ANLAGE/ANNEXE/ALLEGATO/PRILOGA

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REPORT OF CHAIR OF THE WORKING GROUP

"Sustainable Tourism" on the mandate 2015-2016

1. Overview of mandate 2015 - 2016

Summary of the main mandate points
1.1 Analysis of the contents of the Tourism Protocol and its goals in the light of green economy and in particular the role of green investment for contributing to economically viable and solid innovation and growth, decent work creation and alleviation of social problems, while improving resource efficiency and minimising environmental degradation (UNEP, Green Economy Report, 2011). A specific focus should be taken in the field of anchoring the principles of sustainability as laid down in the Tourism Protocol in innovation processes on all levels of Alpine tourism: SME, destination management organisations on local and regional level and tourism boards on federal and national level. 1.2 Deeper analysis aimed at providing expert support to the Compliance Committee, if requested, during the second phase of the compliance procedure regarding the Tourism Protocol 1.3 Drafting of a technical contribution on Sustainable Alpine Tourism focusing on green economy in line with the needs of the WG RSA6 Green Economy and also in close cooperation with this WG. A key aspect will be collecting knowledge and experiences and proposing recommendations on how to coordinate the multilevel Alpine tourism governance system – including destination management as a part of it – to increase the share of sustainable tourism products continuously and in coherence with the Alpine Convention. 2.1 Checking the possibilities to use different international instruments and programmes to raise awareness and valorise sites related to the Alps 2.2 Checking the possibilities, tools and techniques (including indicators) already available

to measure the impacts, from a touristic, economic and environmental perspective, of an inscription of a site in the World Heritage List as well as of other international designations.

Presidency:

The Working Group was chaired by a German-Italian Co-Presidency. The Chairpersons for the mandate period 2015-2016 are Prof. Dr. Thomas Bausch of the Munich University of Applied Sciences and Marcella Morandini from the UNESCO Dolomites Foundation.

Activities and main outputs: please find below

2. Meetings and activities

Report on activities carried out (including meetings, conferences)

- **Research and Analysis of Literature**, Literature review regarding valorisation of the natural and cultural heritage and (Alpine) tourism governance.

- **Collection of Indicator Systems** for checking the possibilities, tools and techniques (including indicators) already available to measure the impacts, from a touristic, economic and environmental perspective.

- Conception of an **interview grid** regarding governance in sustainable tourism.
- Carrying out a qualitative **survey of 23 expert interviews**, spread across the alpine states and evaluation of this survey.

- Result analysis of interviews using **qualitative analysis techniques** and discussion within working group

- **Collection and evaluation of Alpine case studies** concerning 10 different quality criteria:
1. Nature-oriented strategy
2. Good quality of place
3. Nature-based offer development
4. Adopted catering and lodging:
5. Sustainable traffic management
6. Nature and landscape protection
7. Information and sensitisation
8. Nature-oriented marketing:
9. Regional value chain

10. Quality Management

- **Meetings of the working group**
  1st Meeting 17th of April in Belluno
  2nd Meeting 3rd July in Munich
  3rd Meeting 23rd November in Innsbruck
  4th Meeting 2nd February 2016 in Milan
  5th Meeting 31st May 2016 in Kempten

- Answering the questions of the Compliance Committee to the Working Group.
- Contribution to RSA Green Economy about resource efficiency and tourism – more than 20 examples of good practice as input.
- Discussion of options about a new mandate without result – **no joint proposal** from the group.

3. Outputs

Description of main outputs achieved
Final Report: Alpine tourism: valorisation heritage – governing sustainable destinations.

4. Cooperation with other WGs/PFs

Description of cooperation initiatives and activities with other WGs/PFs
List concrete cooperation initiatives with other WGs/PFs. Cooperation with the WG Green Economy – input for RSA (see above).

5. Links to EUSALP

Description of concrete links and contribution to EUSALP
The final report can be seen as a background paper discussing tourism in the light of pillar 3 (1): Reinforcing Alpine natural and cultural resources as assets of a high quality living area concerning a) instruments to measure the valorisation of natural and cultural heritage and b) how to support and set up regional and local governance systems to create synergies between tourism and a high quality living area.

6. Attachments

List of the attached documents
1. Final Report: Alpine tourism: valorisation heritage – governing sustainable destinations (attachment)

GERMAN PRESIDENCY 2015-2016

Die Alpen
Vielfalt in Europa

Les Alpes
symbole de la diversité européenne

Le Alpi
simbolo della diversità europea

Alpe
simbol evropske raznolikosti

ALPINE TOURISM: VALORISING HERITAGE – GOVERNING SUSTAINABLE DESTINATIONS

Final Report Working Group Sustainable Tourism

THE WORKING GROUP SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

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PREFACE

Since more than 200 years' tourism is an economic sector in many areas of the Alpine Space. By this tourism contributes to many Alpine inhabitants to their daily income, partially it is the only option to earn money. To many farmers, tourism generates a secondary income and thereby contributes to continue with mountain farming and the conservation of Alpine speciose landscape. Tourism services offer to the younger generation jobs and business opportunities as a basis for staying in or return into the Alpine valleys. This economic pressure potentially creates conflicts between tourism development interest and the protection of Alpine nature and culture. Sustainable tourism seeks to resolve conflicts and to provide competitive products which generate adequate income without negative impacts to Alpine ecology and the local communities.

Based on the mandate adopted by the XIII. Alpine conference this report gives answers to the questions on how to valorise the culture and natural heritage and how to adapt Alpine tourism governance to support in a more efficient way the development and innovation of sustainable tourism products.

As Co-Chairs of the working group sustainable tourism, we wish to thank all the experts and representatives of the Contracting Parties, the Observers of the Alpine Convention for their efforts and valuable contributions and last but not least the hosts of the five meeting facilities in Belluno, Munich, Innsbruck, Milan and Kempten. A special thank we dedicat to all who actively participated in the meetings and who provided their written contributions, making this publication possible. Furthermore, we would like to thank the German Presidency, the former Italian Precidency and the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention for supporting the working group and producing this report.

Finally, we speak for all the experts in expressing the hope that the report will result in practical measures to foster sustainable tourism development in the Alpine Space and thereby impement the tourism protocol of the Alpine Convention.

Thomas Bausch
Marcella Morandini

I. MANDATE OF THE WORKING GROUP SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

The XIII. Alpine Conference decided to install a working group sustainable tourism, which shall follow a mandate with two parts. The first part of the mandates covers questions in the field of tourism governance, the second an in deep analysis of aspects of the valorisation of natural and cultural heritage in the Alps. The second part of the mandate has a close link to the results presented by Sustainable Tourism Task Force of the Italian Presidency in 2013-2014 (Alpine Convention - Task Force "Sustainable Tourism," 2014) .

This report must always be seen in the light of the mandate, which defined the corridor within the working group had to act. Based on an intense discussion among the members of the working group besides all other tasks the core elements of the mandate were identified as

1) To check possibilities tools and techniques (including indicators) already available to measure the impacts, from a touristic, economic and environmental perspective, of an inscription of a site in the World Heritage List as well as of other international designations. Thereby the focus was widened to all kind of Alpine destinations offering nature based tourism as their core product and not to stop with the measuring of effects but rather more to discuss management options which can be used by the tourism stakeholders.

2) The collecting of knowledge and experiences and proposing recommendations on how to coordinate the multilevel Alpine tourism governance system – including destination management as a part of it – to increase the share of sustainable tourism products continuously and in coherence with the Alpine Convention. Thereby the level of destinations should get considered as the most important for the implementation of sustainable tourism development activities.

This report sums up the results of the work which were achieved within January 2015 to June 2016 concering the above two key questions. Other results of the working group which were part of the mandate as eg. a contribution (a text section and examples of good practice) to the RSA 6 Green Economy or the answering of questions raised by the compliance committee are not part of this report. They will get part of the result presentation of the main reports of relevant working group or body.

II. VALORISATION OF THE NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE OF THE ALPS

The term "valorisation" implicitly contains the term "value". By this it is obvious that valorisation has to do with a process dealing with the values of natural and cultural heritage. Looking at the term "value" in the sense of creating benefits it is quite obvious that there exist several perspectives, which have to do with the three main dimensions of sustainability

- the economic value
- the value to the society
- the value (more in the sense of function) to biosphere

Furthermore, from the long term perspective "value" can be seen besides the creation of concrete benefits as a potential or a resource. By this value also has to do with the moral and virtual obligation to conserve the natural and cultural heritage to future generations.

Valorisation therefore has to be seen as all kind of processes, which aim and are suitable to create economic and social benefits, to safeguard ecological functions and to conserve the potential of all kind of heritage to future generations along the three dimensions of sustainability.

As these processes are always linked to all three dimensions, valorisation must be seen as an integrated process. A subdividing into separated approaches, which focus only or mainly on one of the three dimensions is not possible.

Because of the integrative character of valorisation linked processes always deal with the negotiation and balance of diverting interests of stakeholder groups representing the main concerns of each dimensions and future generations. To come to a balance or even better a consensus among local and regional stakeholder groups about a valorisation strategy participatory processes are needed. Valorisation needs a bottom up component and has a strong local and regional fundament.

Thinking about valorisation of Alpine natural and cultural heritage using tourism as an important part of a strategy widens the perimeter from local and regional to at least a European, in some cases global level. Even though the creation of benefits to the guests mainly takes place on site these guests and all kind of agents taking a role in the tourism market get part of the processes.

Thinking about tourism markets turns at the first view the perspective from integrative processes towards maximizing economic benefits and seems to reduce valorisation to questions of marketing management. The American marketing expert Phillip Kotler points out that successful marketing always is based on products, which fulfil the consumer needs and wishes. The touristic product is a set of services along a chain. In Alpine regions many services are based on resources from the tourism region, e.g. ground used for infrastructure and housing, water, climate, landscape and its topography, nature and culture. Therefore, the product itself is built by a set of components, which have major parts of their basis within the two pillars society and ecology of the sustainability concept.

Understanding the regional touristic economic value of natural and cultural heritage as the cumulated long term overall returns of the tourism sector there are three main variables determining the result: price, quantity and costs of production. Looking at these three variables in the context of valorisation as defined above we can state

1) in economics the price of our touristic product is the value – expressed in a currency – a consumer is willing to give to get marginal benefits out of the services[1] and linked experiences. The concept of valorisation therefore supposes that there exists a significant share of consumers who – from their personal perspective – receive a higher marginal benefit if the share of nature and culture based service elements and linked experiences is higher compared to other touristic products.

2) quantity as a factor itself must not be seen always negative. Quantity is no problem and a useful factor using economy of scale effects as long as natural and cultural resources are preserved from depletion. In the case touristic products makes use of local or regional natural or cultural resources with limited capacity expansion strategies have to respect these limitations.

