into existing management plans. Refer to existing regional and national plans and strategies.
- **Start with understanding the site:**
In the first phase is important to carry out an inventory of natural and human resources, assessing their well-being and need for conservation, and potential benefit from tourism.
- **Undertake further research:**
Further research is important, to gain a better idea understanding of their vulnerability.
- **Knowledge about your existing visitors**
It is important to understand who the visitors are, when they are visiting the site, why and their impact.
- **Market potential and pressure:**
Decide whether, where and when there are limits to the number and types of visitor and site should receive in the future if the environment and heritage is not to be degraded.
- **Identify capacity limits:**
Where and when there should be limits to the number and types of visitor.
- **Select types of tourism to match resources and markets:**
It is important to identify what type of tourism is appropriate for the site.

Creating a strategy based on consultation and partnership²³

- **Involve all stakeholders from the beginning:**
Involve a wide range of local partners from the beginning.
- **Establish partnership-groups:**
Working groups and seminars encourage an association of local tourism professionals to become official partners responsible for the strategy.
- **Raise awareness and commitment:**
For promoting widespread awareness of the strategy, it is important to involve locals.
- **Allocate necessary resources**
- **Sufficient time (minimum 6 months) is needed to creating a strategy.**
- **Strategy must be simple and clear:**
The Strategy must be well-focused, easy to read and well disseminated.
- **Keeping everyone involved and informed:**
Involved partners must be informed at every stage.
- **Widen the scope**
Strategic issues of tourism management and development should address areas around the site, including buffer zones.

²² European Commission: Environment - Management of Natura 2000 sites (accessed: 2018.12.04.), page 47. http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/info/pubs/docs/nat2000/sust_tourism.pdf.

²³ European Commission: Environment - Management of Natura 2000 sites (accessed: 2018.12.04.), page 48. http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/info/pubs/docs/nat2000/sust_tourism.pdf.



4.4. The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism (ECST)

The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas is a practical management tool that enables Protected Areas to develop tourism sustainably, is both a planning tool and a quality label.

In 1995, EUROPARC took the initiative to set up the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas. The core element of the Charter is working in partnership with all relevant stakeholders to develop a common sustainable tourism strategy and an action plan based on a thorough situation analysis. The aim of all Charter projects and activities is the protection of the natural and cultural heritage and the continuous improvement of tourism in the Protected Area in terms of the environment, local population and businesses as well as visitors.

The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism, defined by the EUROPARC Federation, is both a planning tool and a quality label. The 5 Charter principles are represented in fig. 1.

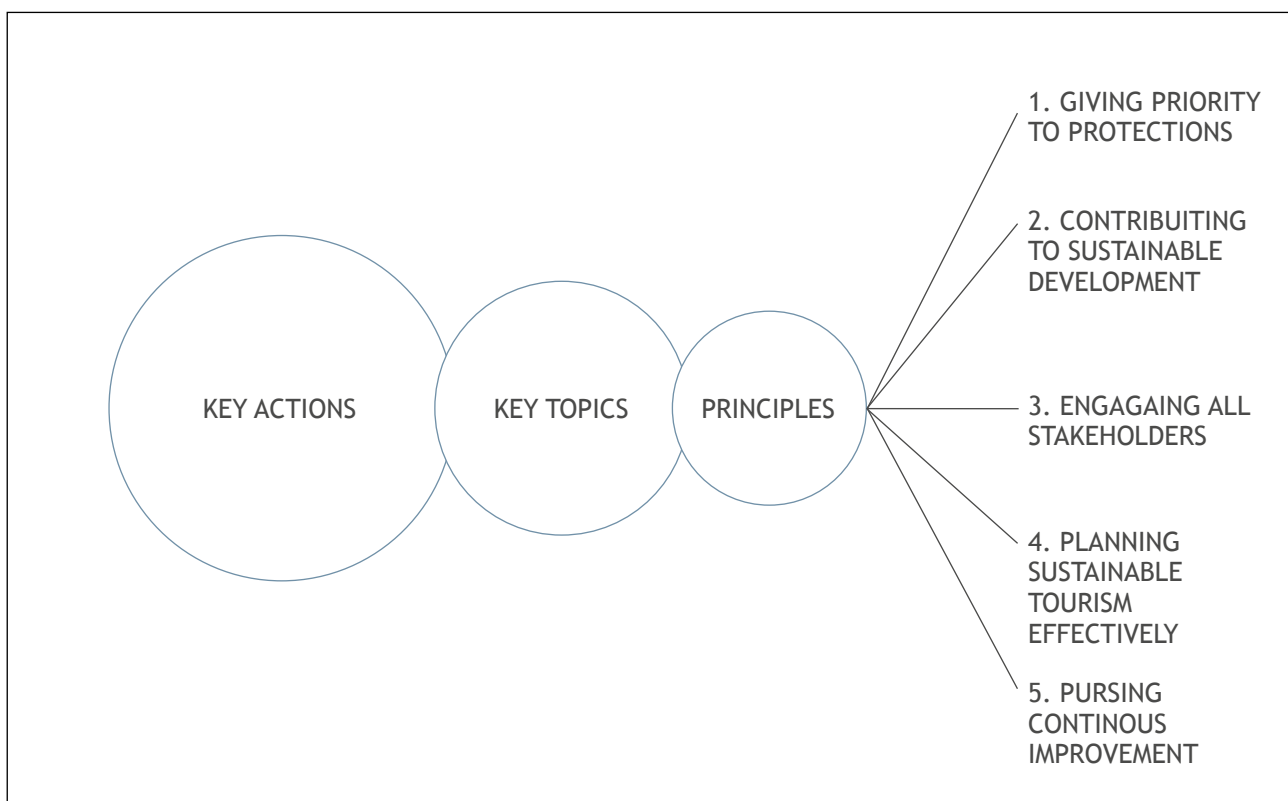


Fig. 1: Charter principles (www.euoparc.org).

4.4.1. Guidelines for the Participatory planning process²⁴

The main objective of the participatory planning process is to establish a consulting body involving main stakeholders in the PA's decision-making processes and Action Plan development and implementation.

The crucial scenes of the participation are the "local forums". A forum involves stakeholders that are interested in the development of the tourism in the area. These are local communities, local authorities, institutes, ministries, tourism service providers, tourist associations and external experts, SMEs, local guides, etc. Stakeholders and their involvement in the decision-making process are the main driving forces behind the successful sustainable tourism development.

The meetings are usually conducted by specialists in communication and group collaboration (facilitators), who make use of a number of consolidated collaboration techniques such as:

²⁴ Capacity Building Workplan for Protected Areas, May 2018 CEETO Project (www.ceeto-network.eu)



Brainstorming	Metaplan	Nominal Group
World Cafe	Focus Group	Ideas Factory
Photo voice	Goal oriented project planning	Critical accident

Despite of the selected meeting technique, in order to design an effective and timesaving participatory planning process, each manager should answer the following questions:

1. Is the goal of the process clear and understandable to everyone?
2. What are the interests affected by the results of the process and who is representing those interests?
3. What kind of conflicts/alliances can/should the process bring forth?

In order to answer these questions, each manager must have a clear understanding about the level of involvement/commitment of the stakeholders and what kind of participatory planning process should be implemented to reach the goal.

Before involving the local community in the participatory planning process, the Protected Area managers should define the expected results. It is also important to outline an understandable message to the potential stakeholders, keeping in mind that most of them are not familiar with technical or scientific terminology. The potential stakeholder might take part in the participatory planning process only when he/she understands that the goal is interesting for him/her. When the goal is clear it is easier to avoid confusion and false expectations.

Managing a participatory planning process means to create a favourable discussion. The result of the participatory planning process should be the integration of convergences between the mission of the PA and the interests of the local community. Some conflicts between stakeholders cannot be solved inside the process itself. Too many conflicts might undermine the whole process, shifting the focus from the goal of the process to the reason of the conflict. On the other side, a participatory planning process can create or enhance positive alliances, based on convergences of interests. Drawing a map of explicit or latent conflicts and alliances can anticipate obstacles, threats and enlighten opportunities.

The Capacity Building Work plan (CBW), successfully implemented within the CEETO project, aims to support the management bodies of Protected Areas in the participatory planning process to define the local Sustainable Tourism Action Plan, supplying them guidelines and methodological tools.

Thanks to its flexibility, this CBW allows the managers of each Protected Area to define their own tailored participatory planning process, according to their specific context, level of local stakeholder involvement and tourism monitoring needs and priorities. Five proposed Participatory Activities Sessions inspired by the European Awareness Scenario Workshop methodology (EASW) - successfully tested in many similar processes in Protected Areas contexts, such as European Charter for Sustainable Tourism (ECST) candidacy participatory processes - and adapted to the specific objectives of CEETO Project.



In the development of the CEETO Project, the participatory activities carried out to define the Protected Areas Sustainable Tourism Action Plans were implemented in a chronological order to reach the goal of the participatory planning process (tab.1):

Participatory Activities Sessions:

Sessions	Participatory Activities	Objectives
1	Establishing the Forum	Involve the community
2	Participatory Mapping	Know the territory and share information
3	Future Search	Imagine the tourism you want
4	Ideas Factory	Create possible solutions and alternatives
5	World Café	Define the Action Plan

Tab.1: Sequence of the participatory activities to reach the goal of the development of the shared Action.

4.4.2. Participatory planning session in eight PAs of the CEETO Project.

The facilitator records the results of each session. The starting session was opened with a clear presentation of the goals, program and the agenda of the participatory planning process.

The facilitator of the participatory planning process kept a “logbook” of the process itself to be published on the social media and/or the official website of the PA. To realize an effective participatory planning process, it is recommended to decide the agenda of the sessions together with participants.

Session 1: Establishing the Forum

The first step of the participatory planning process was the establishment of a local forum between the PA management body and the stakeholders, including local municipalities, conservation and community organizations/associations and representatives of the tourism businesses.

The objective was to involve the local community and to get them committed to the overall objective of the participatory planning process and the definition of the Sustainable Tourism Action Plan. Participants perceived the Forum as the place where they can express their needs, interests, hopes and fears towards the tourism development in their territory. The Forum should be a permanent link between the PA and the local community in the framework of sustainable tourism development.

Aside the Forum, the participatory planning process required the establishment of a small and operative Coordination Committee, including the representatives of the PA management, of the local authorities and a team of experts. The Coordination Committee is in charged for monitoring activities, facilitating the participation of the stakeholders, evaluating the outputs of each session and proposing possible corrections to the process.

Session 2: The Participatory Mapping

The Participatory Mapping (or Community Mapping) combines cartography with participatory methods to represent territorial knowledge of local communities.

Participatory Mapping is useful to define:

- the most precious/valuable area(s) to preserve and promote in the PA;
- the most vulnerable area(s) endangered by tourism pressure;
- the most relevant tourism flows that cross the PA.

Session 3: The Future Search

The Future Search methodology is an interactive planning activity that focuses on breaking down borders



between different, and maybe conflicting, interests, building alliances and spreading knowledge about common scenarios for the future. Participants were asked to imagine the future.

The Future Search is useful:

- to define the common vision that will underpin the whole Sustainable Tourism Action Plan, i.e. the basis of the Strategy and of the plan itself;
- to show negative/positive impacts of tourism flows on the PA.

Session 4: The Ideas Factory

The purpose of the Ideas Factory is drafting different potential answers to a common issue/problem or to take advantage of opportunities. Different ideas coming from stakeholders with different backgrounds and abilities can help to build a more effective and integrated Action Plans.

The Ideas Factory is useful:

- to define a first list of possible actions to include in the Sustainable Tourism Action Plan;
- to detail the Pilot Actions.

Session 5: The World Cafe

The World Cafe method is designed to create a collaborative environment for stakeholders to develop concrete actions and initiatives.

The World Cafe is useful:

- to define indicators, the time of implementation/monitoring and economic resources, possible partnerships of all the possible actions to be included in the Sustainable Tourism Action Plan;
- to present and discuss technical solutions to the problems/issues emerged.
- In case of one single action, the World Cafe should be organized in one single round, to define multiple aspects, including possible technical solutions, indicators related to the expected results, time for implementation, resources and possible partnerships. If the PA management has to define several actions, the World Cafe should be organized in multiple rounds.

4.5. Strategy and action plan guidelines

The development approach in any protected area (PA) is formalized in a development strategy (DS) document. It includes as a result of a participatory process among the stakeholders of the territory, whose approach of the CEETO Project has been described in the previous paragraph, the objectives, the definition of strategic priorities and ranking of the actions to be undertaken.

This chapter describes:

1. The basic principles that should be applied in the DS
2. The structure of the DS
3. The process of preparing a DS



4.5.1. Basic principles and intervention logic in the DS

Extensive consultation with a wide range of local actors and stakeholder groups is a precondition for development strategy (DS) planning and one important element of good governance within a targeted PA. To achieve this, the planning process must ensure continuous access to information for local stakeholders. The facilitators and the stakeholders responsible for administering the DS planning process (DS planning team) should:

- Consult the local community at all of the key stages in the preparation of the strategy
- Encourage cooperation among local partners
- Strive to communicate various milestones in the DS planning process in a simple, straightforward way
- Constantly try to increase the number of stakeholders participating in the planning process,
- And ensure transparency of all DS planning related processes by various publicity measures

The stakeholders in DS planning can include (this is not a full list)
▪ Businesses (agriculture, forestry, fisheries, service industry, manufacturing, etc.)
▪ Not for profit organizations in the civil sector (NGOs) e.g.: Local interest groups, environmental, sporting, church, women’s associations, alpine clubs, etc.
▪ Other representatives of villages and settlements
▪ Regional and micro-regional development councils
▪ Development agencies
▪ Mayors and municipalities
▪ Chambers of commerce and industry
▪ Committees of local governments
▪ Active citizens
▪ And non-members as well, for instance: local, regional, national media, higher education institutions, regional and central government bodies, etc.

The strategy may be divided into different priorities. It can contain several priorities such as community development, sustainable tourism development and others, and all priorities can have several individual strategies. An individual strategy answers the question “what to do in order to be competitive within this priority during the next programming period”. Usually the brainstorming sessions provide many answers to this question from which the PA stakeholders and management must then choose the most feasible ones. One of the essential roles that the strategic planning process (and local partners in the process) play is the selection or prioritization of the most feasible and effective ideas to be included in the strategy.

Strategies should focus on linkages between PA development actions: The main added value of the strategies is to be found in *the way in which these actions are implemented and linked together, both in and by local communities in the respective PA.*

Linkages and integration can be horizontal or vertical:

- In some strategies, partners will seek horizontal integration within the area, for example in deprived peri-urban neighbourhoods or in rural areas in PA
- In others the strategy may focus on vertical integration e.g. of different actors within a sector, supply chain or delivery chain
- Strategies should integrate different sustainable (i.e. economic, social, environmental) development approaches to a coherent multi-sectoral approach and support the overall long-term objectives in the areas concerned. Although the entry point may be a particular sector such as farmers or tourism, the strategy should not focus exclusively on it and should promote links with other sectors, as these



are necessary to foster long-term development of an area. Strategies should also be integrated as coherent links between actions or projects.

Strategies must have an ***innovative character***:

- Innovation can take many different forms (services, products, organization, social innovation, delivery, public sector innovation, open or user-led innovation, etc.). All these are valid in contributing to the innovative character of the strategy.
- Innovation should always be assessed in reference to the local situation, because an approach which is innovative in a certain place might already have been used somewhere else.