3) production costs of tourism are mainly based on three types of costs: investments (depreciation and financing), staff for services and intermediate inputs. Sharing natural and cultural heritage among regional tourism stakeholders helps to reduce investments. Focussing on regional employed staff and regional economic cycles usually has no impact to reduce production cost. But it has a high potential to increase the marginal benefit of consumers and by this their willingness to pay.

It´s evident that valorisation strategies using tourism markets are based on all three pillars of sustainability and have a long term intergenerational component. Valorisation by tourism mainly has to do with the creation of unique experiences to guests to increase their marginal benefits and by this their willingness to pay.

One well known instrument there is the authentification by elements based on natural and cultural heritage out of regional economic cycles. Another instrument is the use of well-known international or global labels marking the outstanding and sometimes universal value (UNESCO sites) of a region, as image attributes of labels and marks also can create a marginal benefit.

A growth strategy is not a contradiction to valorisation per se. But an increase of quantities always has to manage visitor impacts and accept the given natural or social carrying capacity. Visitor management including guidance, time or saisonal restrictions, limitation of visitor numbers or group sizes are well known and effective instruments to resolve potential conflicts between quantity and conservation of heritage sites.

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[1] Marginal benefit is the additional satisfaction or utility that a person receives from consuming an additional unit of a good or service. A person's marginal benefit is the maximum amount they are willing to pay to consume that additional unit of a good or service. In a normal situation, the marginal benefit will decrease as consumption increases (source: Investopedia)

II.1. POSSIBILITIES, TOOLS AND INDICATORS TO MEASURE THE IMPACT OF AN INSCRIPTION IN THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST OR OTHER LIST OF INTERNATIONAL DESIGNATIONS

About the term „indicator" does not exist a distinct understanding among scientist. Researcher from natural sciences or economics use the term to describe variables and linked techniques to measure a manifest aspect as e.g. the acidity of a fluid or the revenues from selling a service. Social scientists deal much more with complex and latent aspects. Social indicators, as e.g. fair working conditions or the level of involvement of locals into a tourism development process, cannot get measured by one parameter or "indicator" in the above sense. It is always needed a scientific conceptual framework by which manifest variables or parameters a latent social indicator can be measured. As indicator systems about sustainable tourism must cover ecological, economical and social aspects it is quite obvious that they are mostly set up by a mixture of both concepts: indicators in the tradition of natural as well as social scientists.

The work on indicator system in tourism and regional development has a long tradition (e.g. see (Torres-Delgado & Palomeque, 2014). In general indicator systems can deal with the description of

a) a status of objects or systems or with
b) a process / processes.

Indicators systems describing a status are often used to compare objects or systems before and after a certain measure and to explain observed changes. Process oriented indicator systems take an important role to follow changes caused by over the time running and therefore not only once effective measures. In case a measure has a permanent character, which is typical for all kind of management activities, some indicators from a system may only proof the fact of implementation or on a qualitative scale the degree of implementation.

Over the last two decades three main types of indicator systems got established:

1) the DPSIR approach: Driver - Pressure -State - Impact – Responses proposed and used by the EEC (European Environment Agency, 1999) ,
2) tripartite systems with a focus on subsets describing the status of the three pillars of the sustainability concept (ecology, economy and society (socio-cultural)),
3) system concentrating on processes and related management techniques which might lead to a higher degree of sustainability.

Out of these three basic types combinations came up, especially putting elements from type 2 and 3 together. Thereby a conflict of interest got more and more visible. Scientist, administration and NGOs from environmental organizations tend to prefer indicator systems which are precise and should cover all aspects of ecosystems, economic impacts and social and cultural qualities to describe a before – after status. Tourism managers as well as policy makers are much more interested in more simple and management oriented systems.

The Alpine Convention and by this in the context of sustainable tourism the tourism protocol is a joint legal basis and framework for policy making. The mandate to check the possibilities, tools and techniques including indicator systems to measure the impacts of an inscription of a site in the World Heritage List as well as of other international designations from a touristic, economic and environmental perspective therefore should focus on tourism stakeholders who are in charge to manage inscribed sites. Consequently the possibilities, tools and techniques including indicator systems described in this report take especially their benefit to decision making and management into account.

Furthermore it must be seen that the types of sites inscribed into a list of an international signet, e.g. the UNESCO world heritage list, the list of sites of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands or the list set up by ICOMOS charter on cultural routes, in the Alps are extremely varied and include among the others[2]:

- ✓ natural heritage sites: fossil sites, geological formation, glaciers, karst, protected areas
- ✓ cultural heritage sites: alpine cities, alpine railways, historical routes, fortifications, monasteries/sacred mountains, monuments, prehistoric traces, vineyard and terrace landscapes

It is clear that all these different types of Alpine sites with an international signet are or, more precisely, could be tourism resources of their own, which require a strategy, contemplating at the same time both promotion and protection. However, local variables, on top of the type of sites under consideration, make impossible to find a unique strategy and a common approach to such a fundamental activity as the continuous monitoring. The management plan, which every UNESCO site has, already covers the actions directed to the protection of the heritage. What is particularly complex is the analysis of the site potential contribution to the tourism sector and, more in general, to the local economy.

II.1.1. THE TASK FORCE ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

The Italian Presidency of the Alpine Convention (2013-2014) placed great emphasis on the theme of sustainable tourism and a strong interest in its operational implications appointing a specific task force coordinated by the Master in Economics and Tourism of Bocconi University. The task force was later institutionalized as a working group during the XIII Alpine Conference which took place in Turin on November 21, 2014.

The final document of the task force (Alpine Convention – Task Force Sustainable Tourism, 2014) evaluates the different aspects, which characterize sustainable tourism in mountain regions. Among them, the task force worked to the identification of some crucial sustainability indicators, which can be concretely applied with the statistical data currently available and which can represent a valuable tool to support tourism strategic planning in the mountain regions (on these aspects, the group also collaborate with the Italian National Institute of Statistics – ISTAT).

The rational of this specific contribution of the task force is that everyone who deals with the management of an Alpine tourism destination should consider the use of indicators, as they allow to: identify priorities in the action; motivate the business operators (from the tourist industry, but also from agriculture, craftsmanship, arts and culture, etc.); involve the local communities; and offer the visitor a better experience. The presence of a local resident community, of a rich cultural offer provided during the whole year, and of a caring hospitality (which at the same time do not alter the traditional culture and way of life) is a necessary premise to reach the aim of a more sustainable tourism. In this sense, it is important that the relationships between private operators and public institutions and among public institutions themselves are positive. It is also essential that the commitment and participation from all the individuals is high, as well as the awareness that the responsibility in the management/planning process and in the governance of the destination pertains to everyone. Indicators can support a shared governance and a higher local awareness of the effects of the actions undertaken. For indicators based on secondary data (available tourism

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[2] More details are available from the results of the UNESCO working group:
http://www.alpconv.org/en/organization/groups/WGUNESCO/default.html

statistics) we thus refer to the final paper of the task force: Even though they are a starting point, they are relevant as they are confrontable in different Alpine destinations.

II.1.2. UNESCO SITES AND TOURISM

The International Cultural Tourism Charter signed in 1999 by the ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Committee (ICOMOS, 1999) already points out some fundamental characteristics and prerequisites that UNESCO sites need to possess in order to support sustainable tourism (MET - Bocconi University, 2012). Among the others:

➢ the relationship between Heritage and Tourism is dynamic and needs to overcome potential conflicting values; it has to be managed in a sustainable way for present and future generations
➢ the actions conceived for the promotion of the heritage should ensure a worthwhile, satisfying and enjoyable experience for all the visitors
➢ the hosting community and the local population should be actively involved in tourism promotion and heritage preservation programs
➢ tourism and heritage protection should generate benefits for the hosting communities
➢ tourism promotion programs should protect and enhance natural and cultural heritage characteristics

II.1.3. UNWTO - THE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM INDICATORS

The UNWTO addressed the theme of tourism impacts in numerous studies and publications, identifying many indicators, which can be used in the necessary and fundamental activity of tourism monitoring (UNWTO, 2004).It is behind the scope of these pages to list them all, but it could be useful to cite the different categories:

➢ Wellbeing of Host Communities
➢ Sustaining Cultural Assets
➢ Community Participation in Tourism
➢ Tourist Satisfaction
➢ Capturing Economic Benefits from Tourism
➢ Protection of Valuable Natural Assets
➢ Managing Scarce Natural Resources
➢ Limiting Impacts of Tourism Activity
➢ Controlling Tourist Activities and Levels
➢ Destination Planning and Control
➢ Designing Products and Services

This is a general framework, which could be theoretically applied to any tourism destination. Within this framework, one can isolate indicators which could be useful also for the Alpine tourist destinations.

II.1.4. DIRECTIONS FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION

The DG European Commission - DG Enterprise and Industry, developed an "European Tourism Indicators System for sustainable destination management" (European Commission, 2013). The toolkit was conceived for all the European tourism destinations, not specifically addressing the Alpine ones (nor those hosting a UNESCO site), but can be partly applied also to this context. The EU system of indicators has the aim to improve sustainability in the management of the destinations, providing the authorities and operators involved with an

easy-to-use set of tools to measure sustainability during the whole management process and to compare the progress achieved, sharing the results obtained.

The ETIS, which was improved in 2016 is now composed of 43 core indicators and an indicative set of supplemantary indicators, with reference to four dimensions:

- ➢ Destination Management
- ➢ Economic Value
- ➢ Social and Cultural Impact
- ➢ Environmental Impact

II.1.5. A DRAFT PROPOSAL OF TOURISM INDICATORS FOR AN ALPINE UNESCO SITE

There are still no examples of tourism destinations measuring the overall impacts which an Alpine UNSECO site has at the economical, sociocultural and environmental level. On the other hand, the huge typological differences among the sites, coupled with the dissimilarities of the alpine tourism destinations with reference to the cultural background, the level of entrepreneurship, the tourist image and the positioning on the market, turn a single list of indicators into a tool of scarce utility in the monitoring process. Nevertheless, it can be useful to create a set of parameters wide enough to allow the single site to choose, on an individual base, the more suitable ones for its specific needs.

On a general basis, there could be four level of potential impacts, among which a preliminary list of indicator categories could be identified: economy, tourism, marketing, and infrastructures. On top of them, there is a fifth fundamental level which concerns the role and the involvement of the local community in all its components. If the local community lives and feels the UNESCO site as a central element of its past and present identity, the interest can be passed to tourists and visitors, generating a meaningful experience.

What follows is a proposal of possible indicators to be developed within the five categories above.