Cooperation and networking with other areas can be a key component of the strategy:

- Cooperation starts at local level in the partnership between the different sectors represented.
- Cooperation with other territories protected or not is a strategic tool that can be used by the PA management and stakeholders to reach the critical mass needed for some projects or to pool complementary resources and expertise.
- Networking is a tool to enable PA partnerships to benefit from the lessons from other experiences. Networks can also be organized on a voluntary basis and represent their members in negotiations with the management authorities at all levels.

There is a need to ensure ***coherence and consistency*** with existing national or regional strategies. The strategies should consider the ***principle of promotion of equality*** between men and women and non-discrimination, as well as sustainable development.

A special priority has to be given to ***monitoring arrangements*** for the strategy, as these will be crucial to ensure evidence of the successful achievement of the objectives set. In the EU, a majority of management bodies employ a structured monitoring approach, which is most frequently annual and focused on financial progress, which is reported to the Management Board.

There is a need for improved focus, planning and structuring of the approach to performance monitoring. PA management should have ***operational performance indicators*** aligned with quantified local development strategy objectives and targets. Any gaps should be addressed through training or guidance. As well as indicators for reporting physical achievement (set at programme level); there is a need for DS specific or additional indicators.

Linked to monitoring, the strategy should also foresee ***arrangements for its evaluation***. This refers to both evaluation and self-evaluation processes. Self-evaluation tends to be a specific approach targeted at the PA management work (strategy) only, while external evaluation of the strategy is linked to the evaluation requirements at programme level (i.e. national or regional) to which the PA have to contribute. The purpose in undertaking evaluation should be clear and reflect in its design the utilization of the outcomes. There is therefore a clearly indicated need for training, guidance, and relevant well-explained and signposted best practice examples.

The ***financial plan*** is an important tool to meet the ***objectives of the strategy***. It is needed to make the PA more accountable for the implementation of the strategy. At the moment of DS selection, a PA management should be able to plan for the availability of the indicative budgets indicated in the strategy, though these can be subject to revision.

Intervention logic of a development strategy

Intervention logic is the tool that is used to connect the detail of the DS to the development priorities (who to support what purpose). Locating the detail in the “big picture” makes the DS more transparent (why these actions are being taken), supports objective decision-making (why some projects should be supported and others not) and (by defining the key working parts) helps the PA management team to diagnose factors that are limiting the performance of the strategy. At the most basic level the intervention logic explains the resources that are used to achieve the objectives that meet the prioritized development needs. Three levels of objectives - operational, specific and overall - are usually defined to provide more detail on the working parts. In EU programming practices, these components of the intervention logic are called inputs, outputs, results and impacts.



4.5.2. Structure of the sustainable development strategy

The following headings are the key themes that can be presented in a full PA development strategy:

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
PUBLICITY MEASURES DURING DS PLANNING
THE STRATEGY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Description of the baseline situation ▪ The local stakeholder's perception of needs ▪ Analysis of development needs ▪ Vision and priorities ▪ Objectives ▪ The actions and measures that will be taken to achieve the objectives ▪ Measures ▪ Specific eligibility criteria and project selection criteria ▪ Input, output, result and impact indicators and targets
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PA management and stakeholders capacities for implementation ▪ Organizational structures ▪ Maintaining and developing partnerships ▪ Decision-making and administrative capacities ▪ Implementing measures ▪ Animation ▪ Support for project development ▪ Arrangements for transparent decision-making ▪ Financial plan ▪ Total budget allocation for the DS ▪ Budget allocation per measure ▪ Budget allocation per fund ▪ Running costs of the PA ▪ Financial management ▪ Monitoring, evaluation, revision ▪ Data gathering and utilization ▪ Analysis of relevant data ▪ Communication with beneficiaries supported ▪ On-going evaluation arrangements ▪ Revision of the DS - method and frequency
ANNEXES AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maps ▪ Project ideas submitted ▪ List of relevant strategic documents reviewed ▪ Minutes and a list of participants at major DS planning meetings ▪ Planning team membership form ▪ Statistics used



A more detailed description of some of the most important components are presented here:

Introduction and summary

This section in a DS describes the need for DS and its implementation in the PA; has an executive summary of the DS; describes the key publicity measures implemented during the DS planning process; includes a brief summary description of the linkages between development needs and themes and objectives identified; and summarizes the main implementation arrangements.

Description of the baseline situation

This section describes:

- General characteristics of the territory: Location, administration, geographical extent, area, population, key environmental, economic and social assets, problems and trends, the factors that make the area coherent;
- State of the environment, geography, land use patterns: Location, settlement structure, areas under environmental or nature protection, key environmental problems, dominant land use patterns (e.g. forestry, arable land, protected area, industrial utilization, etc.);
- Demography: population, age and gender structure, migration, economically active population, tendencies in the demographic change, population in towns and villages, population in less developed areas, ethnic composition and vulnerable socioeconomic groups;
- Economy: economic structure and trends, structure trends and the performance of the main sectors (e.g. agriculture, manufacturing, services, tourism), key employers, infrastructure, unemployment (rate, structure and trends), incomes and living standards;
- Infrastructure and utilities: roads and transport, communications, telecommunications, waste management, water supply, water treatment, heat;
- Public Services: social services, health care, labour exchange, law and order, safety;
- Social situation: education level of the population, provision of education and training, information, non-governmental organizations, communities and community life, level of activity of the local population, involvement in various initiatives, traditions to build on/preserve, culture, sports, leisure, etc.

For each of the above themes, the main problems/challenges and opportunities should be summarised. These can be prioritized during the preparation of the SWOT analysis and the definition of priority themes.

PA local community and stakeholder's perception of needs

This outlines the scope and methods of consulting the local stakeholders on their perception of development needs. Some examples of methods are structured interviews, questionnaire survey of community organizations etc.

Review of analysis of the situation presented in other development plans and strategies relevant for the PA or parts of it

Coherence with relevant regional, national or EU level development programming documents should be ensured, with special emphasis on the coherence with the objectives of the National PA Development Program and others.

Needs analysis

The needs analysis should include the following:

- An analysis of the information provided by the consultations with the local stakeholders;
- An analysis of the baseline situation and trends in relation to the needs and opportunities perceived by local stakeholders, supplemented with quantification where possible;
- A summary of the conclusions of the analysis of the situation;



The sources of the need's analysis are:

- Description of the baseline situation;
- Relevant statistical data;
- Data and analysis from other development plans and strategies;
- Consultation with local stakeholders (through focus groups, thematic working groups, questionnaires, public meetings, or web-based surveys).

SWOT analysis

The SWOT analysis should provide a bridge between the detail of the need's analysis and the definition of development priorities and help stakeholders take a systematic look at the characteristics of the DS area.

The DS planning team initially can perform the SWOT analysis, but for comprehensive and thorough analysis, the exercise should be repeated, and the results refined with the participation of a wider circle of local stakeholders.

The Strategy - from vision to measures

The hierarchy of vision-priority-objective-measure describes and frames the actions that are planned by the local action group to address the challenges identified in the description of the baseline situation and the needs analysis. The relevant sustainable development program and the PA regulation determine the scope of action defined in the objectives and measures.

Vision

The vision in the DS is a holistic description of the desired state of environmental, economic, and social condition of the area. It is the future state of the area which results from the realization of the DS and of which the PA management members and local stakeholders continuously strive to achieve.

Priorities

Priorities or priority themes are the development issues that the PA selects as the focus of their development activity in a specific timeframe.

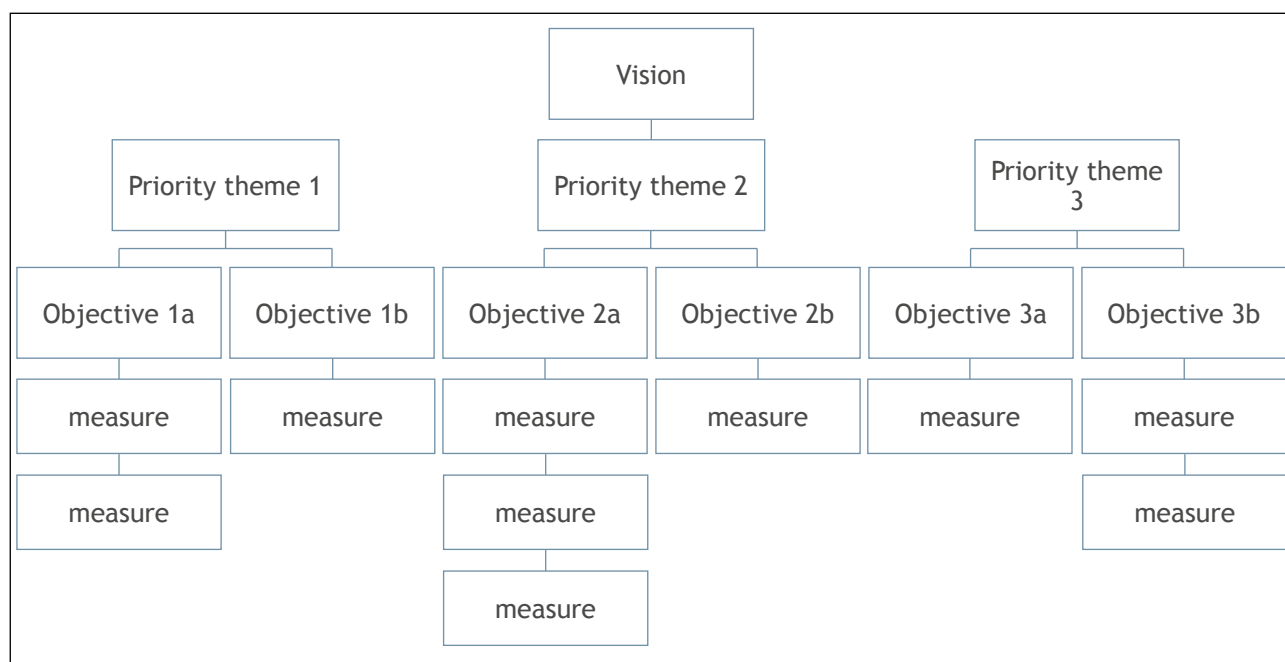


Fig.2: Local development strategy - a hierarchy of 4 levels.



Objectives

The objectives define how the implementation of the strategy will contribute to the achievement of the development priorities. They define what the community and PA stakeholders can expect from the development initiative. The indicators verifying achievement of the objectives must be SMART - specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (see also Ch.8.4.1 on CROSTO monitoring of sustainability in Croatia, as example of possible indicators). The description of each objective should provide information on its linkage to specific development needs identified during the analysis of needs stage and the way it contributes to meeting those needs.

Measures and actions

The most important components of a measure fiche include:

- Title of the measure in DS;
- Quantified outputs;
- Total public expenditure for measures;
- Minimum and maximum amount of support per project;
- Maximum aid intensity per type of beneficiary;
- Potential beneficiaries;
- Brief description of eligible activities;
- Supporting documents required from applicants;
- Eligible stakeholders and the area within PA.

4.5.3. The process of preparing a PA sustainable development strategy

Building up a participatory local development strategy (DS) is a process, where actors come together, hold meetings and talk about interests and needs in their area. Local media (newspapers, radio and TV channels) often prove very helpful partners in this regard. One person should be nominated to take notes of the strategy brainstorming sessions - preferably the same person will be in charge of editing the different parts of the strategy together (authors can be many).

DS planning sessions can include meetings with local stakeholders in the form of public meetings, (e.g. open meeting in a municipal or village centre), thematic or focus groups (maybe organized around some specific themes which only some specific stakeholder groups are interested in), or to prepare draft proposals, web-surveys or questionnaires, or media appearances.

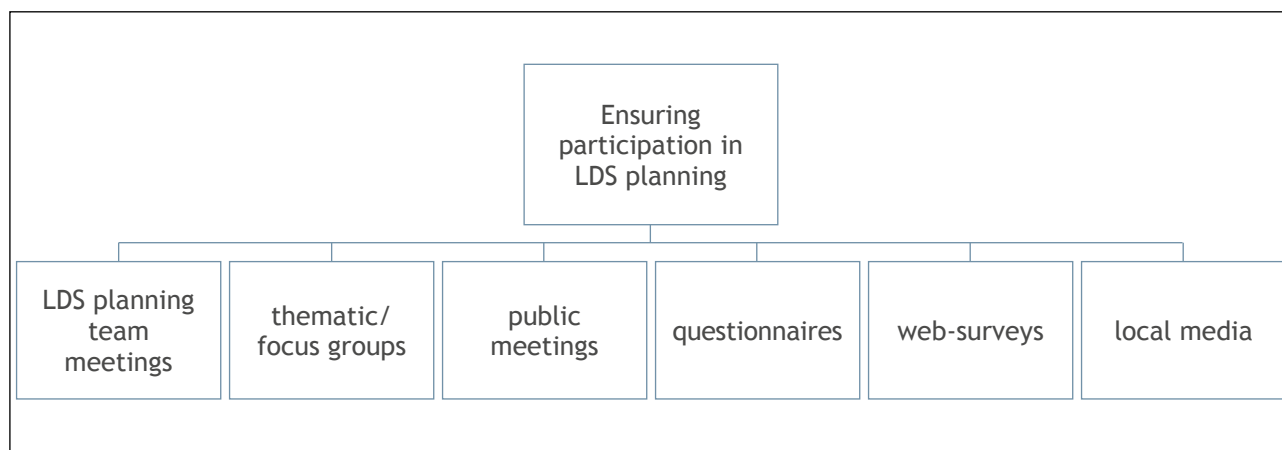


Fig.3: Methods of ensuring publicity in an LDS planning process.



Components and phases in the preparation of a PA sustainable DS

DS planning can be divided into two key components: Planning the PA Sustainable Development Strategy; and planning the implementation of the PA Sustainable Development Strategy. The Fig.4 shows these two key components, their parts, and the logical (not time schedule!) relationships among them.