Economic indicators

- ➢ UNESCO site ability to create direct, indirect and induced employment
- ➢ Importance of cultural activities in terms of number of businesses and personnel figures
- ➢ Extent of public and private investments for industrial areas reconversion and for cultural structures renovation
- ➢ Private expenses for cultural consumption
- ➢ Public expenses explicitly linked to cultural programs and UNESO site activity
- ➢ Level of investment in new equipment and structures
- ➢ Ability to attract new investors

Tourism indicators

> Percentage of tourists choosing and visiting the destination (also) motivated by the presence of the UNESCO site
> Percentage of tourists visiting the UNESCO site
> Tourists expenses explicitly related to the visit of the UNESCO site and to its activities
> Tourist profile of UNESCO visitors

Marketing indicators

> UNESCO site media coverage
> Tourist destination perceived image
> Changes and improvements in the destination image
> Content analysis of social media posts on the UNESCO site/destination
> Importance of UNESCO site in the destination marketing activity
> Promotion of local creative products/activities

Infrastructures indicators

> Overall development of cultural and environmental infrastructures (long term evaluation)
> Incentive to and level of renovation in urban development

Local community involvement indicators

> Associations and volunteers collaborating to the UNESCO site activity
> Level of local community participation in the activity and events promoted by the UNESCO site
> Percentage of local tourist operators actively promoting the UNESCO site
> Degree of collaboration among the local institutions and public authorities in the activities and events promoted by the UNESCO site

II.2.   POSSIBILITIES TO RAISE AWARENESS AND VALORISE ALPINE SITES BY FOSTERING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM USING INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT

Indicators as proposed in the last section are useful instruments to monitor the development of a destination regarding economy, tourism, marketing, infrastructure and the involvement of the local community. These indicators are mainly designed to compare a status from time to time and by comparing the measured indicator results to evaluate the direction and dynamics of the development. Furthermore they are specifically designed to assess the impacts of a designation on an international list of designation with a certain reputation as UNESCO world heritage list. Therefore these indicators are not primarily an instrument to increase the share of sustainable tourism products by the destinations management and the tourism stakeholders of a destination.

Tourism products in alpine destinations are always a set of services provided by different service providers. Looking at the tourism services chain (Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention, 2013, p. 51) it is obvious that increasing the share of sustainable tourism offers always is a process which needs the involvement of all tourism stakeholders being part of one or more of the chain links (see *Figure 1*).
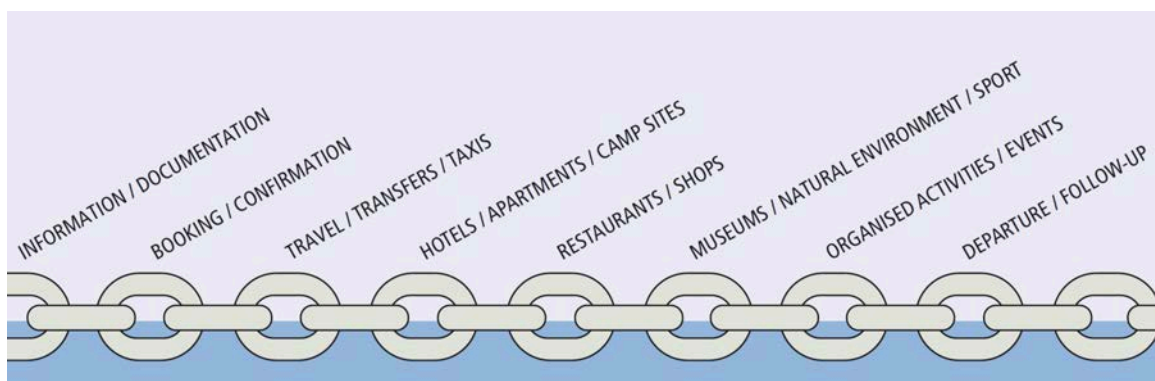

Figure 1: principal elements of the tourism services chain (see RSA4, p. 51)

A process, which aims to foster sustainable tourism in a destination, especially in destinations with a high share of attractions based on the natural and cultural heritage needs a common understanding of in which direction and how to innovate and adapt. The direction must be laid down in a vision putting together the key objectives linked to the three pillars of sustainability: economic, ecologic and socio-cultural objectives. A discussion about a vision thereby always is an instrument to raise awareness among the tourism stakeholders and the local and regional community.

Answering the question "how to innovate or adapt" means to analyse the current status as starting point, to discuss and plan measures, which are suitable to reach the vision. Their implementation not always leads to what was intended to reach. Therefore an evaluation of the results as well as an adaptation of measures or objectives must get part of a permanent management cycle (see *Figure 2*). This is a process, which never ends. The change of consumer preferences, new technologies or the next generation of tourism stakeholders with another perspective need a reflection of the vision and linked objectives from time to time.

A part of an applied research project quality standards for nature-based tourism in the Alps were developed and verified by case studies [3]. Thereby nature-based tourism as term describes a form of sustainable tourism with a specific focus on alpine nature and landscape, and supports nature protection as well as landscape development of high quality in the Alpine regions. As a result of the project ten quality standards as specific management fields could get identified. Compared to the indicators discussed above these quality standards are all implementation oriented. By this they are an integrated part of the management cycle.
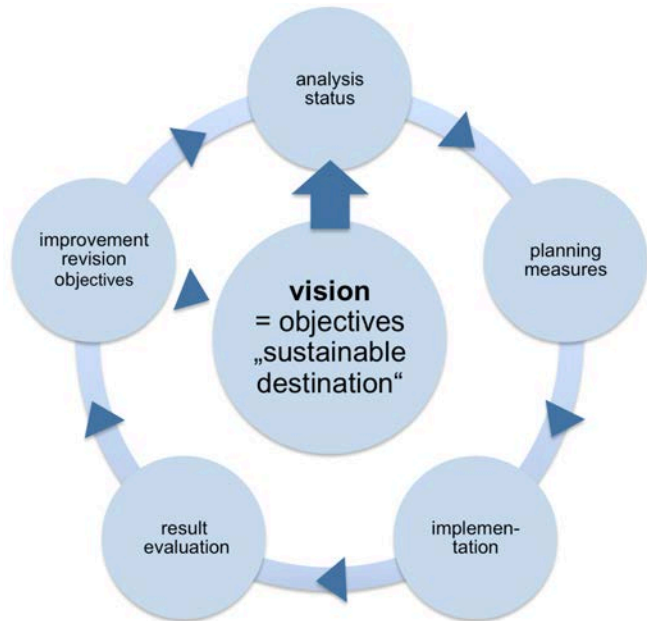
These ten quality standards even they are not in the same order cover all elements of the tourism services chain and add elements of the management cycle.

Figure 2: management cycle fostering sustainable tourism

1. Nature-based region
2. Quality of the place with reference to architecture, landscape and space
3. Nature-based development of offers
4. Accommodation and catering
5. Fostering of sustainable transport planning
6. Nature protection and landscape development
7. Information and sensitization
8. Nature-based marketing
9. Promotion of regional added value
10. Quality management.

To each of the quality standards five criteria using qualitative and quantitative indicators were developed and put into an easy to use checklist. As an example the first three criteria of the quality standard "3. Nature-based development of offers" are given:

3.1   The region pursues a professional development of offers aiming at attractive and marketable nature-based products, so that nature-based offers and activities represent a substantial and clearly visible part of overall offers
3.2   With offers and the thereby enhanced activities the region particularly considers the protection of nature and environment
3.3   The region promotes only environmentally sound facilities, which do not lead to adverse effects on nature and landscape values

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[3] The empirical basis is provided by 14 expert interviews, an alpine-wide online survey and a workshop with professionals from all Alpine countries. As a result, an annotated checklist with quality standards of nature-based tourism was developed. To test the checklist, six case studies including five regions and a tour operator offering alpine-wide activities were conducted: Regional nature park Massif des Bauges, France; Gran Paradiso national park, Italy; holiday regions Engadin Scuol and Engadin Val Müstair, Switzerland; nature park region Lechtal-Reutte, Austria; district Solčavsko, Slovenia and the tour operator faszinatour - Tourism Training Event GmbH, Germany.

The criteria are linked to key actors as e.g. looking at the criterion 3.1 destination management organization (DMO), hotel sector and gastronomy (H), local population (B) or agriculture and forestry (L). Furthermore the indicators to measure the current status and therefore to identify the need for actions are very easy as e.g. the indicators of criteria 3.2 by 1) none 2) occasionally existing 3) widely available. Finally an indicative list of actions proposes measures to improve and eliminate detected deficits.

The result is a professional basis for promoting ecologically and economically successful nature-based tourism in the Alps. By this the system can get applied to raise awareness and to foster sustainable tourism on destination level and especially in destinations linked with large scale protected areas.

II.3.   CASE STUDIES FROM ALPINE SITES AND DESTINATIONS

Using ten case studies from alpine destinations practical questions of sustainable tourism can be examined, documented in an exemplary way. Furthemore deficits can get detected and related possibilities for action are shown. The data can be collected in two different ways: observation and evaluation of documents on the one hand, and qualitative interviews with involved key actors on the other hand. The particular strength of case studies lies in the amount of information, which can be processed, and out of this the extraction of practice relevant statements and recommendations. The authors selected and evaluated ten cases where from their point of view one of the ten quality criteria for sustainable tourism development and the five related subcriteria of each could be explained in a very good demonstrative way (see Table 1 and Siegrist (Siegrist, Gessner, & Ketterer Bonnelame, 2015)). Each of these action fields and quality standards where assigned to the most suitable case study. Furthermore, the importance of sustainable tourism in the respective regions, the destination and region type according to RSA 4, as well as the distribution of the case studies among the alpine states have played an important role for the selection of these case studies.

Nr.	Quality standard	Case study	Country
Q1	Nature-oriented strategy	UNESCO World Heritage Dolomites	I
Q2	Good quality of place	District of Solčavsko	Slo
Q3	Nature-based offer development	Nature park region Lechtal	A
Q4	Adopted catering and lodging	Albergo diffuso Gran Paradiso	I
Q5	Sustainable traffic management	Holiday regions Engadine Scuol & Val Müstair	CH
Q6	Nature and landscape protection	Nature park of Berchtesgaden	D
Q7	Information and sensitisation	Parc Naturel Régional des Bauges	F
Q8	Nature-oriented marketing	Cooperation Bergsteigerdörfer	A
Q9	Regional value chain	Ammergauer Alpen	D
Q10	Quality Management	Maritime Alps	I

Table 1: Quality standards and associated case studies

The case studies are spread across the alpine states except Liechtenstein and Monaco. For Italy there has been selected the UNESCO World Heritage Dolomites, the Albergo Diffuso Gran Paradisoand and Maritime Alps, for Austria the nature park Lechtal and the cooperation „Bergsteigerdörfer", for Germany the national park of Berchtesgaden and the Ammergauer Alpen, for France the Parc Nature Régional des Bauges, for Slovenia the district of Solčavsko and for Switzerland the holiday regions Engadine Scuol & Val Müstair.

CASE 1: NATURE-ORIENTED STRATEGY: UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE DOLOMITES

The Dolomites are one of the most densely populated mountainous regions in the Alps, as well as being one of the leading tourist destinations in the world. On 26 June 2009 UNESCO listed the Dolomites as a World Heritage Site for the aesthetic value of its landscape and for the scientific importance of its geology and geomorphology. The 142,000 hectares that make up the UNESCO World Heritage Site form a sort of archipelago spread over a vast Alpine area and falling within the boundaries of five Italian provinces (Belluno, Bolzano/Bozen, Pordenone, Trento and Udine) of considerable institutional and administrative diversity.

The inscription on the World Heritage List has endorsed the pristine and original outstanding values of the natural environment and landscape of the Dolomites and it is also an acknowledgment of the work of the local communities who live there and work to safeguard them.

The challenge that the people of the Dolomites now face - linked to World Heritage status - involves overcoming the juxtaposition of protecting the environment and driving economic development, which is seen as exploitation of natural and landscape resources. This shift entails a widespread cultural change that can only be achieved over time.

The issues addressed by the Overall Management Strategy (OMS) include topics pertaining directly to the OUVs (landscape, geology, geomorphology), subjects indicated by the WHC (management of the infrastructures within the Property, tourism, conservation of the protected areas), and matters of local importance which came to light during the participatory process (#Dolomites2040) which involved all the various

Figure 3: Val Montanaia / © Eugenio Cappena

stakeholders in the various component sites (public administration bodies, municipalities and mountain communities, collective ownership organisations, mountain sports clubs and associations, ski lift management companies, refuge owners and managers, farmers and animal breeders, cultural organisations and tourist industry operators).

The OMS signals a transition from a model of conflict to a model of cooperation, where the natural environment is central to social and economic issues. Inscription is a golden opportunity for the area to try out innovative policies for conscious growth which foster the concept of natural heritage as a living environment.

The OMS is a voluntary collective agreement, rather than a mandatory set of rules. It reflects the evolution of passive environmental conservation to the promotion of a set of local skills which make conservation a conscious act and a shared responsibility (Protected Landscape Approach).

The OMS is a flexible, dynamic programme. It is not a series of strict, inflexible regulations but a set of strategies and objectives that can be tailored to the different places and verified over time, based on a process that embraces mediation and compensation between those involved. Further information can be found at www.dolomitiunesco.info.

No	Criterion	Key actors[4]	Indicators and evaluation result
1.1	Nature-based tourism and the protection and enhancement of nature, landscape and biodiversity are of high priority in the regional tourism strategy	DMO, G, B, H, V, L, T, S, U, A	Overall Management Strategy (OMS) based on a participatory process (#Dolomites2040) All the operations embarked on in the fields of conservation, communication and enhancement, as set out in the Overall Management Strategy, are planned according to this networked principle, ensuring the involvement and participation of the vast number of stakeholders with both direct and indirect responsibilities for the management of the property. Evaluation = high
1.2	There is a high level of approval for nature-based tourism and the enhancement of nature, landscape and biodiversity among all guests	DMO, H, T	6.000 questionnaires filled in by visitors to the 9 Dolomite component sites 3 studies about visitors, operators and accessibility Evaluation = medium
1.3	The region attaches much importance on the participation of the population in the region in nature-based tourism and the enhancement of nature and landscape, as well as biodiversity	DMO, G, B, H, V, L, T, S, U, A	Over the course of May and June 2015 the UNESCO Dolomites Foundation held a participatory process (#Dolomites2040) with residents and stakeholders from all over the Dolomites, asking them to imagine what the Dolomites will be like in 2040 Evaluation = high
1.4	There is a regular cooperation between the region and actors from nature and environmental protection	DMO, G, B, H, L, T, S, U, A	In order to ensure the participation of all those with a stake in the management of the UNESCO World Heritage Site and to develop a shared understanding of the sustainable development of the property, the Foundation has set up a Board of Supporters. In order to ease the participation of Supporters, a special virtual space (NING Platform) has been created. The NING platform has been designed to provide a place for the exchange of ideas and constructive debate, including on the results of the local participatory process #Dolomites2040. The aim is encouraging dialogue on topics relating to the management and conservation of the World Heritage Site. Evaluation = medium
1.5	In the region a special position for nature-based tourism exists, which is staffed by a professional qualified person	DMO, G	The UNESCO Dolomites Foundation is the single point of contact with the Italian Ministry for the Environment and with the UNESCO World Heritage Site Committee and its job is to encourage communication and collaboration between the local authorities that manage and administer, according to their individual regulatory frameworks, the territory recognised by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. Evaluation = high

[4] Abbreviations actors:

DMO = Destination Management Organisation, guests, G = municipalities, public authorities; B = local population; H = hotel sector, gastronomy; BB = mountain railways; V = public transport; L: agriculture and forestry; T = tour operator, mountain guide, excursion guide; S: protected areas, parks; U: environmental and cultural organization; A = education and research

CASE 2: GOOD QUALITY OF PLACE: SOLČAVSKO[5]

The district of Solčavsko is an exemplary destination in terms of its architecture, landscape and open spaces. It is on the upper course of the River Savinja in the Kamnik-Savinja Alps of northern Slovenia. The particular attraction of the region is the fact that it is unspoilt and has many natural monuments, traditional farmyards and impressive agricultural landscapes. The district initiates and supports efforts to attain high architectural standards in the region's building and infrastructure projects.

For example, the municipality of Solčava opened the Rinka Centre in a converted granary, notable for its attractive and ecological construction and its forward-looking energy system. The Rinka Centre plays a major role in nature-based tourism and the sustainable development of the Solčavsko region. Its outside area makes it a very pleasant place to spend time while in the small centre of Solčava and it thus promotes attractive open spaces in the settlement for enjoyable holidays. 20% of the money to support the centre and its five members of staff comes from municipal funds; all other income comes from tourism-related services and products, sales of local products and third-party funding. The Rinka Centre is responsible for regional management, sustainable development and the regional organisation of tourism. It also serves as an information and visitors' centre for tourists and offers rooms for events, workshops and exhibitions.

Twenty years ago, a citizen initiative to calm local traffic laid the foundation for the area's special architectural and landscape quality. This was accompanied by the locals' support for a semi-natural and forward-looking development of the valley, with an appropriate ratio between the number of beds in the hotel sector on the one hand and in private holiday flats on the other. Since then, excessive infrastructure projects, such as large hotel complexes, have not

Figure 4: Selling regional products in the Rinka-Centre / © Tomo Jeseničnik

been permitted. For example, although the citizenry voted not to restrict the number of guest beds offered at farms, a proposed new hotel was rejected. A mission statement for the region attached importance to maintaining the cultural heritage and high amenity value of this exceptional area, to conserving the unspoilt natural and agricultural landscapes and to forgoing large-scale infrastructure projects. One of the stated aims of the region's strategy is to calm and manage both the visitors' and the local population's private motorised traffic.

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[5] See (Siegrist, Gessner, & Ketterer Bonnelame, 2015).

No	Criterion	Key actors[6]	Indicators and evaluation result
2.1	The region initiates and supports efforts to achieve high structural quality regarding construction and infrastructure projects in the region	DMO, G	Proportion of current tourism-related renovations and new constructions with architectural competitions in relation to the total number of renovations and new constructions in the region. Evaluation: medium
2.2	Appropriate balance between the number of beds in hotels and second homes is pursued	DMO, H	Proportion of beds in hotels to beds in second homes in the region. Evaluation: high
2.3	Our region supports the design of attractive open spaces within residential areas in favour of a high vacation quality and to promote an attractive landscape and biodiversity	G, S, L	Municipal concepts for open space exist in the region and are implemented. Evaluation: low
2.4	Our region abstains from major new infrastructure in the undeveloped landscape in favour of a better vacation quality	DMO, G, H	Number of planned redevelopment projects such as e.g. ski regions and holiday resorts in the region (entry into the structure plan or development plan). Evaluation: high
2.5	Mitigation and steering of motorized private transport of guests and the general public is an explicit component of the regional strategy	DMO, G, V, B	A concept for soft mobility exists in the region and is implemented. Evaluation: medium

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[6] Abbreviations actors:

DMO = Destination Management Organisation, guests, G = municipalities, public authorities; B = local population; H = hotel sector, gastronomy; BB = mountain railways; V = public transport; L: agriculture and forestry; T = tour operator, mountain guide, excursion guide; S: protected areas, parks; U: environmental and cultural organization; A = education and research

CASE 3: NATURE-BASED OFFER DEVELOPMENT, LECHTAL

Coordinated by the Naturpark Lech administration in Austria, the regional tourism organisations in the Vorarlberg, Tyrol and Allgäu regions launched the River Lech hiking trail: a commercially viable and sustainable amenity which is now a major and very visible part of the services on offer in the region. The River Lech hiking trail is an important tourist amenity for the summer, providing visitors with an unforgettable experience of the varying landscapes along one of the last wild rivers of the Alps. The trail delivers adventure, but also takes into account nature conservation and environmental protection. The activities on offer focus on enabling visitors to discover and experience their own physical strengths.

Contrary to the initial scepticism of the population in the communities and regions involved, the long-distance hiking trail now attracts more than 10,000 visitors annually and is an important source of added value in the region without having a negative impact on the quality of nature and the landscapes.

Figure 5: Naturparkregion Lechtal-Reutte / © Robert Eder

The River Lech hiking trail has succeeded in establishing a sustainable tourist attraction that strengthens cross-border cooperation in various areas such as regional development and public transport. The wild river landscape and its natural properties are crucial to the region's tourism philosophy. A cooperative arrangement, featuring the trademark "wertvoller denn je" ("more precious than ever"), has also been set up between all the Tyrolean nature parks and the "Tirol Werbung" state tourism organisation.