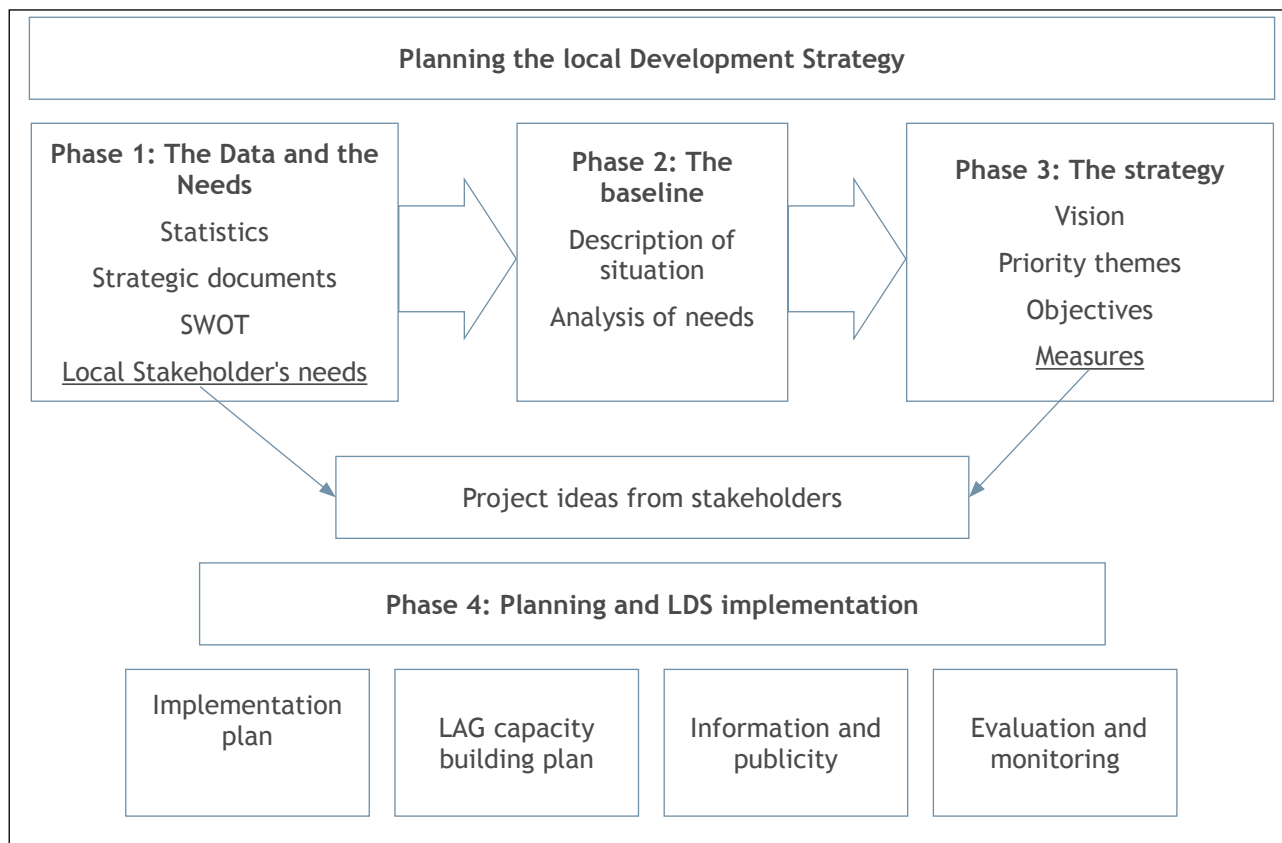
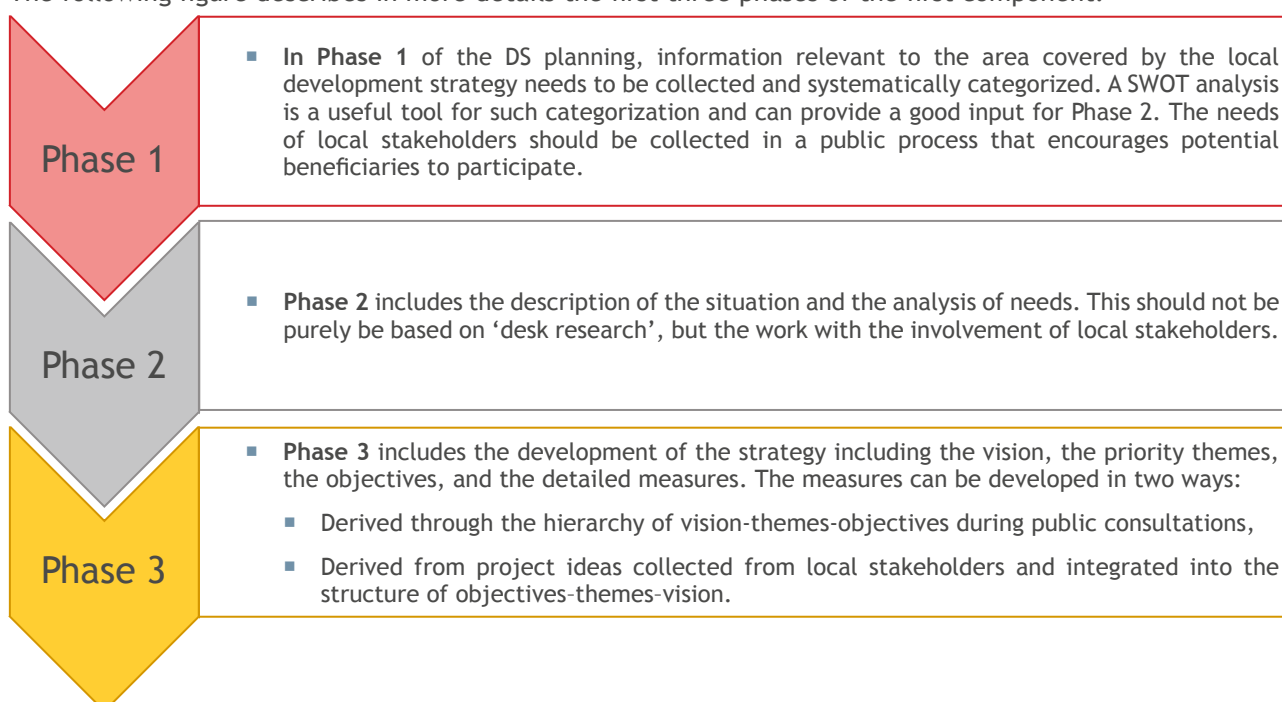


Fig.4: Key components of LDS planning.

The following figure describes in more details the first three phases of the first component.





5. PLANNING/MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING TOOLS

This inventory presents tourist flows planning/management/monitoring tools and success stories for the development of sustainable tourism taken from the experiences of different Protected Areas in Europe²⁵.

It addresses the managers of Protected Areas (local, regional or national public entities, competent agencies) and their stakeholders such as NGOs, research centres and universities or SMEs that might be interested in the interconnection between environmental and biodiversity conservation and development of sustainable tourism strategies.

5.1. Choice of the methodology

First, it is important to clarify some concepts, distinguishing between "surveys" and "monitoring". In the first case it is a matter of "investigating a condition", at a certain moment, presumably for the first time, to define a state of affairs on the basis of which political and governance decisions are taken. With the term "monitoring", instead, we assume a continuous evaluation or a set of individual investigations, repeated over time.

The definition of the monitoring objectives is very important, because each objective may involve a different mix of techniques. After the definition of the objectives we have to define which issues are necessary to monitor, what's the best place (or places) to acquire data, who/what should be monitored, what set of information is required, how and how often to acquire data and so on. When choosing the type of monitoring, the costs should not be overlooked.

Tools identified below are a mix of well-consolidated methods, which have been used for many years, and innovative methods. The following synoptic scheme can be considered as a starting point, which can be further enhanced and developed by introducing other techniques or transformations of the existing ones.

5.2. Methodologies identified

In this section, a short summary of the identified methodologies aimed at monitoring tourism flows in PAs.

St. Gallen Method

The St. Gallen Method allows to analyse the strategic flows of visits starting from the knowledge of the local stakeholders which describe and draft on maps (subsequently combined and overlapped) the routes preferred by tourists and, as a consequence, tourist products that they seek in the territory.

Car counting

This method is based on counting cars passing through established "check points" and helps to know the level of traffic within a given area, as well as how the level varies over a period.

In order to implement this methodology, counting tools are needed (pyroelectrics, tickets, parking lots, video cameras with VCA²⁶, photocells).

People counting

This method is based on counting people passing through established "check points" and enables to know how many people enter a certain area, as well as how the level varies over a period.

To implement this methodology counting tools are required (pyroelectric, pressure, optical, infrared or magnetic meters, entrance tickets, video cameras, turnstiles).

²⁵ Inventory of planning/management/monitoring tools and success stories for sustainable tourism in PAs, Feb 2018 - CEETO Project (www.ceeto-network.eu/)

²⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Video_content_analysis.



Telephone cells (big-data analysis)

This method is based on big data. They are, usually collected by telephone cells and analysed to obtain information about the movement of visitors within the Protected Area. A geo-referenced database provided by a telephone operator is required to implement this technique. The personal data must be managed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (EU) 2016/679 and an important data elaboration by service providers is required to extract the useful information, so generally these data are relatively expensive.

Interview

This is one of the most commonly used methods because it is cheap and it allows having specific information about the visitor. The analysed sample is obviously a very restricted subset of the whole PA users. For this method it is sufficient to have a voice recorder.

Survey

Like interviews, it is one of the most commonly used methods when it is necessary to collect visitors' preferences in order to apply appropriate management strategies. This technique can be realized it online or live, thus either internet forms or paper surveys are needed.

GPS Tracking

This method has become more widespread because it allows to “follow” (tracking) visitors inside the Park, and gain knowledge about the favourite routes and the most visited places. GPS tracker devices are required in order to use this technique. However, due to the presence of a GPS inside each Smartphone, a proper App of the protected areas that, in return for useful information, record the GPS data of the users while they move within the Protected Area itself could be an option. In addition, there are now worldwide freely accessible anonymous data from GPS positioning of smartphones (Strava Heat Map).

Social Media

The use of the large amount of data and information that can be provided by Social Media is one of the methodologies that are most successful because it allows managers to know trends, preferences and behaviour of visitors in a very easy way by checking what they post on the web.

Statistical models

Statistical models are a set of statistical tools, more or less elaborated, and used to obtain and estimate the object of study.

Focus Group

The focus group is a useful technique to deepen a theme or particular aspects of a topic, interviewing a homogeneous group of people.

Video camera

Using cameras at the entrance of the Parks or at some focal points may be useful to gather information about the number, flow and behaviour of visitors within the Area.

For this methodology, camcorders and, if available, frame analysis (or video-Analysis) software are required, which would otherwise have to be done manually by an operator.

Bioacoustics

Bioacoustics is a branch of zoology, strictly related to ethology, that investigates sound production and reception in animals, including man, and how animals communicate by means of sound.



To implement this technique is necessary:

- Microphone/hydrophone
- Recorder
- Computer with dedicated software to elaborate (filter) sounds













 St. Gallen Method allows to analyse the strategic flows of visits	 Car counting counting cars passing through established "check points"	 Car counting counting cars passing through established "check points"	 Telephone cells obtain information on the movements that visitors make
 Interview it allows to have specific information on visitors	 Survey it allows to have specific information on visitor	 GPS to "follow" visitors inside the Park	 Social Media to know trends, preferences and behaviours of visitors
 Statistical models to obtain an estimate of tourist flows when there are not all the information available	 Focus Group to deepen a theme or particular aspects of a topic	 Video camera to gather information about the number, flow and behaviour of visitors	 Bioacoustic investigates sound production and reception in animals, including man and detect their presence

Fig.5: Table of monitoring tools.

The choice of the method best suited to our needs must take into account many aspects: technical, economic, management, etc. For each of the identified methods, fig.6 describes through icons, the parameters of:

1. **Complexity** - difficulty in implementing the method;
2. **Profiling** - ability of the method to profile tourists;
3. **Data Quality** - ability of the method to obtain qualitatively reliable data (whether qualitative or quantitative);
4. **Possible Combination** - ability of the method to combine with other monitoring methodologies;
5. **Flexibility** - ability of the method to adapt to specific local needs;



Tool	Complexity	Profiling	Data quality	Possible combination	Flexibility
St. Gallen Method					
Car counting					
Person counting					
Telephone cells					
Interview					
Surveys					
GPS					
Social media					
Statistical models					
Focus group					
Video camera					
Bioacoustic					

Legend:

Very easy to do High level of profiling, data quality, accuracy and flexibility	Easy to do Good level of profiling, data quality, accuracy and flexibility	Quite easy to do Medium level of profiling, data quality, accuracy and flexibility	Difficult to do Low level of profiling, data quality, accuracy and flexibility	Very difficult to do A bad level of profiling, data quality, accuracy and flexibility

Fig.6: Evaluation of monitoring tools for profiling, quality of data, for combination with other tools, flexibility and its complexity.

6. GENERAL REVIEW OF CEETO PROJECT CASE STUDIES

CEETO project cases include protected areas from five countries in Central Europe: Sölktäler Nature Park and UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Salzburger Lungau (Austria); Nature Park Medvednica (Croatia); UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Southeast-Rügen (Germany); Regional Park of the Po Delta, Appennino Modenese Regional Park and Appennino Tosco Emiliano National Park (Italy) and Strunjan Landscape Park (Slovenia). The eight protected areas involved in the CEETO project started with developing a process aimed at elaborating a Sustainable Tourism Action Plans (capacity building and participatory process). Following specific managing and monitoring tools defined in their Action plans were implemented locally.

Based on the reports done by each protected area, a summary of implemented monitoring activities and achieved results was created. In the following chapters, one will find assessment studies; one was done by an external expert and the second internal evaluation through structured interviews and questionnaires delivered to protected areas stakeholders. Furthermore, each protected area is unique, possessing particular characteristics, confronting specific limitations and environmental problems and revealing different opportunities thus requiring specific attention. Therefore, to select best practices from each protected area it is important to choose the most appropriate approach.

6.1. Emilia-Romagna Region: Po Delta Regional Park

Monitoring Activities

The “Analysis of the strategic visitors’ flows” was chosen according to the St. Gallen method. This technique responds to the need to know the characteristics of the existing tourist flows in the area of the Cervia Salt Pan and the Mesola Woods, in order to better manage them, reducing their impact, encouraging better distribution throughout the Park (even to those areas that are almost unknown) and throughout the year.

This methodology was also supported by a phase of data collection, especially through visitors to the Visitor Centres and the collection of questionnaires about the characteristics of the tourist.

Within the Pilot Action design phase, they forecasted two kind of monitoring activities.

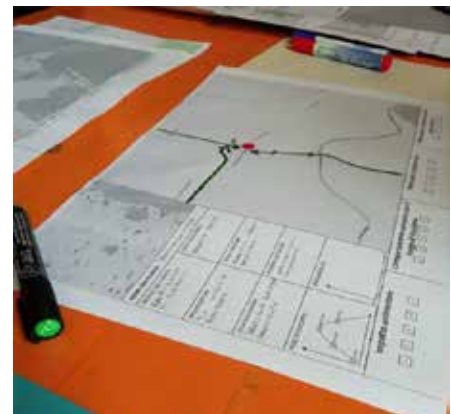


Fig.7: Analysis of strategic tourist flows. Archive: Po Delta Regional Park.

For the first monitoring activity in 2018:

1. Analysis of strategic visitor flows with local stakeholders related to tourism activity;
2. Questionnaires collection during the month of July for a first tourist profiling;
3. Data collection available to have a picture of the seasonality. In 2018, the various Visitor Centres were asked to send them the data available at that time and they each presented themselves in different ways (the monthly or annual data, a cumulative data or data divided between normal entries and students, for example, etc.).

For the second monitoring activity in 2019:

1. Daily data from Visitor Centres between March and September 2019 to have a complete view of the seasonality of visitor flows in visitor centres during the monitoring period. In 2019, they structured an ad hoc data collection module for all Visitor Centres, to have a consistent and comparable data in different periods. The module will also be used by the Visitor Centres after the end of the CEETO project.
2. Questionnaires were collected all year long to build on the first phase of collecting questionnaires in 2018, thus improving the knowledge about tourists who visits the territory of the PA.



Achieved Results

1. Touristic pressure reduction

With respect to the purpose of the project, it was not feasible to identify real effects in terms of environmental impacts reduction. However, as part of the pilot action an important social communication campaign was carried out, through the Facebook and Instagram pages of the Po Delta Biosphere Reserve on the correct behaviour in a protected area, with the aim of creating (or raising) tourist awareness. About 600'000 people were reached and the post received about 330'000 clicks. It worked better on Instagram (between 70 and 80%) than on Facebook.