No	Criterion	Key actors[7]	Indicators and evaluation result
3.1	The region pursues a professional development of offers aiming at attractive and marketable nature-based products, so that nature-based offers and activities represent a substantial and clearly visible part of overall offers	DMO, H, BB, L	Proportion of offers of nature-based tourism on the overall offers in the region. Evaluation: high

[7] Abbreviations actors:

DMO = Destination Management Organisation, guests, G = municipalities, public authorities; B = local population; H = hotel sector, gastronomy; BB = mountain railways; V = public transport; L: agriculture and forestry; T = tour operator, mountain guide, excursion guide; S: protected areas, parks; U: environmental and cultural organization; A = education and research

3.2	With offers and the thereby enhanced activities the region particularly considers the protection of nature and environment	DMO, H, B, U, T	Proportion of non-environmentally sound offers and activities in the region (ski region with more than 5 ski lifts, heliskiing, motor sports offside the streets, downhill biking, golf). Evaluation: medium
3.3	The region promotes only environmentally sound facilities which do not lead to adverse effects on nature and landscape values	DMO, G, BB	Number of actual tourism infrastructures for offers outside of the settlement area. Evaluation: medium
3.4	The region attachs importance to a high nature experience quality regarding the development of offers and activities	DMO, T	Estimated share of offers, where the experience of nature is the main focus of the offer. Evaluation: high
3.5	The discovery and experience of own physical strength is in the focus of the offers and guest activities, and not the technical locomotion with mountain railways	T, BB	Number of mountain railways in operation during summer. Evaluation: medium

CASE 4: ADAPTED CATERING AND LODGING: ALBERGO DIFFUSO GRAN PARADISO

The Gran Paradiso National Park is located in the Italian regions of Aosta Valley and Piedmont. In addition to other initiatives by the national park and the regional tourism organisations, expanding the capacity of high-quality accommodation has led to an increase in the number of visitors. The national park awards the "Marchio di qualità del Parco" quality seal for services and regionally produced organic products, which has been helpful in improving cooperation with tourist service providers.

Around 25 percent of catering and accommodation establishments have been awarded this quality seal, including agro-tourism providers. The "Albergo Diffuso" project, which was launched in the communities of Noasca and Ronco Canavese in 2012, is particularly worthy of mention. This project provides guests in traditional buildings with all the services offered by conventional accommodation establishments, such as reception and meals, but the guest rooms are distributed across a number of houses and flats in the village. This means

Figure 6: Albergo Diffuso / © Case Grand Paradiso

that existing buildings are utilised, the architectural heritage is preserved and new building developments are not necessary. "Albergo Diffuso" is proving to be effective in protecting the historical centres of these small mountain communities from degradation.

No	Criterion	Key actors[8]	Indicators and evaluation result
4.1	The region supports efforts for high quality of accommodation and gastronomy establishments (with respect to environmental and climate protection as well as enhancement of biodiversity in the fields of energy, building ecology, water and waste management and products)	DMO, H, G	Proportion of gastronomy and accommodation establishments in the region with sustainability- or eco-label Evaluation: medium
4.2	The region promotes the compliance of a collective working agreement regarding employments in accommodation and gastronomy enterprises	DMO, H, G	Compliance with the collective working agreement is ensured. Evaluation: high
4.3	The region promotes a high quality of accommodation and gastronomy enterprises concerning building culture	G, H, U	Proportion of hotel and gastronomy enterprises older than 100 years with historical building structures. Evaluation: medium
4.4	In the region the use of regionally produced products and products from ecological agriculture in gastronomy is supported	DMO, H, L	Proportion of gastronomy enterprises with mainly regionally produced products and/or products from ecological agriculture. Evaluation: low
4.5	The region support the establishment and the improvement of agri-tourism offers	DMO, L	Number of farms with agri-tourism offers (Farm holidays, catering on the farm, farm events etc.). Evaluation: high

CASE 5: SUSTAINABLE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT: SCUOL ENGADIN

The destination "Engadin Scuol Samnaun Val Müstair" is located in the far east of Switzerland at the tri-border region with Italy and Austria. The "Tourismus Engadin Scuol Samnaun Val Müstair AG" (TESSVM) destination management organisation is responsible for developing tourist services, enhancing communication and providing visitors with information. The TESSVM supports voluntary Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) with regard to the sustainable development of tourism and is working with the "myclimate" climate action organisation to achieve climate neutrality.

One of the region's particular strengths is the good public transport connections. Sustainable transport planning is a core element of the destination's strategy. Since the Vereina tunnel was opened in 1999 between the Chur Rhine valley and the Engadin, rail connections to the Lower Engadin have been excellent and the number of guest arriving by train has increased

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[8] Abbreviations actors:

DMO = Destination Management Organisation, guests, G = municipalities, public authorities; B = local population; H = hotel sector, gastronomy; BB = mountain railways; V = public transport; L: agriculture and forestry; T = tour operator, mountain guide, excursion guide; S: protected areas, parks; U: environmental and cultural organization; A = education and research

significantly, not least due to communication specifically targeted at potential guests. Accordingly, the region has an above-average percentage of guests who arrive by public transport.

The Swiss government's "domicil da vacanzas" pilot project on luggage transport, which was launched in 2012, makes travelling to the holiday destinations by public transport even easier. The ongoing efforts regarding extending public transport services in and around the area have also strongly supported endeavours to move towards soft mobility. Great importance is attached to soft mobility and sustainability regarding the activities and services on offer. For example,

Figure 7: Scoul / ©Andrea Badrutt

the annual Engadin bike marathon has been carried out climate neutrally since 2013, as a slow-transport activity popular with the public. New soft mobility initiatives are being launched and supported all the time.

An important element is coordinating excursions with public-transport timetables ("meeting at the bus stop"), enabling visitors to use local buses and the skiing bus free of charge, increasing the frequency of regional services and having regular services according to the peak season timetable all over the year. Many of these improvements have only been possible thanks to a close cooperation with the public-transport partners (PostAuto AG, Rhätische Bahn, mountain railways etc.). Whenever possible, the destination takes soft forms of mobility into consideration when offering tourist services and activities. Thanks to all these efforts - and with the good accessibility by rail - the Lower Engadin region has one of the best modal splits in the entire Alpine region.

No	Criterion	Key actors[9]	Indicators and evaluation result
5.1	Sustainable transport planning is a core component of the regional strategy.	DMO, G, V	Concept of sustainable transport planning exists, is a component of the strategy and is implemented. Evaluation: high
5.2	The region is committed to a public transport (train, bus), which makes it fast and easy accessible and the possibilities for sustainable and soft mobility towards the guests actively (e.g. in regional marketing, on tourist maps) are communicated	DMO, V	Modal split between guests of public transport and motorized individual traffic regarding arrival in our region. Evaluation: high

[9] Abbreviations actors:

DMO = Destination Management Organisation, guests, G = municipalities, public authorities; B = local population; H = hotel sector, gastronomy; BB = mountain railways; V = public transport; L: agriculture and forestry; T = tour operator, mountain guide, excursion guide; S: protected areas, parks; U: environmental and cultural organization; A = education and research

5.3	The region seeks that in the future a large proportion of its guests use public transport and non-motorized traffic and abstain from their cars	DMO, G, V	Density of connections with train and bus in the region. Evaluation: medium
5.4	In nature-based offers and guest activities the region takes, whenever possible, into account soft forms of mobility.	DMO, BB	Proportion of offers where soft mobility is a significant component. Evaluation: high
5.5	The region initiates and supports initiatives to promote non-motorized traffic	DMO, G	Length of cycling, mountain biking and hiking paths networks in relation to the surface of the region. Evaluation: high

CASE 6: NATURE AND LANDSCAPE PROTECTION: BERCHTESGADEN

In 1978 the national park of Berchtesgaden in the very southeaster part of Germany was founded. With a total surface of 210 km^2 its major aims are the protection of alpine nature, research, education and recreation. The national park is set up by a high protected core zone covering two third of its surface. About a quarter of the surface is declared as permanent conservation zone with management possibilities.

In 1990 the national park and it´s approaches was declared as a UNESCO biosphere reserve and in 2010 enlarged to the whole administrative district of Berchtesgadener Land with a total surface of 840 km². Following the zoning concept of UNESCO the national park is the core and conservation zone inside the biosphere reserve. The surrounding area is declared as development zone. By the management plans and their key objectives inside the national park the protection of alpine flora and fauna are the major tasks while in the development zone landscape conservation and development are the key issues.

Besides the specific protection, conservation and development plans of the national park and biosphere reserve exist a regional development plan as well as a development plan of the federal state of Bavaria. In integrative part of these plans is the so-called Alpenplan, which defines three zones for the entire Bavarian Alps and therefore also for the district of Berchtesgaden. In one zone mainly linked to the high mountains all kind of development is forbidden. In a second zone mainly linked to areas with mountain agriculture and forestry only activities to maintain the traditional cultivation and conservation are allowed.

Figure 8: Haus der Berge / © ATELIER BRÜCKNER, Michael Jungblut

By the installation of the house of the mountains a very modern and attractive information centre was installed and opened in 2013. There the visitors can pick up all kind of information material guiding them within the national park. The national park itself but also in cooperation

with specialized and trained nature experience guides offers continuous guided tours and information.

Traditionally a close cooperation exists among the national park and the local population, local organizations from mountain farming, tourism but also environmental associations as German mountain club DAV, the Bavarian association for the protection of environment and nature BN Bayern e.V. or the Bavarian bird protection association LBV e.V.

No	Criterion	Key actors[10]	Indicators and evaluation result
6.1	The region supports the zoning of landscape and nature protected areas (by spatial planning) in sensitive natural areas and favours soft, but accepts if necessary also hard measures of visitor guidance	S, G, B, L, U	strict zoning concept, all year information program, information centre Haus der Berge Evaluation: high
6.2	The protection of nature and enhancement of landscape and biodiversity play a central role in the regional strategy and are intentionally and professionally integrated into the offers	DMO, G, S	guaranteed by plans and protected areas; guided tour offers Evaluation: high
6.3	The region contributes with different measures to the protection of nature and landscape	G, L, S	conservation and development plans define a list of measures Evaluation: high
6.4	The region works closely together with the organizations of private nature protection and which results in a concrete benefit for nature and landscape as well as for nature-based tourism	DMO, S, L, U	public events of all organizations as well as joint activities; information centre Evaluation: high
6.5	The region has a considerable share in parks and protected areas	S, G	more than 50% of surface of district Berchtesgadener Land Evaluation: high

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[10] Abbreviations actors:

DMO = Destination Management Organisation, guests, G = municipalities, public authorities; B = local population; H = hotel sector, gastronomy; BB = mountain railways; V = public transport; L: agriculture and forestry; T = tour operator, mountain guide, excursion guide; S: protected areas, parks; U: environmental and cultural organization; A = education and research

CASE 7: INFORMATION AND SENSITISATION: BAUGES

The Massif des Bauges Nature Park is located in the Rhône-Alpes region in France. The park dominated by forest and grassland boasts very diverse habitats. As a UNESCO Geo Park, Massif des Bauges is also witness to mountain-building processes and has a unique karst landscape with caves, gorges and waterfalls.

The aims of the nature park are to protect the mountain region's rich flora and fauna, to preserve biological diversity and in doing so create synergies with nature-based tourism and sustainable development. One declared goal is to support environmental education in cooperation with alpine-wide networks. The geo park plays an important role in this context by making the geological heritage accessible to the public and supporting the development of geotourism. As far as tourism is concerned, nature, landscape and the cultural heritage are crucial for positioning the destination. These values form an integral part of the communication strategy and are actively communicated to the outside world by the nature park and the tourism organisations involved. There is close cooperation with public nature-conservation authorities. Joint campaigns (in particular events) are carried out with environmental organisations.

The Massif des Bauges is an important destination for outdoor sports enthusiasts (e.g. mountain biking, paragliding, nature-friendly winter sports) from large cities in the surrounding area. To minimise conflicts between tourists and nature, the nature park has launched the "Respecter c'est protéger" ("Respect to protect") campaign and provides visitors with information on appropriate behaviour via information boards, flyers and the website.

Figure 9: Massif de Bauges / © Denis Vidalie/PNRMB

The nature park provides professional services for informing, educating and sensitising visitors and the local population on nature and landscape topics, including the two information centres. To make its geological heritage accessible to the wider public, the nature park offers events, excursions and workshops and develops programmes and materials for schools. It also uses new methods of environmental education.

There are cooperation projects with stakeholders in eco-tourism and environmental education, for instance with the network of nature guides. The "Réseau des professionnels du Parc naturel régional du Massif des Bauges" (RePERE), a group of experts who offer educational services, plays an important role. Via the "Fermes pédagogiques" initiative, two farms and a regional cooperative are contributing to sensitising children and educating them about environmental issues. Active learning in different environments (e.g. making cheese) is supported by workshops and games.

No	Criterion	Key actors[11]	Indicators and evaluation result
7.1	The regional nature and landscape values build a core component of the communication strategy of the region and we actively communicate them	DMO, S, U	Number of events in the region in a year in the field of nature-based tourism, nature, landscape and biodiversity. Evaluation: high
7.2	Professional offers for information, education and sensitization of guests and the local population about nature and landscape issues exist in the region	DMO, S, U	Sensitization measures in the region for nature, landscape and biodiversity per year (e.g. exhibitions, print materials, website, social media activities). Evaluation: high
7.3	The employees and those of the tourism service providers enjoy regular further educations on nature and environmental issues and know the natural and cultural attractions of the region and its key partners in nature protection	DMO, H, BB, U	Trainings and further educations about nature and environment of the employees in the region. Evaluation: high
7.4	The region has an extensive program of excursions to all important natural and its cultural values	DMO, S, U, A	Percent of guests, who participate in a nature excursion. Evaluation: low
7.5	The region communicates nature and landscape topics taking into account the latest teaching knowledge and modern information and communication technology	DMO, S, U, A	Number of offers taking into account modern information and communication technology (e.g. smart phone app, multimedia, audio guide etc.). Evaluation: medium

CASE 8: NATURE-ORIENTED MARKETING: BERGSTEIGERDÖRFER

Duties and functions of the mountaineering villages Mountaineering villages are exemplary regional cores of development in sustainable alpine tourism that have a corresponding tradition. They guarantee a professional range of tourism activities for mountaineers, boast an excellent quality of landscape and environment, and are committed to the preservation of local cultural and natural values.

As alpine centres of competence, mountaineering villages place an emphasis on self-responsibility, capability and independence, as well as an environmentally-aware and responsible behaviour of their guests on the mountain. Big anthropogenic transformation and damage of landscape should not be found in mountaineering villages, but therefore a

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[11] Abbreviations actors:

DMO = Destination Management Organisation, guests, G = municipalities, public authorities; B = local population; H = hotel sector, gastronomy; BB = mountain railways; V = public transport; L: agriculture and forestry; T = tour operator, mountain guide, excursion guide; S: protected areas, parks; U: environmental and cultural organization; A = education and research

functional mountain agriculture, which is in balance with a cultural landscape that offers a platform for collaboration and creative new ideas.

In a first selection of villages these are the main criteria for becoming a mountaineering village. No wonder that most of the villages are situated peripheral, in the shadow of big ski areas and sometimes, but not always they are part of protected areas, although this is mainly a natural circumstance than a hard criteria. The model character of the mountaineering villages is also apparent in the fact that they want to achieve the objective of sustainable development in the Alpine region, in harmony with relevant legal regulations and programmes.

Figure 10: Schmirn in the Schmirntal Valley, North Tyrol / © Christina Schwann

Philosophy of tourism: The main focus is on achieving sophisticated mountain tour objectives and the deliberate overall experience of nature including the following components: physical exercise, coping with alpine difficulties, competence and risk management on the mountain, enjoying the beauty of nature, deceleration. For local tourism providers this means a particular restraint in the technical development of the mountain region.

Forecast: From the beginning of the Mountaineering villages in 2005, over the first, second and actually third period of financial support by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management and the EU - Fund for Rural Development there is now a very clear direction defined which is expressed in the "Criteria for Mountaineering Villages". Because of this very hard criteria there will be not more than about 25 Mountaineering Villages in Austria (actually there are 20), always focusing on the main aim: to help small villages with nearly no technical tourism infrastructure as large skiing areas, but with a beautiful landscape, a good net of hiking trails and alpine huts as well as a small but high qualitative gastronomy.

First steps over the boarder of Austria were taken in 2015 with the first German Mountaineering Village – Ramsau by Berchtesgaden, which is the result of a cooperation between the Austrian Alpine Association and the German Alpine Association. Other cooperations with the Club Alpine Italiano (CAI) the Alpenverein Südtirol (AVS) and the Planinska zveza Slovenije (PZS) will follow and should guarantee the high project quality.
A Memorandum of Understanding with the Alpine Convention is aimed to underline the political importance of the project in the field of sustainable tourism and regional development (www.bergsteigerdoerfer.at).

No	Criterion	Key actors[12]	Indicators and evaluation result
8.1	The special values of our nature, landscape and biodiversity form a core element of the positioning of the region	L, S, U, DMO, G, B	Criteria for Mountaineering Villages, especially the exclusion criteria guarantee the values of nature landscape and cultural heritage;
8.2	Nature sport offers are a central component of our long-term marketing strategy	DMO, G, H, T, V	A high identification and pride of the inhabitants could be seen; they get more and more resistant against the high pressure on the alps by diverse lobbies.
8.3	As part of the nature-based tourism marketing, the region maintains the cooperation with relevant regional partners	DMO, G, B, H, V, L, T, S, U, A	Mountaineering Villages are a bottom up strategy; the Alpine Association only provides a platform for regional initiatives, events, offers… all of them are seen on the website
8.4	The region is involved in broader national and international environmental and sustainability networks for experience exchange.	DMO, G,	Diverse seminars and presentations, as well as cooperations with existing initiatives like "So schmecken die Berge" and strong connections to diverse projects of the Alpine Association.
8.5	The region conducts regular market analyses and thereby acquire important knowledge about the market situation of nature-based tourism.	DMO, G, H, T	Professional expertises as well as a strong contact to the press, offers a good knowledge about the chances on the market. Website analysis and observation of the numbers of overnight stays.

CASE 9: REGIONAL VALUE CHAIN: AMMERGAUER ALPEN

The Ammergauer Alpen are a traditional destination located about 100km in the south of Munich. Most know by the famous passion plays hold all ten year in Oberammergau, the Benedictine monastery Ettal as well as the royal castle of Linderhof the region is not only a place for holidaymakers but also for a huge number of day-trip visitors. Traditionally agriculture focuses on milk production, which contributes to a very high extend to landscape conservation in the valley of Ammer and Linder. Because of the extensive production methods biodiversity of the mountain meadows is outstanding.

In 2002 the farmers discussed to found a cooperative to produce their own cheese exclusively out of local and extensively produced milk. They reached to win the monks of the monastery as partners. Three years later the construction of a dairy located directly in the neighbourhood of the monastery Ettal was finished. The dairy was planed as a show production combined with a restaurant and a salesroom. At the beginning about 1.500 litre of daily milk production was processed, today 10 years later the double level of 3.000 litre was reached.

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[12] Abbreviations actors:

DMO = Destination Management Organisation, guests, G = municipalities, public authorities; B = local population; H = hotel sector, gastronomy; BB = mountain railways; V = public transport; L: agriculture and forestry; T = tour operator, mountain guide, excursion guide; S: protected areas, parks; U: environmental and cultural organization; A = education and research

The products as yoghurt, white cheese, butter and more than 10 different types of cheese are sold not only at the dairy but also in regional food supermarkets. Furthermore the destination management using the same brand as the dairy created a Ammergauer Alpen, breakfast which offers the products in hotels, guesthouses but also accommodation with breakfast at farms. In the restaurant furthermore by the farmers women locally produces cakes are offered as well as dishes with ham and sausages from local slaughtered beef. Fulltime as well as part-time jobs in the dairy were created.

Figure 11: Visiting diary / Schaukäserei Ammergauer Alpen eG / ©
Siegfried Karpf

Before the project started a continuous decline of farmers was going on. This negative trend was stopped mainly because of two reasons. First by the regional distribution of their products the farmers get a higher price for milk and as members of the cooperative they participate in its earnings. Second a high level of identification and a sense of community lead to a high motivation to contribute to the success. In 2013 the dairy was the first, which was awarded by the Bavarian state minister of agriculture and are now allow using the signet "proofed Bavarian quality Ammergauer Alpen"

No	Criterion	Key actors[13]	Indicators and evaluation result
9.1	The combination of added value and nature protection, landscape development and enhancement of biodiversity is of great importance for our region.	DMO, G, L	less than 10% - total added value of the region is high because of other branches – tourism is not the dominant sector Evaluation: low
9.2	Initiatives and support efforts to ensure that nature-based tourism contributes to the added value of the region.	DMO, G, BB, H, L	1) more than 5 projects – currently the installation of a nature park with a large set of sub-projects Evaluation: high
9.3	Striving for a functioning agricultural and forestry sector and an intact sector of commerce in the region.	DMO, H, BB L	very successful project involving not only farmers but also local food production and distribution; furthermore promotion of agriculture by offering school class visits in dairy; strong cooperation with monastery owning a brewery Evaluation: high
9.4	Striving for functioning of public	DMO,	its part of the DMO management

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[13] Abbreviations actors:

DMO = Destination Management Organisation, guests, G = municipalities, public authorities; B = local population; H = hotel sector, gastronomy; BB = mountain railways; V = public transport; L: agriculture and forestry; T = tour operator, mountain guide, excursion guide; S: protected areas, parks; U: environmental and cultural organization; A = education and research

	services in the region, such as school, post office, grocery shop, doctor etc.	L	obligations – but cross marketing activities could be more intense Evaluation: medium
9.5	Commitment to actively promote cooperation amongst the various sectors and industries in the region	DMO, G, L	1) A cooperative was founded and runs all activities and business Evaluation: high

CASE 10: QUALITY MANAGEMENT: MARITIME ALPS

The Maritime Alps are located in the southwestern part of the Alps, divided between the Italian provinces of Cuneo and Imperia and the French department of Alpes-Maritimes. Within the Italian side are included 2 large protected areas, the regional Natural Park of Maritime Alps and the regional Natural Park of Ligurian Alps.