2. Tourist experience improvement

The Commission's proposal for a Directive on the tourist experience improvement can be mentioned in two main actions:

- The first refers to the creation of information panels at the Fossil Dunes of Massenzatica. These tools, in fact, are essential to ensure a correct and complete enjoyment of the area and to understand the significance and value of this geomorphologic uniqueness.
- The process to improve the coordination between the Visitor Centres, to ensure uniform communication and information throughout the Park's territory. The objectives were that each Visitor Centres has the same base level of:
 - information about the peculiarities of the Park;
 - improving the quality of the information given to the tourists;
 - giving the operators the ability to advise tourists about the most suitable places to visit.

3. Socio-Economic Benefits

The socio-economic benefits cannot be concretely calculated within the pilot action because the period analysed was not long enough. However, important repercussions in terms of awareness and participation of local stakeholders have already been evident during the organized workshops. The Visitor Centre managers who have also been involved in other activities have understood the important repercussions that CEETO can have on the territory if the five-year Strategy and the Action Plan are carried out and implemented. Awareness that has been capitalized with ECTS. In fact, among the socio-economic effects connected to the CEETO project there is the application process for the European Charter of Sustainable Tourism that has allowed to create an important public-private involvement on the territory of the two Regional Parks of the Po Delta.

Within this path 91 projects have been collected, from more than 20 different subjects, where 60% are public, 30% private, and the restorative mixed public-private. The activities in the ECST Action Plan as a whole have a capacity target of over €30 million spread over all 5 years. Some of the actions incorporated in the ECTS Action plan are New Salt Pans Cycle Path; Renewal of the Park posters; Getting to know the Po Delta Park; Personal training Park and Visitor Centres and Analysis of strategic flows of visit.

6.2. Emilia-Romagna Region: High Modenese Apennine Regional Park and Salse di Nirano Natural Reserve

Monitoring Activities

The two pilot areas have different characteristics and criticalities and, therefore, the monitoring activities implemented in the two pilot actions have provided for different approaches and systems.

In the **Lago Santo Modenese** area, the monitoring objective concerned:

- The promotion of sustainable forms of accessibility, to reduce traffic congestion;
- Usage of the parking and the Info Point.

The monitoring activities results are:

1. As regards the reduction of car access at the Lago Santo car park, it will be confirmed by the number of tickets issued by parking meters for a parking fee (which will be compared with data from past summer seasons);
2. The evaluation of the number of people, who will benefit from the alternative routes, will be based on the e-bike rental data, on the number of people transported by the shuttles, and an estimation of the number of hikers who will use the reopened hiking path that joins Tagliole to Lago Santo.

The purpose of the monitoring at the **Salse di Nirano**, was aimed at improving the knowledge of the managing authorities and planning suitable activities to steer the behaviour of visitors.

To the purpose of both:

1. Monitoring the presence of excursionist in the area;
2. Monitoring the main threats to the integral protection zone by fence crossing excursionists;
3. Planning the right counter measures, using a multi-Video Cameras system. The need was to implement a system able to automatically identify, distinguish and count vehicles (cars, bikes and motorbikes), pedestrians and animals. Another purpose of the system was to acquire as much data as possible to document the main factors of threat to the Reserve arising from poor or incorrect use even by visitors, in support of possible defence actions, to empower the existing ones.

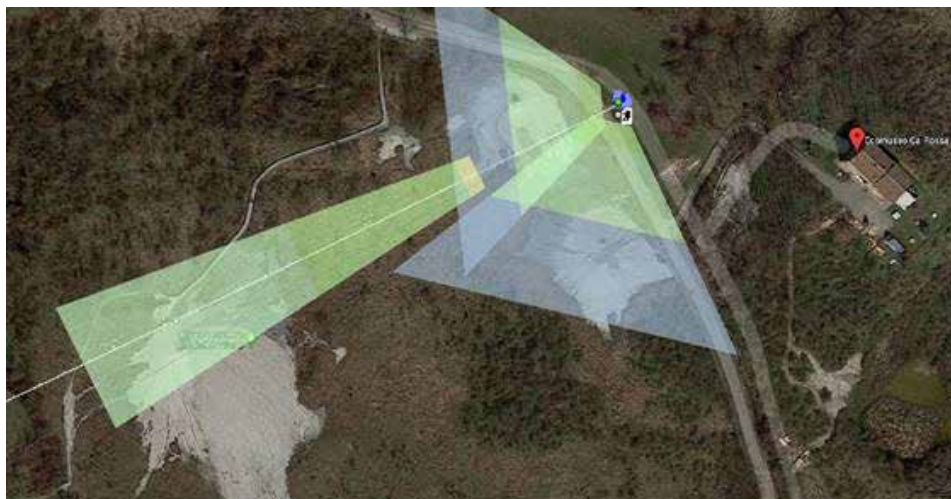


Fig.8: Video Content Analysis (VCA) system that monitors transits along the access road. Archive: Emilia Centrale Park authority.

Achieved Results

In both pilot actions, the overall evidence gathered through these monitoring systems constitutes the basis for the implementation of the activities foreseen in the five-year Action Plan. The data acquired at **Lake Santo Modenese** will be used to replicate and improve the initiative experimented in the summer period in collaboration with the Municipality of Pievepelago. Through the implemented monitoring system, it was possible to:

- Encourage sustainable forms of accessibility instead of the car;
- Acquire a better knowledge of the characteristics, choices and degree of awareness of visitors;
- Make visitors responsible for their own behaviour in the Park, through adequate information on the correct rules of conduct.

The data acquired at the **Salse di Nirano Natural Reserve**, allowed the Managing Authority to identify the weakest points of the fence system. It will be possible to study a suitable signage that tries to dissuade intrusion actions and then monitor, with the same tool of VCA, if the number of intrusions or the points of intuition are actually reduced.



1. *Touristic pressure reduction*

With regard to the pilot area of **Lake Santo Modenese**, the Pilot Action Indicators and future targets forecasted for the closure of the Pilot Action (September 2019) are as follows:

- Total number of shuttle passengers per direction of travel;
- Length of the route served by shuttle bus;
- Average journey time by shuttle bus;
- Average journey time by car, with reference to August 2018.

The quantitative data acquired from the day of installation (19/07/2019) and elaborated by the VCA system, using state-of-the-art Artificial Intelligence algorithms, include the following data:

- Daily (weekly, monthly, etc.) number of people on foot, bicycle, motorbike, horse, etc. and number of cars travelling along the Municipal Road “Via Rio Salse”, near the locality of Cà Rossa (location of one of the two Visitor Centres of the Reserve), with distinction between ascending (from valley to mountain) or descending (from mountain to valley) route and aggregation of the hourly, daily, weekly, monthly and overall data over the entire monitoring period;
- Heat Map of the routes of the tourists/hikers of Zone A of the Reserve (considering the maximum surface area that can be framed by a single position of installation of the cameras), with aggregation of daily, weekly, monthly and total data over the entire monitoring period;
- Number and statistical data (duration, route, etc.), on the overriding of physical barriers (fences) and invasion of the areas of mud-bursting volcanoes, forbidden to access and trample;
- Video in “Time Lapse” mode of the framed areas (minimum sampling of 1 image every 5'-10'), for the seasonal evolutionary reconstruction of the landscape and of the morphologies of the mud-bursting apparatus (mud volcanoes).

Analysis of the data, from reported daily statistics of overcoming physical barriers (recognized by the three cameras), can confirm that the phenomena is quite frequent. The highest number of overshoots was recorded by camera 3, the one pointing to the most distant apparatus. The cause of this could be the visibility of the cameras in areas 1 and 2 while in area 3, being far from the cameras, probably leads people to think they are not “observed”. To get more details and to exploit the power of the VCA, the frequentation and intrusions from the heat maps, which are overlapping, on the real image, of a semi-transparent colour scale were analysed. Colour scale from blue to brown colour, gives the double information of position and frequency/time of people and vehicles on a certain area. It was possible to highlight: 1) the overriding points mostly used by offenders; 2) the position of walking/stay inside the Zone A of the reserve. The first points are those where the managing authorities can strengthen the dissuasive plates or more precise indications to the footbridge access to the area.

2. *Tourist experience improvement*

For the area of Lake Santo in Modena, it is strategic to share the results of the monitoring with all the local stakeholders, i.e. the Municipality; in order to understand how to implement actions in a more structured way. The promotion of alternative accessibility systems should have significant impact on the reduction of private motor vehicles. The idea is to replicate and improve the initiative implemented in the summer period in collaboration with all stakeholders and with the Municipality of Pievepelago.

For the area of Salse di Nirano, it was essential to understand if it is possible to replicate the experimentation of the VCA NEMOS system (Nature reserve Monitoring System) and the location, as a system for acquisition data about the use and possible threats that may occur in protected area.

3. *Socio-Economic Benefits*

The promotion of alternative accessibility systems in the pilot area Santo Lake should have a significant impact on the reduction of private motor vehicles.

In the pilot area of **Salse di Nirano**, the monitoring has allowed to identify the weakest points of the fence system and those that are statistically more used by the intruders. In the future it will be possible to study a suitable signage that tries to dissuade intrusion actions and then monitor, with the same tool of VCA, if the number of intrusions or the points of intuition are reduced or changed. In the area of Salse di Nirano the tested monitoring system can be replicated in other protected areas.

6.3. Emilia-Romagna Region: Tosco-Emiliano Apennine National Park

Monitoring Activities

Pilot Actions Pietra di Bismantova:

- Assess monitoring with shuttle buses;
- Assess monitoring with a payment parking area;
- Tourist monitoring with questionnaires;
- Collection of data;
- Data analysis;
- Evaluation of the results with the aim of reducing the vehicle access and increase sustainable behaviour of tourists.

Pilot actions Lagdei Plain:

- open days;
- Assess monitoring with shuttle buses;
- Assess monitoring with a payment parking area;
- Tourist monitoring with questionnaires;
- Collection of data;
- Data analysis;
- Evaluation of the results with the aim of reducing the vehicle access and increase sustainable behaviours of tourists.

For the **Lagdei plain**, a surveillance service by the local police was established during summer 2018. They monitored car parking and provided some penalty measures. In summer 2019, it was not possible to repeat the same action due to lack of human resources.

For the **Pietra di Bismantova** a payment parking area with a service of “light” surveillance at the entrance of the parking area, by some volunteers was established during summer 2018.

At the end of the monitoring season, collected data about the visitors’ profile are detailed as follow.

Activities done by the visitors refer mainly to finding relaxing places, being in contact with nature and the environment, where it’s also possible to do outdoor/sports activities, with a special focus on walking, in both pilot areas. According to the questionnaires, there are three main reasons for visiting both areas:

- vacation and spending time in nature;
- relaxation and fun;
- sports activities.

There are also other reasons for visiting Pietra di Bismantova, for example cultural and religious aspects, while for the Lagdei plain spending time with family and friends and the eno-gastronomy. In Pietra di Bismantova, climbing is a very important and religious aspect regarding visits of the local Sanctuary and meditation. It is interesting to know that the economic convenience is neither a reason for coming to the Pietra the Bismantova nor to the Lagdei plain.

The monitoring showed that many visitors come only for one day and almost half of them know these sites very well because they visited more than 5 times. The results of data underline that the main visitors in both pilot areas were couples, groups of friends and family with children.



Fig.9: Pietra di Bismantova. Archive: Willy Reggioni.



Personal cars are the main form of transport. The low percentage of use of public transports underlines the difficulty to go to the Pietra di Bismantova and Lagdei plain without private transportation. However, at the same time it confirms the needs of the shuttle buses as alternative means of transports. Collected data about the shuttle buses and the incomes from the parking payment system confirmed the trend of the high touristic flows in summer with the highest peak in August in both the pilot areas.

The survey showed that most of the visitors know that they are inside a protected area and that they have to maintain some particular behaviours. This confirms work done in the last 15 years in building the identity of the Tosco-Emiliano Apennine National Park.

Achieved Results

The acquired data will be used as the reference to decide whether these kinds of actions could continue or not and eventually what should be modified.

1. Touristic pressure reduction

The results have been compared with the comments and needs acquired during the workshop on the spot organized at the beginning of the project. The survey confirmed that cars are the main form of transport and the needs of the shuttle buses as alternative means of transports. The total amount of people confirms that such activities are required, especially if compared with all the negative comments regarding the illegal parking along the main road access.

One interesting finding that emerged about Pietra di Bismantova was that many people knew about the shuttle bus service but only a low percentage used it, while few people did not have the information about it but would have used it.

2. Tourist experience improvement

As seen from other sources (such as the registered overnights in the local accommodations) the data confirmed that visitors are mainly residents and excursionists. They usually spend one day in the pilot areas and are mainly doing open-air activities. The goal is to encourage visitors to stay more days.

The level of satisfaction, hospitality and accommodation services was ranged very high for both the pilot areas.

The challenge is also to use the ECST and the UNESCO Biosphere Reserves network, to improve the number of sustainable tourists not only in the pilot areas, but in general in the Tosco-Emiliano Apennine National Park and in the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. Based on the collected data, there is still a small part of visitors, who are not conscious of sustainability. Despite this fact, it seems that the website and social media channels of the National Park are the most common tools used by visitors to get information about the area.

In general, visitors complain about the payment of parking in both areas, and also complain about the illegal parking, and are asking for some parking management.

3. Socio - Economic Benefits

The money received from the payment parking spaces, will be used for maintenance services. The Lagdei plain, has confirmed the needs to manage the accesses and the parking payment. The alternative way of reaching the area must be implemented. That is how collected data will be used also as reference to improve the other activities of the action plan.

As already declared by the Municipality of Castelnovo ne' Monti the data acquired in 2019 will be used as comparative data for the actions and activities foreseen in 2020 at the Pietra di Bismantova. The parking payment system and the shuttle bus are considered good experiences in 2019 and there is the willingness to reapply them next year.

Regarding Lagdei plain, there is a will, for next summer, to improve the shuttle bus service not only from "Cancelli" bus stop, but also from the village of Bosco di Corniglio. It will be financed also from the parking payment system.

6.4. Sölktaier Nature Park

Monitoring Activities

The main purpose of the monitoring activities was to evaluate the human impact in the region on leading endangered species of several sensitive habitats (div. grouse species) and to find the relative frequency in the different valleys using visitors counting.

For the monitoring of visitors, was planned to install four light barriers. The counting serves as a basis for an annual comparison as well as a numerical comparison with the visitor counting of the valleys within the Nature Park and with the numbers of Schladming-Dachstein.

To get some information about tourism activities in winter it was also planned to observe the frequency of ski tours over winter by mapping ski tracks, but due to the high snow conditions and the avalanche situation in winter 2018/19, this activity was not carried out. An alternative way to get data about visitor frequencies was data from the summit books.

Short-term measures included in ongoing monitoring was focused on the impact of people/tourists on the environment and wildlife. This included on-site inspections in summer as well as in winter, using the Swarovski spotting scope. This type of observation allows determining the effects on a very large area. One of the goals was also to determine the current habitat for the two "mountain chickens" black grouse and ptarmigan in order to exclude negative developments. These species serve as indicator of species in alpine habitats. To get the knowledge of the habitat quality for different species, habitat models were developed. The information of landowners and hunters were gathered to prepare a map of wildlife rest areas. In addition to the habitat models, selected areas were visited to find evidence of presence or absence and to verify the model.