The two parks started in the Nineties a successful path towards a more sustainable development of their respective territories, recognizing the importance for protected areas to implement adequate quality and environment management tools. They both represent a very interesting example since it is part from one side of a voluntary process aimed at receiving tailored EU and international certifications, and from the other side, in parallel, reinforced through effective cross-border cooperation.

Quality Management (QM) is closely linked to the concept of continuous improvement, involving repetition and evaluation. Over the years, an increasing number of certifications appeared, with different requirements and degrees of implementation, both at National or EU/international level.

One of these is the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism (ECTS), a methodological tool and a certification that allows better management of protected areas for the development of sustainable tourism, elaborated by the EUROPARC Federation. The Natural Park of Maritime Alps was the first Italian protected area to receive this award (2001), that led to the creation of the "Ecotourism Association in Maritime Alps". Nowadays, there are more than 50 associated members and the Association has become the reference point for visitors who wish to

Figure 12: The village of Palanfrè / © G. Bernardi, www.parcoalpimarittime.it

experience and stay in the Maritime Alps, according to a more eco-friendly and sustainable approach.

A further level of implementation involves the release of EMAS/ISO 14001 registration and/or the EU Ecolabel. The adhesion to EMAS/ISO standards provides an opportunity to acquire a

environmental management system (EMS) that allows to clearly define roles and responsibilities and to put in place all the necessary tools to carry out these activities in a systematic, efficient and effective way.

Besides volontary instruments, an important role is played by external relations and cross-border cooperation to improve overall QM. Both parks established a long-standing collaboration and cooperation with neighbouring National Park of Mercantour. In 1987, National Park of Mercantour and Maritime Alps Park signed a twinning agreement – followed by a Twinning Charter - to strengthen the collaboration between the two neighbouring protected areas. This led to the implementation of several EU projects, the constitution of a European Group for Territorial Cooperation (EGCT, 2013), a legal entity established also with the aim to prepare the dossier for the inscription of the "Mediterranean Alps" to the Tentative List of the UNESCO World Heritage Programme (April 2014).

No	Criterion	Key actors[14]	Indicators and evaluation result
10.1	The region is involved in tourism-quality programs related to nature and environment on international, national or regional level.	DMO, H, BB, V	-> n° of accomodations and facilities certified "Ecolabel" e.g: The initiative "Ecoturismo in Marittime" which highlight most eco-friendly facilities in the area
10.2	The region is certified in the field of nature, environment and sustainability.	DMO, T, S, U, A	-> Presence of EMS tools (e.g. EMAS, 14001) or QM tools (e.g. ISO 9001) e.g: the certification ISO14001 received by the Park of Ligurian Alps (2013
10.3	The region has additional certifications, e.g. in the field of social sustainability or corporate social responsibility	G, B, H, T, S	-> Presence of further certifications: (e.g. European Diploma of protected areas, European Charter for Sustainable Tourism, other national awards like the "Legambiente's greenflag" for the Park of Maritime Alps etc.)
10.4	The region reviews the results regarding the further development of nature-based tourism in regular evaluations.	S, U, A	-> the EGTC and the candidature to the Tentative List of the UNESCO World Heritage Programme recently allowed to a continuous review of overall framework
10.5	The region maintains regular cooperation with applied research institutions (educational institutions, universities of applied sciences, universities, other stakeholders).	G, B, L, S, U, A	-> N° of stakeholders/projects or agreements with which regular cooperation is established e.g. implementation of several EU projects, especially on the IT/FR ALCOTRA cross-border Programme (e.g. ibex migrations) Main stakeholders: French national park of Mercantour, local public authorities of Piemonte and Liguria regions, Politecnico di Torino, other parks and protected areas

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[14] Abbreviations actors:

DMO = Destination Management Organisation, guests, G = municipalities, public authorities; B = local population; H = hotel sector, gastronomy; BB = mountain railways; V = public transport; L: agriculture and forestry; T = tour operator, mountain guide, excursion guide; S: protected areas, parks; U: environmental and cultural organization; A = education and research

II.3.1. FURTHER APPROACHES

The discussed integrated management approach, which was based on ten quality standards, is one of several possibilities to raise awareness about sustainable tourism and to foster the development of sustainable offers. The following Table 2 shows some other examples from different Alpine states.

Country	Name of project	Keywords	QR Code with integrated link
Austria	recommendations and landmarks for development processes in tourism regions	checklist , guideline, development processes, tourism regions, all-season tourism, extending tourist season, sustainability, innovation	Up-to-date information can be obtained from post.II1@bmwfw.gv.at
Germany	Developing criteria for the sustainable structuring of tourism destinations"	criteria, guidelines, sustainable structuring, certification systems, check-lists	
France	An excellence center for mountain tourism in summer (Pôle d'excellence touristique "tourisme de montagne en été")	summer season, less snow development model, welcome tourists all year round	
Switzerland	Network of Swiss Parks	Sustainable and nature-based tourism in parks	
Slovenia	Green Tourism Scheme	Slovenia Green, Green Scheme, sustainable tourism	

Table 2: Approaches to foster sustainable tourism development

II.4. CONCLUSIONS PART 1

The Tourism Protocol of the Alpine Convention gives several direct links to the valorisation of natural and cultural heritage. First of all in the preamble it is mentioned that *natural and cultural heritage as well as the countryside constitute an essential part of tourism in the Alps[15]* as well as it is stated that *recent trends seem to be moving towards greater harmony between tourism and the environment; for customers, an increasing interest in attractive natural surroundings that are protected summer and winter alike, and for local decision makers, concern for making tourist destinations more environmentally-friendly*.

Furthermore the Contracting Parties agree *to contribute to sustainable development in the Alps by encouraging environmentally-friendly tourism, which is also an essential basis for the standard of living and economy of the local people*. In addition there exists an agreement that *the local population must be able to develop their own social, cultural and economic development plan, and take part in its implementation in the existing institutional framework*. Thereby the contracting parties see a high share of the responsibility for future tourism development on the local and regional level and recommend implicitly participatory approaches.

Even though these general statements of the preamble have an Alpine wide validity their relevance is even more important to those destinations, which focus on nature and culture as basis for their touristic products and development strategy.

Looking at the specific measures in the article 5 of the Tourism Protocol the Contracting Parties agree to *undertake to combine sustainable development with environmentally-friendly tourism. To this end, they shall support the preparation and implementation of guidelines, development programmes and sectoral plans which take the objectives of this Protocol into account and which are initiated by the competent bodies at the most appropriate level.* The protocol leaves open, at which level such a support shall be given. Concentrating on those areas which have the potential of an inscription as a site into the World Heritage List as well as lists of other international designations, as it is given by the mandate of the working group, it is obvious that the sites and especially their touristic relevance should get targeted.

From the perspective of the consumer as well as from a technical perspective the destination level seems the appropriate starting point for successful sustainable tourism development.

The quality criteria presented above by the working group deliver a framework, covering article 5.2. Furthermore they can be used for structuring development processes by

- Setting up participatory processes within the destinations to discuss a development strategy. The participation should cover tourism stakeholders as well as other actors which are directly or indirectly affected by the tourism system.
- Discussing concrete strategic objectives linked to the ten quality criteria as well as fixing operative targets for each of the five sub quality criteria.
- Defining an implementation plan with concrete measures and their expected effects. A management structure fixing responsibilities and milestones should always be part of each implementation

This approach is in line with the guidelines for developing tourism in article 6. Articel 5.1 of the protocol states that the contracting parties "*shall support the preparation and implementation*". Support programs could be (indicative list of options):

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[15] text in italic type are cited from the protocol tourism

- Awards for the best regional sustainable tourism development plan
- Combining the award with a marketing package of the national or regional tourism marketing organization to promote the destination
- Development of an excellence network for destination management focussing on the support of selected quality criteria by specific programs open to all destinations having started the process. This could include the creation of shared platforms such as for good Alpine tourism architecture, the organization of product development workshops, courses in quality management, etc.
- Adding or strengthening sustainability criteria in existing programs of the contracting parties. By this those applications, which follow an integrated sustainable tourism development plan get a higher probability to get funded.
- Adding or strengthening sustainability criteria in existing programs of the contracting parties. Applications, which follow an integrated sustainable tourism development plan shall get a higher probability to get funded.
- Offering destinations with a sustainable tourism development approach a higher weight in advertising and press work.

The implementation of one or several of these options always have to be seen in the context of the EU state-aid regulations as well as the national and regional responsabilities for tourism policy and related activities. Therefore, which support programs seem to be suitable and who shall be in charge for implementation must get discussed and decided indivitually.

All these options mentioned abovecan be seen as incentives to promote sustainable tourism development. By article 6.4b. incentives should fulfill the requirements of a *continuation or development of environmentally-friendly tourism, and the promotion of the natural and cultural heritage of tourist areas* in extensive tourism areas.

There is no need to set up new legislation or instruments to initially boost sustainable development of nature and culture based destinations but rather a strategy which, strengthens the supply side and by this stimulates and redirects the demand for nature und culture based tourism. The promotion of high quality nature and culture based destinations should get major attention. A strategy like that requires a medium and long term perspective.
Comment Ms Preslmair:

The discussion within the Working Group about instruments to measure the impacts of the inscription of a site into the World Heritage List as well as lists of other international designations have identified a broad variety of instruments (indicator systems included). They can either get applied 1:1 or they can get adapted and refined to the specific characteristics and objectives of a region. Nevertheless, the working group wants to underline that an evaluation of a status of a destination or a comparison over the time can support the sustainable development process to detect deficits or to make a success visible. A causal proof of the effectiveness of an inscription into a international list from scientific position is not possible.

The proposed method of quality criteria is a combined approach which is action oriented. Because of the qualitative evaluation approach based on simple three stages scale (low / medium / high) these criteria easily can get applied by the destination management and the involved stakeholders.

Therefore it is obvious that the sustainable development process with a focus on tourism development in a destination itself is the core element. The application of an indicator system, which is not associated with a permanent review, will not delivier any contribution to a development.

III. PART 2: ALPINE TOURISM GOVERNANCE

III.1. ALPINE TOURISM GOVERNANCE AND THE ALPINE CONVENTION

The term governance is widely used in a variety of academic and practitioner circles. It implies "systems of governing" and the ways in which societies are governed, ruled or "steered" (Bramwell, 2011). Therefore, Alpine Tourism Governance focuses on systems of tourism governing in the Alpine area, more specifically in the context of the Alpine Convention about the way of governing the tourism system within the perimeter laid down in the Convention.