Fig.10: Evaluation of summit books in Nature Park Sölktaier to estimate the frequency of different trails/routes. Archive: Nature Park Sölktaier.

For the research of motivation of guests in Sölktaier Nature Park, placemats were created and delivered to restaurants and alpine huts.

Achieved Results

1. Touristic pressure reduction

The monitoring data of tourists, skiers and populations of wildlife animals are essential to keep and steer the guests towards the right trails and routes. Since the touristic pressure in the nature park is still low and will automatically increase in the next years, the area in the park can be planned spatially now for the future. This is much more efficient than trying to regulate an already high and unguided touristic stream.

2. Tourist experience improvement

The knowledge of tourists about the importance of alpine meadows, their preservation, sensitive habitats and the need of wildlife animals, was permanently improved. At the manual counting station at St. Nikolai, people were informed, and it was discussed with them (2018). Placemats were made to receive information for tourists and about their motivations. The two folders ("Ski tours" and "hiking and alpine huts") gave much information about the nature park, correct behaviour to decrease human impacts and to raise awareness for preservation. The workshops for inhabitants increased their knowledge about nature and they became ambassadors of the nature park and its concerns.

3. Socio-Economic Benefits

Socio-Economic benefits were mainly expected from the workshops for locals. They learnt about their environment, how to protect and how to present it to tourists. Socio-economic awareness will be presumably generated also from our summer -folder that tries to guide tourists to the alpine huts. In addition, the winter folders which were disseminated in the whole region (Schladming - Dachstein), can attract tourists and train their environmentally friendly behaviour. Generally, the implementation of the management plan with the aims of raising awareness of the locals and support the preservation of the alpine meadows will

give a significant input for socio-economic benefits of the region. In general, the results of the entire data (quantitative from visitor counting, bird population; qualitative from questionnaires) will be interpreted and will serve as basis for the target-performance comparison of the five-year strategy for nature preservation for socio-economic benefits for the locals.

6.5. Biosphere Reserve Salzburger Lungau

Monitoring Activities

The planned monitoring based on a visitor survey using standardized questionnaires in the Preber area and the comparison of traffic data from the Salzburg Transport Association. The interviewees for the survey were randomly selected. Among them were both locals and guests. The survey was conducted in summer of 2018 (starting point) and repeated in summer of 2019 (review of the impact of the measures taken).



Fig. 11: Prebersee area.
Archive: Biosphere Reserve Salzburger Lungau.

The aim of the survey was, on one hand, to determine the situation in the Preber area (number of private cars, usage of public transport system, under what circumstances conceivable) and, on the other hand, to obtain more information about the current awareness and knowledge of the visitors regarding the Biosphere Reserve.

Survey implemented in summer of 2019 served to check the level of changes compared to the previous year, both in terms of the use of public transport and the level of knowledge and information about the biosphere reserve.

Monitoring activities in the Preber area regarded:

1. The number of persons using public transport service;
2. The results of the surveys regarding the arrival of visitors, reasons for the (non-) use of the offer, as well as their satisfaction with the offer and the willingness to use public transport.

Achieved Results

1. Touristic pressure reduction

Since it was not possible to implement the planned actions, an increase of 10% in the use of public transport was not achieved. Actions such as parking space management and expansion of the bus service will be put into the test phase in the summer 2020 and will be implemented in the coming years.

2. Tourist experience improvement

First steps to experience the biosphere as a destination have been made. With the event “Day of open Door” and the kick-off event, first steps were made. With the summer and winter brochure for the Preber area, visitors were provided with all the interesting information about the area. Currently, a 3D map is in preparation for the Preber area and the entire Biosphere Reserve, as well as an interactive map to communicate the Biosphere Reserve with all its variety to guests and locals, thus increasing awareness and knowledge. Furthermore, the basics are being surveyed in order to make the Biosphere Reserve a real destination and to convey the idea and philosophy to locals and tourists through appropriate offers.

3. Socio-Economic Benefits

Public awareness was increased, by dissemination of the information about the Lungau biosphere and the region, local producers and agriculture, and sustainable tourism. These first steps must now be pursued further in order to further expand the socio-economic benefits.

6.6. UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Southeast-Rügen

Monitoring Activities

Following monitoring activities were implemented in the summer of 2018 and lasted until the end of the pilot action period in mid-October 2019:

1. Installation of electronic people counters (light-barrier sensors) at the two main entrances of the Zicker Berge, to be able to monitor the visitor flows into and out of the area
2. Manual visitor counting and flash interviews
 - To distinguish different types of visitors (hikers, excursionist, mountain biker, joggers), and to monitor the behaviour that violates the proper code of conduct;
3. Manual in-depth visitor interview
 - The following information is recorded: the general visitor profiles, tourist behaviour, the reasons for the visit, awareness of the naturalistic specificity of the Biosphere Reserve and, in particular, of the Zicker Berge; the current protection regime and the existence of a code of conduct for its protection; the frequency of visits and the particular interest for the Biosphere Reserve; knowledge of the reference terminology for the definition of Protected Areas; the degree of satisfaction, with particular attention to tourist pressure

During the winter (the off-tourism season) only the electronic monitoring system counted visitors. The manual counting and interviews only took place from July to October 2018 and from April until October 2019. Originally, three manual monitoring points were chosen. However, after a testing phase it became clear that the manual monitoring point II was redundant as tourist, who passed this point had already been recorded at either point I or point III. Thus, manual counting only continued at point I and III. The questionnaire used for the in-depth interviews was revised for the second monitoring period to include questions in relation to the implemented pilot action activities.



Fig.12: Audio Guide. Archive: Biosphere Reserve Southeast-Rügen.

Achieved Results

1. *Touristic pressure reduction*

Based on the first evaluation in 2018 as well as on the continuous data from the electronic counters in 2019 it is possible to say that a critical point of visitor numbers has not been reached yet in the Zicker Berge. Based on the questionnaires, many visitors do not feel that the area is too or overcrowded. Thus, currently no measures need to be taken to reduce tourism flows. However, the flows should be evaluated again in three to five year to see if anything changed and to be able to react to possible negative impacts or pressures in a timely manner.

2. *Tourist experience improvement*

Based on the questionnaires conducted in the Zicker Berge, 97 percent of the visitors in 2018 were very or fully satisfied with their stay in the area. In 2019, 98 percent of visitors were very or fully satisfied with their stay in the Zicker Berge. Whether this is an improvement based on the implemented pilot actions is hard to say. The questionnaires should be conducted in three to five years' time to see if anything changes in terms of visitor satisfaction.

Whether the audio guide - implemented as pilot action in 2019 - can improve the tourist experience has to be seen. Based on the questionnaires conducted approximately 21 percent of the interviewees said that they were generally not interested in the audio guided tour. So far, only two evaluations of the audio guided tour took place in the easy travel app; the people are very satisfied with the content. It will be interesting to see



how this will look like in the coming season.

3. Socio-Economic Benefits

No indicators for socio-economic benefits were set as it is very difficult to measure. Based on the data however, it seems possible that socio-economic benefits could be generated by further promoting the season-prolonging measures. This could possibly attract additional tourists.

6.7. Public Institution Nature Park Medvednica

Monitoring Activities

The CEETO project's Monitoring Work Plan foresees implementation of the following activities, in the period between October 2018 and September 2019:

- Visitors survey - carry out a quantitative and qualitative survey of visitors' profile, habits and views;
- involvement of relevant stakeholders - actively involve relevant stakeholders in elaboration and implementation of the Monitoring Work Plan, particularly through contribution to certain data collection, such as data on overnight stays and number of visitors - skiers;
- installing car counters and cameras - install 2 car counters and 3 cameras for real-time surveillance;
- monitoring of selected indicators of environment and nature - monitor selected indicators linked to impacts of visitation on nature and environment. Based on LAC (Limits of Acceptable Change) methodology and in consultations with experts, a set of relevant indicators was defined, as follows:
 - environment indicators: hydrological, soil and edaphic indicators, climatological indicators;
 - nature indicators: vegetation records; stream and wells fauna - stone crayfish, yellow-bellied toad and Italian crested newt; meadows biodiversity; (other) invertebrates' indicators - Rosalia longicorn and long-horned beetle;

the selected indicator species are targeted by Natura 2000 species of Medvednica Nature Park and Natura 2000 site HR2000583 Medvednica.

Achieved Results

1. Touristic pressure reduction

The research results represent guidelines in visitor management planning and tourism development in the Park, which will contribute to sustainable tourism in the long run. Apart from the reconstruction of the cable car, Action Plan also stimulates activities aimed at improving and upgrading of traffic solutions for accessing the peak zone, as well as traffic at standstill.

Furthermore, the results of monitoring of certain indicators pointed out the necessity to implement a specific measure to mitigate recorded negative impacts of tourism. Such example is pollution of surface fresh water with anthropogenic related bacteria (faecal coliform), coming most probably from gastronomic and accommodation facilities that do not have an adequate system of wastewater treatment in place. The necessary measures require analysis of current treatment of wastewater and implementation of remedy actions and solutions beneficial to the environment.

Possible measures to mitigate the Tourist pressure reduction:

- reconstruction of Sljeme cable car;
- creating a Traffic study for analysing the possibility of re-categorization of the Sljeme road from the direction of Zagreb following the opening of the cable car;
- developing and installing traffic and tourist signs;
- installing additional counters (people and bicycle counters);
- cooperation with all the stakeholders (through meetings, fieldwork etc.).

2. Tourist experience improvement

Some activities from the Sustainable Tourism Action Plan aimed at improving tourist experience were already implemented including regular maintenance and improvement of visitors' infrastructure, improvement of touristic offer and other activities for reducing tourism pressure.

After the project, the monitoring of profiles, habitats, opinions and satisfaction of visitors will continue in the Park periodically. Possible measures for the improvement of touristic experience are:

- creating a Visitor management study;
- creating a marketing plan for online communication;
- producing educational and promotional materials;
- improving visitors' infrastructure;
- organizing different workshops.

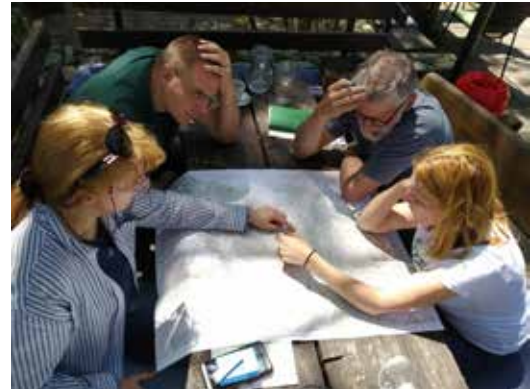


Fig.13: *Involvement of Stakeholders. Archive: Nature Park Medvednica.*

Public Institution "Nature Park Medvednica" has for the first time organized an Open Days event. The main topic was accessibility and inclusion for all visitors. Therefore, visitors were invited to come by public transportation, on foot or by bicycle. At the event were several institutions that work with people with disabilities (blind, mental problems, physical disabilities...) who presented their work and their projects. A part of the event was also an organized educational guided tour of Forest trail Bliznec (trail adopted for people with disabilities).

Medvednica Nature Park as a part of the ecological network HR2000583 Medvednica on that day also promoted and educated visitors about natural values. The scientists who have been researching Medvednica for a long time held lectures.

3. Socio-Economic Benefits

Activities implemented within the scope of the CEETO project represent an important step towards future benefits of all Park users. The implementation of the activities within CEETO project and the Action Plan will contribute to the protection and preservation of the protected area. An innovative sustainable tourism planning model and reduction of the pressures of Park area usage will create social and territorial cohesion and will contribute to the quality of life of the local community and encourage the development of the tourism sector in a sustainable way.

6.8. Landscape Park Strunjan

Monitoring Activities

Monitoring activity aims to monitor the effectiveness of education/informing the tourists about the protected area and its protection regimes (Landscape Park Strunjan) in the area of Belvedere terraces.

Raising awareness action consists of:

1. Leaflets (leaflets were distributed to visitors and tourists in the Pilot Area alongside with the questionnaires in summer seasons, July and August 2018 and 2019).
2. Educational video (with the protection regimes in the park, which was produced and disseminated in 2019).

The monitoring activity was conducted using questionnaires. Monitoring and raising awareness action were 2 in 1 (a leaflet/questionnaire). A questionnaire was distributed in the pilot action area in the summer season in 2018 (100 pieces) and 2019 (160 pieces). Tourists used to deliver answered questionnaires to the bar at the beach or to the park employee and could take the leaflets with them.



Achieved Results

1. *Touristic pressure reduction*

The main reason to start the pilot action - regulation of the Belvedere terraces - were environmental problems, especially the possible deterioration of the costal (cliff) area by the construction of large-scale hotel capacities. The objective of the regulation was to control movements of visitors, the establishment of sustainable visits of the park and entry point to the PA where it will be possible to inform visitors about the park and offer them several sustainable activities outside the park and relieve some of the pressure on the PA.



Fig. 14: Study on landscaping and spatial planning solutions - glamping in pilot area of Belvedere terraces. Archive: Strunjan Landscape Park.

The Municipality of Izola also wanted to limit construction in this area and to move the parking area from the existing beachfront location to another, in order to reduce traffic in the area. They also want to establish rules that will allow a sustainable business activity and environmentally friendly tourism in the area of Belvedere terraces. This kind of tourism also encourages sustainable forms of mobility, in particular electric public transport, which includes also maritime transport.

A study on landscape and spatial planning solutions with an additional study of utility equipment and traffic regulation for the same area represent the project documentation that will be the basis for the municipality to implement the changes in planned use in a Municipal Spatial Plan document.

The second part of the pilot project was an offer of an electric minibus, which has contributed to the reduction of car use within the park, long-term free parking services and prohibited parking in the natural environment. The main goal with hotels and camp owners was to encourage their guests to leave their cars in the parking lots in front of the hotels and use public transport for transportation throughout the park. This activity also reduced exhaust gases in ecologically sensitive areas where there are two nature reserves in the immediate vicinity.

Some data on the activity of electric minibus:

- Total number of passengers: it was estimated that in 2 months the minibus was used from 12000 to 15'000 passengers, what is approximately 6'000 cars;
- Length of the bus trail journey was 2.7 km / one way;
- Duration of a bus journey was around 15 minutes with all stops;
- Average travel time by the car was 7 minutes.

2. *Tourist experience improvement*

The Municipality of Izola in the further implementation of the pilot project (regulation of the Belvedere terraces), was planning to establish a "transition zone" with green public infrastructure and through an info point, to directly inform and raise awareness of Strunjan Park and its rules of conduct and a better cooperation with tourist operators and local growers and producers. The main objective of these activities is to control the movement of visitors, and a wider distribution of tourists in the area. In 2019, two additional electric minibuses were deployed, which were used to transport the visitors and locals. They were free of charge. An audio information was produced for the bus in three languages which was playing on during the ride. Furthermore, leaflets were printed with the bus route and stops. The pilot project was aimed at testing these measures. For 2020, it is planned to increase the number of hours of driving per day.

3. *Socio-Economic Benefits*

Several sustainable and traditional activities outside the park like renting electric bicycles, sustainable water activities, harvesting olives, installation of didactic playgrounds, connecting the area with the hinterland or other parts of the park by electric buses and many other activities, will contribute to socio-economic benefits. With maritime transport seaside towns, resorts and three landscape parks will be connected. This will be established in collaboration with providers to create packages/arrangements of offers for various groups (international guests, including guests with cruise ships, domestic guests). Above all, the development of glamping and new catering service would offer new job opportunities.



7. ASSESSMENT STUDIES OF CEETO PILOT ACTIONS

7.1. Internal evaluation

The internal evaluation was conducted by protected areas involved in the CEETO project based on structured questionnaires and interviews. The aim was to gather information about pilot actions results, provided by eight protected areas participating in CEETO project. The data for the structure of questionnaires and interviews were sourced from the Action Plan Strategies and the External Evaluation Report. The analysis of the questionnaires and interviews focused on management and planning, decision making process, research, and monitoring.

7.1.1. Methodology

Following methodology was applied:

1. Questionnaires for PA internal evaluation

A questionnaire with two sets of questions was prepared: one common to all pilots with base principles and one focused on each specific pilot. Each project partner involved in pilots submitted four questionnaires to the relevant stakeholders. Questionnaires consisted of the: General data about the interviewee; General Part - Part 1 (Management & planning, Decision making process and Research and monitoring) and Specific Part - Part 2 (Evaluation of the pressures and threats).

2. Structured interviews for PA internal evaluation

On the same basis as for the questionnaires, questions for the interviews were prepared. There were some common questions to all pilots with base principles and other focused on each pilot specific pilot. Main topics included Management and planning, Decision making process and Research and monitoring. Each project partner carried out three interviews (protected areas managers, local actors).

7.1.2. Key findings of the internal evaluation of pilot actions

There were 35 stakeholders from public, private and the NGO sector who participated in the survey. The results showed good gender and age range with the interviewees, good sectorial coverage (public, private & NGO), and involvement of different organizations (Mountain Rescue Services, Regional Associations, private companies and tourism actors, protected areas representatives, guides, municipalities representatives, environmental NGO's, farmers associations, tourism organizers, local community representatives, business support institutions, etc.). There was relatively good knowledge of each area.

Management and planning

The analysis of received answers showed a positive propensity of interviewees regarding CEETO pilot actions and willingness of the residents within the pilot area to participate more actively in projects such as CEETO project. Further discovered findings:

- governments support protected areas to a certain extent;
- management and achieved results in the protected area in the last two-years were positively evaluated;
- most stakeholders included in the survey accept and actively participate in activities/initiatives proposed by protected areas;
- resistance of local populations and landowners is still noticeable;
- in some cases, the lack of budget and time is seen as a threat to more efficient implementation of the various tasks in the pilot areas.

Risk and pressures factors

Important pressures factor mentioned by interviewees are as follows:



- **tourism, recreation and transport**, in comparison with traditional land use, create pressure on the environment;
- tourism and recreational activities are gaining in popularity, so some of the negative aspects are already present, particularly over-tourism in certain parts of the season;
- **conflicts between hunters and farmers** on the one hand and **tourism** (locals and guests) on the other are present;
- **traffic** is considered the most dangerous element;
- **Climate change** and the **abandonment of traditional land use** are threats to forests and agriculture;
- external factors that in some cases threatened the feasibility, sustainability and tangible results of the CEETO pilot actions are **changes in political attitude** towards sustainability, liquidity problems and problems with permissions, lack of funds and lack employees, administrative problems and also over ambitious objectives.

Communication, training and education

- stakeholders support protected area participation in media and education on the protection of natural and cultural heritage;
- implemented measures are seen as very effective in enhancing and in further promoting sustainable and responsible tourism and should be planned in the future as a permanent and continuous process;
- a participative approach is one of the most important elements for the success of sustainable and responsible development. Participatory planning, however, requires more local content, ideas and support;
- in addition to nature protection, protected areas also have different priorities and that is why an interdisciplinary and management approach is required;
- even when planning is appropriate, delays can cause unforeseen problems and negative impacts on project implementation.

At the CEETO Participatory planning process, involved stakeholders received relevant information about the pilot area, proposed activities and future development plans. Stakeholders need to be involved in every step of the process. The managing body of the protected area should be responsible for monitoring of the implemented activities and evaluation of the performance. Respondents emphasized that regular involvement of local stakeholders is crucial to reach consensus. A special importance should be given to the capacity building through the stakeholders' training, for local actors/stakeholders and the schools for sustainable tourism.

Involvement of stakeholders and monitoring

- respondents agreed with tools and measures chosen by the protected area management body and to repeat the measures in the same pilot areas in the future;
- through long-running dynamic workflows, new and unforeseen problems can arise that cannot be eliminated due to a rigid system plan and project-based rigid goals that make implementation difficult;
- results are often not in line with expectations and because of that it is good to measure and also to change action plans;
- various stakeholders, priorities and political circumstances and changes, as well as the limited period, lack of human and financial resources are critical points in planning and implementing. Supervision should be planned and directed with a clear vision of what data is intended to be achieved;
- monitoring of tourists for the example to the peaks (via summit books) and creation of an information brochures to communicate winter ski itineraries and refugee zones for wildlife are seen as a good example of the most important activities in the monitoring process. These all suggests that regular, well managed as well as transparent monitoring system should be applied as a tool in the protected area.



Resources

The following suggestions were given to improve the management process and resources as a social capital in protected areas:

- more financial support by project stakeholders is necessary;
- internal communication/knowledge transfer should be improved;
- better information for guests and more modern forms of communication are necessary.

Key Lessons learned:



I like

- pilot actions were evaluated as positive from all stakeholders involved in the survey;
- all respondents positively assess the results achieved by the protected area;
- to a certain extent government at all levels supports their protected areas;
- protected areas should continue with the initiatives already implemented with an active participation of the stakeholders;
- participation of the media in education and information on the protection of natural and cultural heritage was very encouraging and positive.



I dislike

- resistance of the local population and landowners is still noticeable in some protected areas;
- lack of budget and time could be a threat to a more efficient implementation of the activities;
- tourism, recreation and transport, in comparison with traditional land use, make pressure on the environment;
- conflicts between hunters and farmers on the one hand and tourism (locals and guests) are present;
- traffic is considered one of the most dangerous elements;
- climate changes and the abandonment of traditional land use are threats to forests and agriculture;
- understaffing (people with relevant expertise) could be one of the threats for poor performance of activities.

7.2. Independent evaluation of pilot actions

The independent evaluation report of the Pilot actions, implemented by eight protected areas, was made by an external expert. This report is summarizing some important findings from the evaluation of the single pilot action. The following chapters illustrates:

- the types of Pilot Actions structured by the Management Bodies of the Protected Areas involved in the CEETO project, indicating their thematic scope, critical issues and intervention objectives;
- according to an approach that intends to focus on the strengths and opportunities, the best practices implemented by the Protected Areas in the testing phase;
- recommendations to policy makers for a sustainable tourism development of the Protected Areas.



7.2.1. The Pilot Actions in the Protected Areas

The Pilot Actions identified by the Protected Areas, focus on seven central themes and were built with the aim of solving the elements of internal weakness. In light of this definition process, it was possible to see the compliance between Pilot Actions and development purposes of the Parks. The intervention themes identified by the Protected Areas were, in detail, the following:

- Accessibility;
- Portrait of the visitors;
- Behaviour of the visitors and awareness of the local specificities;
- Tourist fruition of the territory;
- Tourist offer;
- Impact of the tourist pressure on nature and environment;
- Network of collaboration among the local actors.

More precisely, the structure of the thematic areas of intervention, the criticalities identified, the activity aims and the Pilot Actions defined within the CEETO project is as follows.

Accessibility

Critical points	Purposes of the Pilot Actions	Pilot Actions
Unsustainable accessibility, with consequent negative externalities (congestion of the road and parking areas, environmental and acoustic pollution, impact on climate, violations of the rules of the road, obstacle to the passage of emergency vehicles)	To promote sustainable accessibility, instead of the private car	Shuttle service
		Public transport (bus) service
		E-bikes
		Restoration and securing of paths
		New parking rules
		InfoPoint
		Open days
		Communication of the alternative mobility services by:
		- <i>press</i>
		- <i>posters</i>
		- <i>brochures/ leaflets</i>
- <i>web</i>		
- <i>social network</i>		
Low accessibility and inclusion for visitors with disabilities	To enhance the possibilities of fruition of the territory by visitors with disabilities	Open days



Portrait of the visitors

Critical points	Purposes of the Pilot Actions	Pilot Actions
Limited knowledge of the visitor profile in terms of number, origin, behaviour, mobility preferences, awareness of being in a Protected Area and knowledge of the specific code of conduct	To acquire a better knowledge of the characteristics, choices and level of awareness of visitors regarding the naturalistic specificities	Survey
		Manual counting of visitors
		Electronic people counters
		Electronic car counters
		Analysis of summit books and counting of signatures
		Video cameras
		Video Content Analysis (VCA) system

Behaviour of the visitors and awareness of the local specificities

Critical points	Purposes of the Pilot Actions	Pilot Actions
Inappropriate behaviour of visitors, due to a lack of knowledge of the particularities of the Protected Area or an insufficient respect of its natural value	To increase the knowledge of the visitors about the specificity and the nature delicacy of the Protected Area and to empower visitors about their behaviour, by an adequate information on the correct rules of conduct	Open days
		InfoPoint
		Communication through:
		- press
		- brochure/ leaflets
		- the website of the Park
		- social networks
		- audio guide
		- educational video
		- placemats
		Interactive map
		Waste bins
		Training and coordination of the Park Visitor Centres and Tourist Information Offices

Tourist fruition of the territory

Critical points	Purposes of the Pilot Actions	Pilot Actions
Relevant concentration of the Park visitors in few sites	To promote the visit to less known and less frequented sites within the Park	Open days
		InfoPoint
		Communication through:
		- brochure
		- social networks
		Training and coordination of the Park Visitor Centres and Tourist Information Offices
		Panelling and information tools



Critical points	Purposes of the Pilot Actions	Pilot Actions
Partial knowledge by visitors of the overall tourist offer of the Protected Area	To improve the tourist promotion by informing on the wider offer (sports and recreational activities, accommodation, restaurant, paths)	InfoPoint
		Communication through:
		- brochure
		- 3D map

Tourist offer

Critical points	Purposes of the Pilot Actions	Pilot Actions
Perfectibility of the overall tourist offer of the Protected Area	To enhance the possibilities of fruition of the Protected Area according to environmental sustainability criteria	Plan for the local territorial development and technical study for the infrastructural services
		New signs for trekking
		Search and rescue routes

Impact of tourist pressure on nature and the environment

Critical points	Purposes of the Pilot Actions	Pilot Actions
Limited knowledge of the actual impact of the tourist pressure on the Protected Area	To inspect and analyse the effects of the touristic presence on the natural environment and habitat	Swarovski telescope (Spektiv) and rescue equipment
		Monitoring of the naturalistic and environmental conditions by specific indicators

Network of collaboration among the local actors

Critical points	Purposes of the Pilot Actions	Pilot Actions
Low participation of the local stakeholders in designing the tourist offer of the Protected Area in concerted terms	To create opportunities for local public and private stakeholders to meet and discuss, in order to promote participatory planning processes	Saint Gallen method
		Training and coordination of the Park Visitor Centres and Tourist Information Offices
		Working groups between inhabitants and stakeholders

7.2.2. The best practices in the testing phase

Based on the experiences developed by the Protected Areas within the Pilot Actions, this chapter summarizes the strengths and opportunities that must be considered in the implementation of sustainable development activities by the Park Management Bodies.

The project areas examined concern, in detail:

- Accessibility;
- Profiling of visitors;
- Visitor behaviour and awareness of the specificities of the territory.



Accessibility

1. Shuttle service

- autonomy of the Park Authority in the definition of the transport service and in its management;
- in the event that the service is promoted by:
 - a wider network of public and/or private actors, in which the Park participates with a non-decisive decision-making role;
 - a Public Administration other than the Park, in independent terms and as a local public transport service within its territory;
- preliminary stipulation of agreements that bind the parties involved to the effective supply of the connections, in order to stem the consequences of unfavourable political dynamics (for example, the change of agreement regarding the project following elections);
- scheduling of the working timetable according to a planned daily frequency;
- consistency of the frequency of the connections with the intensity of the tourist demand, providing for a different modulation of the offer on the weekdays and holidays, as well as in the low and high season;
- flexibility of the fleet, favouring small shuttles, in order to reduce the risk of road congestion;
- eco-sustainability (electric shuttles);
- clear, widespread and articulated communication to visitors, availability of the shuttle connections, the timetables and the stop points (press, posters, flyers, web and social networks);
- diffusion on the shuttles, during the journey, of an audio dedicated to the introduction to the specificities of the Park and to the respect of the local sites;
- conclusion of free loan agreements with the owners of the lands next to the shuttle stops and not used, in order to designate them to parking spaces for cars;
- tariff integration between transport and parking services;
- involvement of the local community in the promotion of the shuttle service;
- organization of a computer database dedicated to the collection of data on the actual use of the shuttle.

2. E-bike and mountain bike

- realization of paths exclusively dedicated to bicycles;
- periodic maintenance of the tracks, in order to guarantee their usability in terms of safety;
- provision along the route of stopping points for the bicycle emergency maintenance;
- equipment of the routes (directional signs of distance and proximity to the most interesting points; thematic posters, tables with behavioural provisions);
- involvement of local operators in the rental and maintenance of vehicles;
- promotion of trails within the wider local network of routes for e-bikes and mountain bikes.

Portrait of the visitors

1. Survey

- Definition of a set of questions aimed at knowing:
 - the identity of the visitors (age, gender, residence);
 - the tourist behaviour (local inhabitant, hiker, visitor staying overnight);
 - choice of accommodation (place and type of accommodation) and the length of stay;



- the activities carried out in the park;
- wishes and suggestions for a better use of the naturalistic sites.
- Inclusion of educational questions, which, by asking:
 - Inform the visitor of the availability of a new service (for example: "Are you aware of the existence of shuttle links to the Park?", "Did you use the shuttle service to reach the Park?");
 - sensitize tourists to a correct behaviour in the Protected Area (for example to respect wildlife needs).
- Identification of questions for monitoring the effectiveness of the actions carried out, which must be asked in the period preceding and following the implemented activity,
- attention to the clarity of the questions and the answers contained in the survey,
- internal consistency of the questionnaire,
- administration of the questionnaire, over time, according to the same criteria relating to:
 - the percentage target of reference (number of interviews compared to the number of visitors);
 - interview places;
 - time slots and days of the week dedicated to the interview.
- administration of the questionnaire in paper or web mode, through a CAWI (Computer Assisted Web Interviewing) accessible from smartphones and tablets;
- organization of a computer database to collect the survey answers.

Behaviour of the visitors and awareness of the local specificities

- definition and implementation of an organized and coherent plan to raise awareness of the protected area visitors;
- identification of a place dedicated (Info Point) to the visitor training;
- calendar of events specifically dedicated to the visitor education (Open days);
- articulated and widespread communication of the rules of behaviour, considering, alongside the more traditional channels, innovative digital tools;
- motivating and empowering the correct behaviour in a Protected Area;
- multilingual promotion of the code of conduct;
- creation of a collaboration network with the main tourism stakeholders in the area (Park Visitor Centres, IAT offices, accommodation and restaurant, guides and sports operators), oriented towards a joint sensitization to the respect for the local environment and its habitat;
- promotion of environmental training opportunities;
- fruition of the places (Info Point), events (Open days) and the networks to raise awareness about the protected area and as opportunity to promote the wider local heritage, material and immaterial, for a sustainable redistribution of the tourist flows in the territory and a seasonal adjustment.



8. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Sustainable and Responsible Tourism Development has become the main challenge, against the background of the continued growth of tourism industry. To fully achieve its potential, well-founded principles and clear guidelines are necessary.

These conclusions are addressed to first and foremost, local, and regional administrations, protected area managers, decision makers in tourism and nature conservation ministries as well as the associations of the private sector and NGOs at the local, national and international level - with one word: policy makers.

Tourism as a sustainable development option must be planned and managed so that its socio-economic benefits are spread as widely as possible throughout the local society. Community-based tourism projects²⁷ are important means for spreading benefits to local residents.

The sustainable development approach is particularly important in tourism because this sector depends mostly on tourism attractions and activities that are related to the natural environment and historic and cultural heritage. Environmental planning approaches and carrying capacity analysis are important techniques for preventing environmental and sociocultural problems resulting from tourism. In order to plan for tourism development that meets present and future expectations of tourists and accomplishes sustainability of the tourism sector, local authorities must understand major tourism trends internationally.

8.1. Sustainable tourism development and implementation

Before “take-off” of tourism development in PA, it has to be decided by local planners and developers, whether or not to consider sustainable tourism as a viable development option. As with the objectives pursued by sustainable tourism, the key issues are:

- **Objectives and interests:** what goals/interests the protagonists are pursuing? Is steering or promotion of tourism the primary issue?
- **Feasibility:** Is the area suited for tourism; are the conditions for sustainable implementation being met (basic conditions, protagonist capability)?
- **Compatibility:** Will the ecological and sociocultural circumstances permit compatible tourism development? Are the institutional conditions such that negative effects can be avoided by regulation means?
- **Benefits:** Are the fundamental political, social and institutional conditions present for tourism to help make a noteworthy contribution to conservation areas at all and/ or have a broad impact on the income of local communities?

To answer these issues a feasibility evaluation of sustainable tourism development should take place (see the Fig.15):

²⁷ For more detailed information about Effective community based Tourism see: The best Practice Manual, Effective community based tourism: a best practice manual / Sally Asker ... [et al.].

ISBNs: 9781921785047 (pbk.) 9781921785542 (pdf).

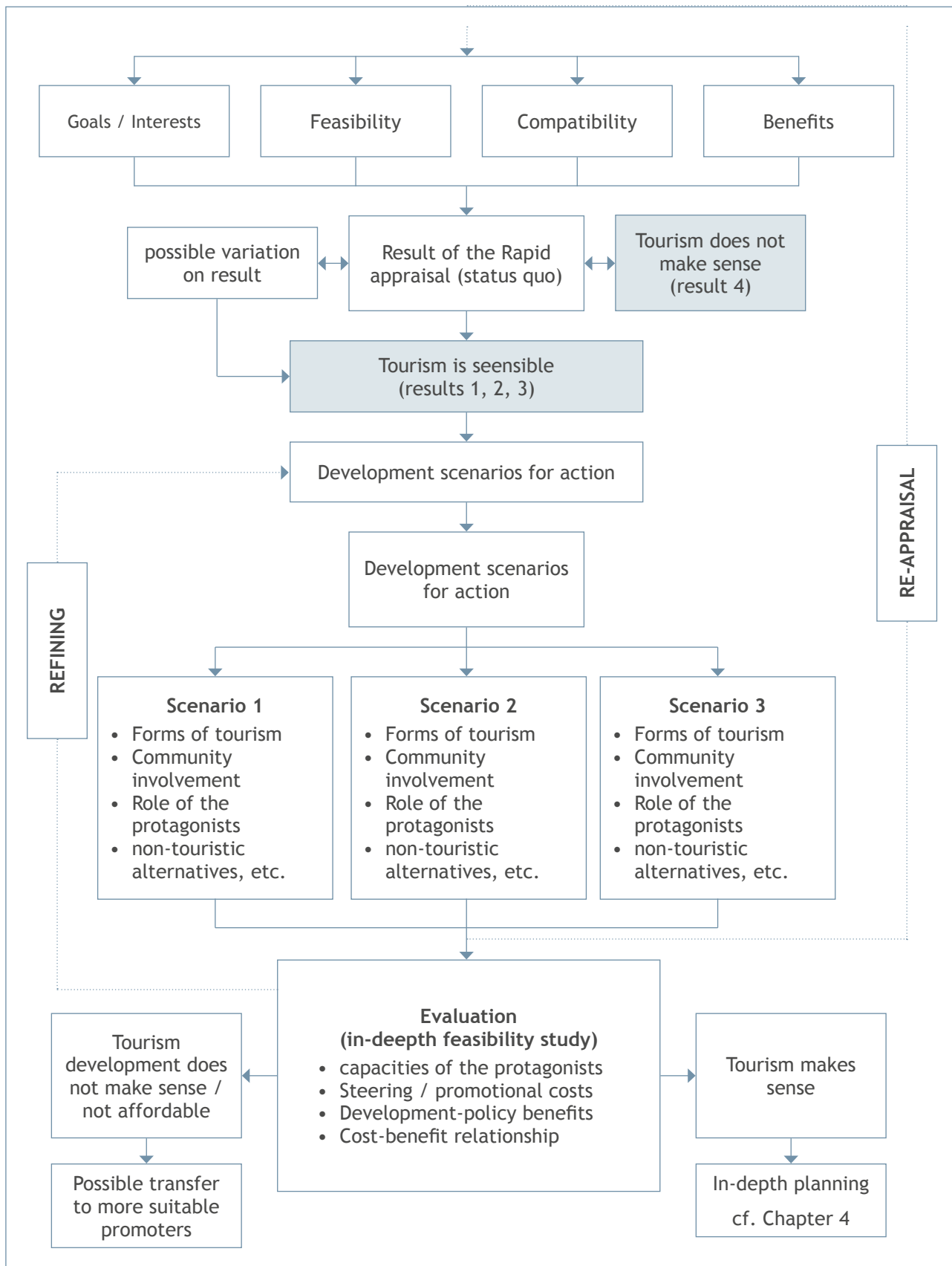


Fig. 15: Process of development sustainable tourism.



Conclusions from practice:

- answering the key questions is an interactive process. The conclusions drawn from the answers always coincide with certain conditions or assumptions, which refer to other questions or lead back to previous questions.
- thus, a question that has been answered positively on its own does not necessarily mean that a tourism development is legitimate! The greater picture is the decisive factor insofar as there are no criteria for exclusion.
- rapid appraisal only allows limited judgement of the feasibility and rationality of tourism. An in-depth feasibility study is necessary as a future course.
- the results of a rapid appraisal do suggest, however, which and under what conditions, a tourism development can be pursued. Hence, it also helps creating consciousness of the potentials and risks linked to tourism.
- it is desirable to invite a tourism experts to participate at the earliest possible date, at the latest, however, if the in-depth feasibility-study and concrete planning is being carried out.

8.2. Decision making process

The proper direction and coordination of the strategic planning process in a protected area is the key element of success. A large part of the responsibility lies with the institution, which initiates the strategy development process. It can take full control and management of this process, or it can entrust this function to a special Working Group, which would include, for instance, representatives of all the important local actors in the PA. The Group should have freedom to establish its own internal structure, e.g. to select the leaders and/or coordinators for specific themes or sectors, to organize secretariat and contact points.

From the point of view of the organization of the process of strategy development, the Group should fulfil the following functions:

- **initiating** - which involves bringing ideas to the table;
- **organizing** - managing the process of strategy development, organization of work, division of tasks and allocating responsibilities, inviting experts or moderators to help in the research or workshops;
- **integrating** - it should ensure good relationships between participants of the process of strategy development;
- **mediating** - helping to achieve consensus, conflict resolution, ensuring the balance between interests of different groups;
- **deciding** - defining priorities, making final decisions in matters where other methods to achieve consensus fail.

It is very important that the Group create a culture of work of all the process participants, based on such values as cooperation, partnership, priority of common interest over the interests of individual partners.

8.3. Building consensus and co-operation with stakeholders in protected areas

What generally causes more problems than the financing and promotion of conservation areas through tourism, is the adequate involvement of the local population. Typical problems, as a kind of conclusions from practice in developing sustainable forms of tourism are (this is the list of the most frequent problems in general, not just and solely for the CEETO pilot areas):

- conservation areas levy either no fees or only very low ones that do not - or hardly - exceed the expenses incurred by tourism;
- earnings from fees must be sent to a central tax authority and thus are no longer available to local



nature conservation also tourism companies are often opposed to fees;

- the local rural population lacks the necessary know-how, experience and financial resources to engage in the business of tourism;
- local labour force cannot take on qualified jobs because of a low level of training;
- it is extremely difficult to achieve widespread benefits in socially and culturally heterogeneous local communities with low level organization;
- tourism potential is overestimated because no feasibility-studies or cost-benefit analysis were conducted;
- the abilities of local communities are overestimated. Local ownership and participation are certainly desirable and necessary, but only exhibit a limited degree of professionalism necessary in the tourism industry;
- clarifying roles amongst the protagonists involved only occurs insufficiently or not at all;
- often private sector and other relevant protagonists are ignored instead of being drawn upon for their professionalism and market contacts.

8.3.1. Management and planning

The most promising initiatives are those that link resource conservation and local participation with professionalism in the tourism business, entrepreneurial thinking and market orientation. Achieving this balance is not easy. In tourism, the idealistic initiatives with a maximum of local ownership in particular (“the people should preferably do and decide everything”) only seldom produce high development-policy benefits. Consequently, the private sector’s role will become even more significant. Protected area management and planning teams, with help of NGOs and Technical Co-operation organizations should adopt the role of expert mediators between nature conservation, local interests and tourism companies. This way, the development-policy benefits can best be maximized, in the interest of the local communities as well.

Conclusions from practice - PA action plans should therefore keep the following in mind:

- When conservation area managers, NGOs or local administrations receive support in developing tourism products, they have to keep in mind the market demands. When marketing matches the right product or service with the right customer at the right place and the right time, the results are a profitable business and a satisfied customer.
- In order to market a local touristic product, the private sector must become involved, mainly tour operators and wholesalers. When designing offerings and managing tourism, their interests and operational processes must be taken into consideration.
- In view of sustainable tourism development, marketing and promotion should emphasize environmentally sound and sociocultural equitable behaviour on the part of the tourists and on the tourism industry in general.

8.3.2. Developing Priorities, Goals and Objectives for Sustainable Tourism Development

As with other enterprises, the tourism industry is also dependent on certain framework conditions in order to function in a sustainable manner. The necessary conditions for implementing sustainable tourism in PA (but also elsewhere) can be subdivided as follows.

Fundamental framework conditions:

- Presence of basic **transportation infrastructure** (road network, runways);



- **simple immigration and currency regulations** (very important for tours that include several border-crossings);
- **personal safety** for the tourist (protection from crime, robbery, natural disasters and catastrophes);
- **relatively low health risks** (existence of basic medical services, no epidemics);
- **protection of environmental attractions** against tourist impacts or degradation (legal regulations and their strict implementation).

Economic policy framework conditions:

- existence of an **economic order and financial policies** that promote tourism and other private companies;
- access to **financing or promotional options** (e.g. special credit lines for SME or investments in general);
- access to information and advice regarding entrepreneurial competence (e.g. for business start-ups);
- access to **information/consultation for product development and marketing** (especially with regard to new types of touristic demand);
- **support for marketing** abroad (e.g. trade-fair assistance, access to new booking systems);
- existence of **possibilities for training specialized tourism personnel** (tourism schools and vocational training centres).

Ecological and socially sustainable tourism framework conditions:

- **government environmental legislation** (high environmental standards for the tourism industry);
- political and administrative structures that support, assist and provide **grant (material and non-material) to local/indigenous communities**;
- government economic and fiscal policies that basically permit **income from tourism to be directed into nature conservation or local communities**;
- **funding tools/systems of incentives** that make environmentally sound investments in peripheral regions or technical qualification of rural communities economically attractive;
- information/consultancy with regards to **environmentally sound technologies and management methods**;
- ongoing monitoring and if necessary, adaptation of management measures to new challenges.

Conclusions from practice

- It is very important to clarify ahead of time whether or not the core conditions for sustainable forms of tourism exist (see above).
- Should considerable deficits exist (e.g. institutional weaknesses), and then development co-operation must be started on the framework conditions.
- In general, state agencies and NGOs cannot provide sufficient support to local tourism initiatives (e.g. concerning consulting, training); co-operation with the private sector should be increased.

8.3.3. Networking the stakeholders: who, how, with whom?

The first step leading to making the strategy development process a common one is to identify entities and persons who should be offered the opportunity to be directly involved in the work. Such a proposal should






be addressed to all the stakeholders who have an influence on the present or future situation. The Working Group that issues such invitations should have a good knowledge of the local community. Activities leading to the elaboration of such a document should start with the stakeholder analysis.

Identification of all potential stakeholders will define:

- entities which - because of their role and influence - will anyway have to be involved in creating the strategy;
- organizations and institutions whose functioning will depend on the shape of the strategy;
- organizations and institutions which can affect the implementation process of the strategy;
- organizations, institutions and other entities which can have an interest in participating in the development and implementation of the strategy;
- organizations, institutions and other entities which can become party in a conflict or can see strategy development as a danger to their own interests;
- useful persons and institutions;
- often it is not easy to find authorized speakers for stakeholders, who also pass on information within this group and whose behaviour is copied by the group.

Stakeholders should be grouped according to their character and/or potential involvement, e.g. into the following groups:

-  **Key stakeholders:** these are entities of high importance for the process of strategy development. Activities and interests are directly related to the situation in the given area. Many of them should be members of the Working Group.
-  **Secondary stakeholders:** entities with less influence, but their existence and activities will certainly have to be taken into account during elaboration of the strategy.
-  **Other stakeholders:** these are all the entities potentially interested in the strategy, which can in the future play a role in its implementation.

The different visions and varying cultural backgrounds of the following groups of stakeholders (see Fig.16) must be taken into account. Imagination and personal initiative of participants should know no limits when it comes to their own input (e.g. knowledge, financing, work force, land, etc.).

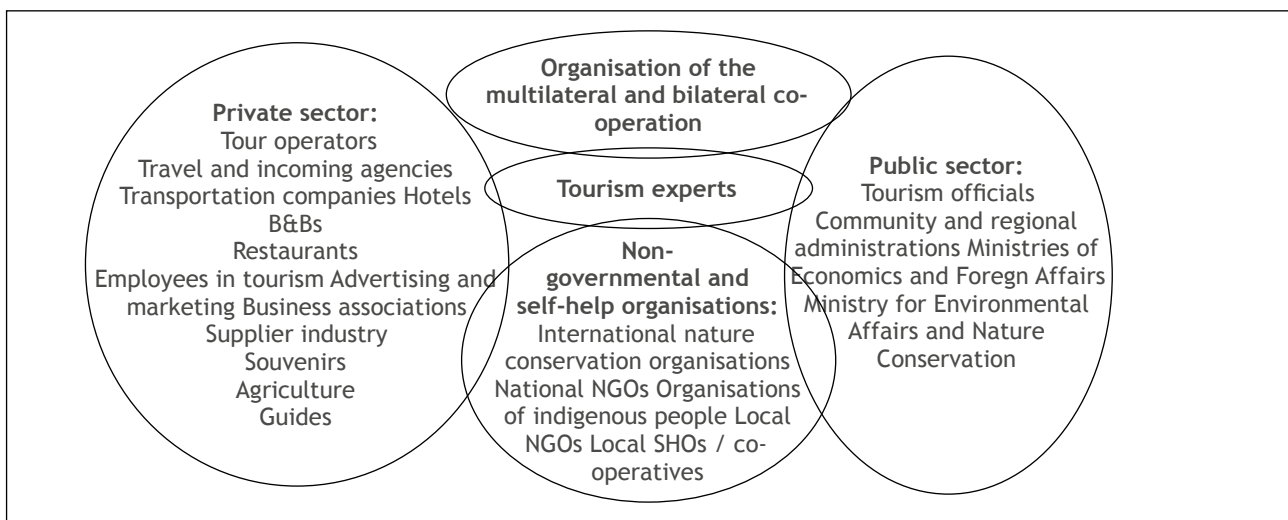


Fig.16: The different visions and varying cultural backgrounds of the groups of stakeholders.



Follow up:

- When co-operating with the private sector, it must be clarified in what areas the objectives of sustainable tourism development harmonize with the primarily economic interests of the companies and where they tend to conflict. Beyond a general sense of responsibility, the tourism industry principally exhibits immediate interest in the sustainability of tourism development when:
 - appropriate measures are taken to lower operational expenses or at least not to increase costs, it can prevent damage to the touristic resources (e.g. destruction of the landscape, water pollution, driving out wildlife by numbers of visitors);
 - the respective measures fit the company's corporate identity and appeal to customers (image care).
- The fundamental readiness to co-operate with the local communities has similar traits. For companies it first means delays and increased complications in operational processes, but it could become interesting if it gives way to an attractive touristic product.
- If the conditions mentioned above are not met, the tourism industry cannot be relied upon to voluntarily act in environmentally and socially sound fashion, especially if this would generate higher expenses or loss of revenue. In such cases conservation area management, local organizations and governmental and non-governmental institutions would be well advised to create special incentives (e.g. granting exclusive rights of use, fee discounts, joint training of local personnel) or impose charges (e.g. for granting concessions), so that the activities of tourism companies might produce the kind of effects considered right from the standpoint of nature conservation or benefits for local communities.
- A very significant but only indirect economic advantage of project-related tourism is the impact on the public relations work of development cooperation and nature conservation organizations in donor nations. Members and other interested parties can actually observe where their contribution is being spent and thus might decide to increase their support for such projects.

8.4. Monitoring and evaluation

In view of guaranteeing the sustainability of tourism, managing environmental and socio-economic impacts, establishing indicators and maintaining the quality of the tourism product is required. Negative impacts can be minimized by continuous monitoring and acting if problems arise. In order to ensure that tourism remains sustainable, the indicators can be assigned as follows:

- **ecological and sociocultural compatibility:** landscape utilization (all infrastructural facilities); water consumption; trophy collecting, photo hunting and other activities such as rafting, climbing, mountain biking, trekking, birdwatching, etc. (protected species, driving out of the reclusive fauna); study, renovation and protection of historic sites, or degradation; revival of handicrafts: financial dependence on cartels or independent marketing?;
- **creation of benefits for conservation areas and/or for the host communities:** amount of touristic currency leakage: distribution of operators, increase in import for luxury and consumer items, energy carriers, etc.; vertical and horizontal distribution of growth in earnings: for whom: women, men, youths; is the income generated by tourism also being used locally for nature conservation in the broadest sense, or are they being rededicated locally/nationally: local conservation area administration, national conservation agency, central fiscal authority, local communities, NGOs?; is a collection of fees and their use transparent? Is the tourist/company being informed of how fees are to be used;
- **raising consciousness for nature and resource conservation** (is the level of acceptance for nature and resource conservation measures growing along with tourism development; are tourists/companies participating in the promotion of sustainable tourism: visitor payback, sponsorships, etc.

Selection of the indicators depends on the destination's characteristics and the special emphasis within the development of the objectives. The key indicators may also differ because the important objective is to bring the benefits of tourism to particular communities. In the following chapter CROSTO indicators are presented as good example.



8.4.1. Example of CROSTO indicators

The main goal is to present a systematic measurement and monitoring of tourism sustainability, which was used in Croatia. This methodology is used in scientific and professional work based on the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the European Environmental Agency (EEA) methodology and related indicators systems proposed by the EUROSTAT and Tourism Sustainability Group. Croatian Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) produced a national list of indicators classified into thematic areas for monitoring of the situation and changes in the environment in Croatia (Ministarstvo zaštite prirode i energetike; Zavod za zaštitu okoliša i prirode; 2016). Indicators proposed for tourism as thematic area are:



1. The **first step** implies establishment of an observatory as a virtual organizational structure. In Croatia, it was under the management of the Croatian Institute for Tourism. The observatory is in charge for measurement and monitoring tourism sustainability in the most tourism developed regions. In Croatia, this region is under the highest impact of the ‘sun and sea’ tourism. The main goal is to apply the ETIS Indicator System for a sustainable destination management, developed by the European Commission. It was decided to use the ETIS due to country compliance, as EU member state, with EU recommendations. However, since many of ETIS indicators are not measurable, or there are no data available to be applied in the research, the Croatian Institute for tourism intent to fully adjust ETIS indicators to the mandatory sustainability issues selected by the UNWTO.
2. The **second step** is aimed at promoting the application of ETIS among local communities (tourist destinations). The main goal is to successfully foster the appliance of ETIS at municipal level. It has to be noted that it also depends on cooperation of all relevant stakeholders.
3. The **third and the final step** involve aspiration to transfer into a regional monitoring centre coordinating many local observatories, all of them applying ETIS for measuring and monitoring tourism sustainability in its own local jurisdictions. In that regard, the Institute for tourism (CROSTO Preliminary Report, 2016) intend to apply as many as possible of the nine ETIS indicators that fully cover 8 out of 9 mandatory issues selected by the UNWTO. The list of the UNWTO mandatory issues and corresponding ETIS indicators are shown in Tab.2.

This could also be a pattern to follow by CEETO PA management and stakeholders in their future monitoring activities.



UNWTO mandatory issue	Corresponding ETIS issue		Corresponding ETIS indicators
	ETIS selection	ETIS criterion	
Local satisfaction with tourism	C Social and cultural impact	C.1 Community/social impact	C.1.2 Percentage of resident who are satisfied with tourism in the destination (per month/season)
Destination economic benefits	B Economic value	B.1 Tourism flow (volume and value) at destination	B.1.1 Number of tourist's nights B.1.4 Daily spending per over-night tourist
Employment		B.3 Quantity and quality employment	B.3.1 Direct tourism employment as percentage of total employment in the destination
Tourism seasonality		B.2 Tourism enterprise(s) performance	B.2.2 Occupancy rate in commercial accommodation per month and average for the year
Energy management	D Environmental impact	D.6 Energy usage	D.6.1 Energy consumption per tourist night compared to general population energy consumption per resident night
Water management		D.5 Water management	D.5.1 Water consumption per tourist night compared to general population water consumption per resident night
Sewage treatment		D.4 Sewage treatment	D.4.1 Percentage of sewage from the destination treated to at least secondary level prior to discharge
Solid waste management		D.3 Solid waste management	D.3.1 Waste production per tourist night compared to general population waste production per person (kg)

Tab.2: List of UNWTO mandatory issues and corresponding ETIS indicators.

Institute for tourism also supplement the indicator list with five extra indicators. Two of them are associated with the last mandatory issue selected by UNWTO, and three of them are associated with the fourth section of ETIS. Those indicators are shown in Tab.3.



UNWTO mandatory issue	UNWTO baseline indicator	ETIS issue		ETIS indicators
		ETIS selection	ETIS criterion	
Development control	Existence of land use or development planning processes, including tourism	-	-	-
	% of a destination area subject to control (density, design, etc.)			
-	-	A Destination management	A.1 Sustainable tourism public policy	A.1.1 Percentage of tourism enterprises/establishment in the destination during a voluntary certification/labelling for environmental/quality /sustainability and/or corporate social responsibility
			A.2 Customer satisfaction	A.1.2. Percentage of tourist and same-day visitors that are satisfied with their overall experience in the destination
				A.2.2. Percentage of repeat/return visitors (within 5 years)

Tab.3: List of supplemental indicators covering the ninth UNWTO mandatory issue and the fourth ETIS section.

8.5. Final conclusions and recommendations

In light of the experiences of the CEETO project action and evaluation, in particular, of the strength and opportunities observed in the evaluation of the Pilot Actions promoted by the Protected Areas, this final sub-chapter intends to offer some ideas for policy makers, with the aim of strengthening their ability to:

- define, develop and implement territorial policies;
- monitor the achieved results;
- revise the same policies in order to optimize their effectiveness.

Sustainable Tourism Development Recommendations

Adoption of a holistic and inclusive approach in the development of sustainable tourism policies in Protected Areas, which:

- considers the set of public and private stakeholders involved and the related economic, social, cultural and territorial interdependencies;
- encourages collaboration between the same subjects and the Management Body of the Protected Area, with a view to strengthening synergies and minimizing forms of competition inconsistent with the objectives of shared and sustainable growth;



- takes into account the system effects generated by the action of each stakeholder, with particular reference to economies of scale and learning;
- involves the various subjects in the identification and development of local policies, according to a participatory logic.

Adoption of a long-term development perspective, which integrates a two-year (short-term) and five-year (medium-term) vision with intervention horizons of more than ten years.

Clear identification of the elements of local criticalities, of the growth objectives and of the results achieved with the development activities promoted in the Protected Area.

Commitment to a constant improvement of sustainable development policies and adoption of an adaptive management approach through:

- the observation of the evidences that emerged in the preliminary test phases;
- the evaluation of the results obtained in the short and medium term;
- the incentive for forms of lifelong learning by the Management Bodies of the Protected Areas.

Promotion of a learning culture for the Protected Areas policies and the governance practices based on mechanisms, tools and partnerships that promote a continuous collaborative training and a cross-fertilization of experience.

Integration of moments of **systematic evaluation of the effectiveness** of the development policies within the decision-making process.

Taking a **neutral and external view** of the policies adopted and the possibilities of their effective implementation in the Protected Area, in light of the best practices observed in the international, national and regional fields and the specific direct, indirect and induced impacts.

Consideration and respect for the **national and international strategic objectives** within which the development plan is placed.

Encouragement of a **flexible and creative approach to development**, available to question the most widespread and consolidated forms of intervention in favour of innovative practices and the experimentation of new planning ideas.

Definition of the needs of financial and human resources for the implementation of the development plan.

Guarantee that the financial and human resources assigned to the management of Protected Areas are adequate with respect to the stated objectives and plans.

Promotion of the **financial, economic, and social sustainability** of the development actions of the Protected Areas.

Clear definition of the levels and roles of responsibility for the implementation of the development plan.



Promotion of periodic reports on the performance of Protected Areas by Managing Bodies and sharing with stakeholders.

Evaluation of the performance of the Protected Areas, of the relative decision makers and of the staff working in and awarding of rewards in line with the quality of the results achieved.

Definition of a **communication plan of the local development lines** addressed to the territory, public and private stakeholders, the personnel involved in the management of Protected Areas, visitors and tourists.

Incentive for projects aimed at **improving the accessibility** to Protected Areas through the creation of conditions of autonomy for the Park Authority in the definition of the internal transport service and its management or, alternatively, that is if the service is promoted by:

- a wider network of public and/or private subjects, in which the Park participates with a non-decisive decision-making role;
- a Public Administration other than the Park, in independent terms and as a local public transport service within its territory;
- the legislative and financial support for the preliminary stipulation of agreements that bind the parties involved to the effective creation of the connections, in order to stem the consequences of unfavourable political dynamics (for example, the change in consensus on the project following elections);
- the facilitation of free loan agreements with the owners of the land next to the shuttle stops and not used, for the purpose of their destination at car parks;
- the facilitation of tariff integration agreements between public transport and parking services;
- public grants or tax relief on the purchase of eco-sustainable shuttles (in particular, electric) and e-bikes;
- the financial support for the budget of:
 - fittings at the shuttle stop points;
 - directional signs, thematic signs and tables with behavioural dispositions along the routes dedicated to mountain bikes and e-bikes;
 - the creation of paths dedicated to trekking and cycle paths.

Support for the definition and the implementation of a **common and shared plan among the Protected Areas of competence**, in order to raise the visitors' awareness on the respect for local naturalistic excellences.

From these recommendations it is evident that implementation of sustainable tourism in vulnerable ecosystems and habitats has to be supported by political backing and with the involvement of the diverse stakeholders. The Guidelines are designed to fill a need in providing planning approaches for the integrated and sustainable development of tourism in protected areas.

From principles and approaches described in the document, the key role is given to the process of creating a strategy with two key elements: participatory planning process and CEETO monitoring tools. Monitoring Tools are presented through the pilot actions implemented by eight protected areas involved in CEETO project and are applicable to any tourism activities and development that may have an impact on biodiversity in protected areas and their surroundings.

Another important issues while designing a strategy is that it must be designed as a dynamic tool, both the CEETO internal and independent evaluation showed this. It is important that scenarios with monitoring tools and actions built at the beginning, can be adapted, adjusted or reinvented, in future application of the strategy. The definition of development scenarios must be a result of a dialogue and cooperation between different partners, or stakeholders.



An important person for Slovenian geography Matjaž Jeršič wrote that with the establishment of various protected areas, nature and its values have been preserved not only for future generations, but also for tourism²⁸. Sustainable tourism as accepted conceptuality is the way of developing successfully because at the one hand, it protects nature and on the other, it promotes the prosperity of local communities. It can be a great opportunity but also a great threat if it is not properly managed and implemented. An increase in touristic and recreational activities can contribute to the degradation of the area²⁹. That is why policy makers are of great importance and why various stakeholders' view must be taken into account.

The Authors of this document hope that the Guidelines will be a mechanism for achieving sustainable tourism in protected areas and for an active and collaborative role of policy makers in protected area management.

28 Jeršič, 1985

29 Primožič, 2014



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1. CEETO HANDBOOK - successful and innovative practices on sustainable tourism
2. CEETO GUIDELINES - HOW TO DEVELOP SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN PROTECTED AREAS
3. CEETO MANUAL - How to implement a sustainable governance of tourism in protected areas

All publications are available to download in different languages on the CEETO website and CEETO Network Platform.

<https://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/CEETO.html>

<https://ceeto-network.eu/home/>



CENTRAL EUROPE ECO-TOURISM: TOOLS FOR NATURE PROTECTION

- Emilia-Romagna Region - Protected Areas, Forestry and Mountains Development Department (IT)
- Federparchi - The Italian Federation of Parks and Nature Reserves - EUROPARC Italy (IT)
- EUROPARC Federation (DE)
- UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Salzburger Lungau (AT)
- Soelktaeler Nature Park (AT)
- NIMFEA Environment and Nature Conservation Association (HU)
- UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Southeast RLIgen (DE)
- Public institution Nature Park Medvednica (HR)
- WWF ADRIA - Association for Nature Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (HR)
- Regional development center Koper (SI)
- Public institute Landscape Park Strunjan (SI)



11 partners



3 years



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