When analysing tourism governance processes to understand how societies steer policy making three main types get visible:

- First a discussion and negotiation of tourism relevant objectives and measures can take place among actors from the same level. Very often the level is local (municipality) or destination based (a larger unit set up mostly by a landscape element as a lake, valley or a mountain). Interest groups and associated organizations (e.g. the local hotel owners, ropeway companies, farm tourism suppliers) on the respective level there take an important role in policy making. They bundle and articulate their interests against the other stakeholders and actors or set up coalitions with them. This type of governance process is called horizontal and mainly takes place if the decision taking can be done without actors from a higher level.

- Second there exist tourism linked processes needing a steering across the levels as on the one side the actors at the local and destination level are affected or initiators but also the dimension of decision taking touches the responsibility or jurisdiction on a higher level which might be federal (Canton, Länder or a large political region (NUTS II)). In this case the decision making needs a steering among the actors from different levels (e.g. local hotel owner association, regional destination management unit, the tourist board on federal level) and therefore the type of the governance process is called vertical.

- Finally, a distinction can be made concerning the involved stakeholder or actor groups. Sometimes a field of discussion is limited to one specific group as e.g. only the farm holiday suppliers among themselves or just the alpine clubs as owners of the mountain huts. If the discussion is running only within a specific stakeholder group, the process is of the type "single stakeholder". If many stakeholder groups representing different interests are involved it is called a multi-stakeholder process. Out of the two types horizontal and vertical in combination with single- or multi-stakeholder four basic governance types can be described.

Most often found are so called multi-level / multi-stakeholder processes which are part of the vertical governance types.

Governance processes are not static. The type of governance can change over the time. Very often processes start on local or destination level as the proposal for a tourism infrastructure project or a change of the product focus in destination management was made by tourism stakeholders on site. Therefore, processes can have a horizontal character at the beginning but because of the political dimension or the need of a permit by an administrative body from a higher level they change over the time to a more vertical type.

As an example the installation of the nature park Nagelfluhkette in the region Allgäu shall be given. At the beginning there was the discussion among the mayors of the municipalities about the pros and cons of a nature park. After having found a consensus among themselves and a debate and decision taking in the local parliaments the next step was the prepa-

ration of an official application. While this phase a dialog with higher levels (district, region and and federal state) was opened and therefore the process turned to a multi-level type.

To understand how aspects of sustainable development can play a stronger role in alpine tourism governance it is needed to know the stakeholder groups which might get part of the governing in the sense of steering processes.

To identify the different types of stakeholders and actors taking part in tourism governance a look at tourism as a system shall be taken. Structuring tourism as a system (Kaspar, 1996) there can be seen three main system elements:

1) The general framework around the tourism system set up by economy, environment, society, technology and politics, which itself is exposed to driving forces causing a permanent need for adaptation

2) The tourism objects as a combination of physical objects (infrastructure, specific tourism relevant facilities) and the tourism stakeholders providing services which make use of the objects. There institutional subsystems can be found, within the stakeholders of similar type organize and bundle their interests (eg. a local hotel owner association, a federation of farmers offering farm tourism, …),

3) The guests and visitors as the subsystem of tourism subjects, which take an own mostly passive role in governance. They usually are not active participants in the discussions but often indirectly determine the argumentation of the discussion ("this is needed for our guests"). Today and more intense in future they may take by social media (e.g. a destination facebook page) an active role in governance processes by commenting on the governance process running on site.

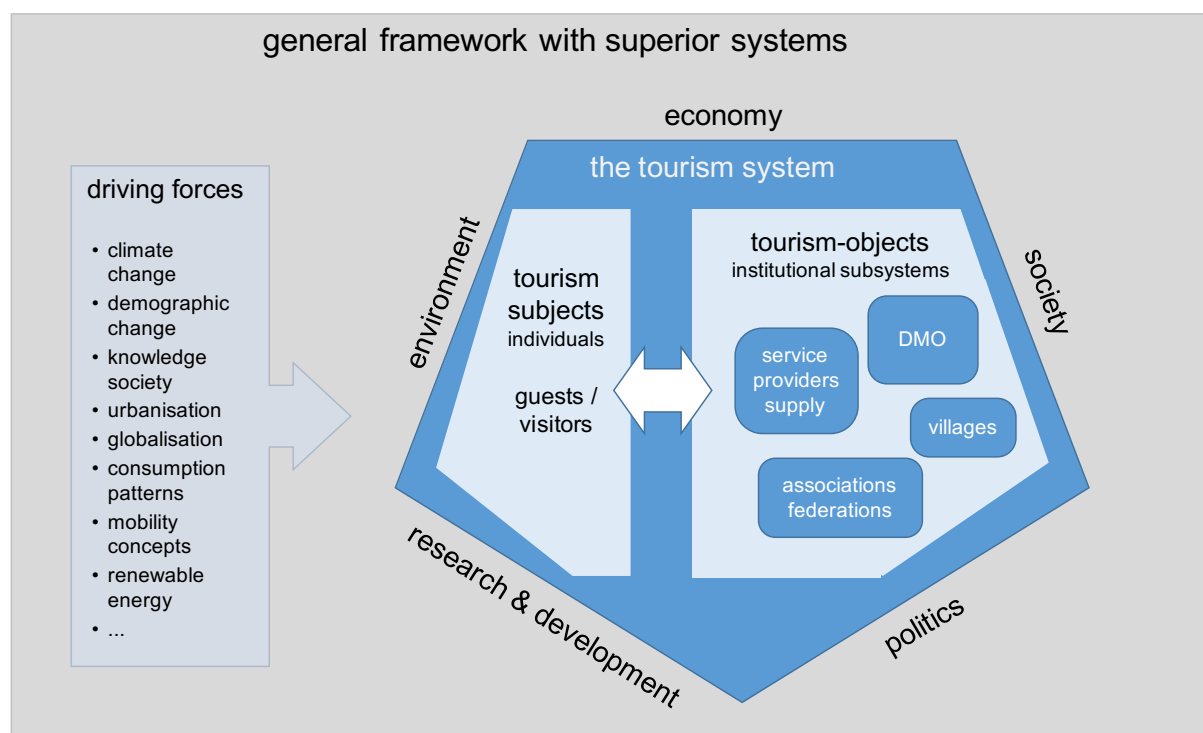shows these three elements within a general framework of superior systems.

Figure 13: tourism as system embedded into a general framework
(own schematic and by driving forces supplemented figure based on Kaspar, 1996)

A first view at the tourism system makes visible that not only stakeholders coming from the institutional subsystems, the tourism objects take part in tourism governance. Also actors representing the five framework elements mentioned above are part of the governance process: representatives of other economic sectors which benefit or suffer by tourism, environmental associations and related administrative bodies, representatives of society being engaged in culture or social activities, actors from research and technology development and especially policy makers often in combination with the related administration.

The Alpine Convention is a relevant actor in the alpine tourism governance, since it provisions, in particular those of the Tourism Protocol, set an overall framework for the international cooperation in the field of sustainable tourism. In this respect, the bodies of the Alpine Convention can be seen as covering different governance fields and actions.

On the one hand, the Alpine Conference represents a policy platform, establishing general common aims for the Contracting Parties that are coordinated in their implementation by the Permanent Committee. On the other hand, the Working Groups and Platforms tackle relevant issues for the Alpine area, producing knowledge and fostering cooperation and exchange from experts of the Alpine countries. This exchange takes place not only within the groups, but also between different groups. For instance, in the years 2014-2016, several Working Groups have cooperated with the Sustainable Tourism Working group for issues related to sustainable tourism: for example, the Working Group for the elaboration of the Sixth Report on the State of the Alps has recognized sustainable tourism as contributing to an advancement of green economy in the Alps. Moreover, the Compliance Committee has undertaken an in-depth analysis of specific provisions of the Tourism Protocol.

The Observers are another important part of the governance system of the Alpine Convention. With specific relation to tourism and to the governance framework addressed in this report, they represent instances concerning one or more of the five governance elements mentioned (politics, technological progress and research, environment, economy, society)[16]

This picture from the Alpine Convention underlines that alpine governance in general as well as specifically tourism governance have to be seen in a multi-stakeholder context. In many cases activities negotiated among stakeholders from the tourism objects side (see Figure 1 right side) touch the interest of stakeholder groups from outside.

Sometimes tourism stakeholders intend to keep governance process within their group. Such a single stakeholder or tourism sector isolated governance approach will provoke reactions from outside the tourism sector as at a certain stage of the process it will get public. Because of the late involvement now the excluded groups will use all their options to gather influence within the governance process. Especially in the case that an excluded stakeholder group has a strong political, legal or public position it will use its influence. Often this leads to long lasting public debates and can damage the reputation of the entire destination. Tourism stakeholders therefore should accept that in any case tourism is embedded into other systems and a participation of stakeholders from the framework elements in most cases is needed and useful.

Tourism is a cross-sectional business involving many private enterprises, making use of natural and cultural resources as well as infrastructure provided by public authorities and the state. Therefore, compared to other business areas the number of stakeholder groups is very large. Tourism mostly touches permanent public interests because of a widespread use of

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[16] The Observers of the Alpine Convention are: European Association of elected Representatives of Mountain Regions, Alliance in the Alps, Alparc, Alps-Adriatic Alliance, Alpine Town of the Year Association, Arge Alp, CIPRA, Club Arc Alpin, Euromontana, FACE, FIANET, ISCAR, IUCN, Alpine Space Programme, Pro Mont-Blanc, UNEP, WWF.

natural and cultural heritage. The impacts of tourism have an area-wide character within a destination. In other businesses the impacts are often local at the site of a company (e.g. all type of manufacturing trade). Investments in tourism are not only private. Many infrastructure investments are public. Hence there is a need for a participation at least of the local parliaments but often also of the population.

The following Table 3 structures the different groups of stakeholders in tourism as well as tourism involved groups from the framework elements and gives examples. The table is an indicative list of stakeholders and does not claim to be complete. It shows the potential complexity of tourism governance processes.

groups	local and destination level		regional (NUTS II) / federal level		national and international level	
	stakeholders	examples	stakeholders	examples	stakeholders	examples
tourism objects: service providers, suppliers, local tourism and destination management, villages/municipalities with tourism infrastructure…						
accommodation	hotel owners, tenants, B&B, …	local hoteliers association, association of young hoteliers of destination	regional federation of hoteliers regional federation of farm tourism suppliers	federalberghi Veneto gallo rosso south Tirol, Urlaub auf dem Bauernhof Bayern	national / inter-national organi-zations of hoteliers and other accom-modation types	IHA Hotelverband Deutschland Association of Tourist Farms of Slovenia
food & beverage	restaurant owners, tenants, mountain huts, farm shops …	organization of farm shops / regional food distributors at destination level	regional federation of gastronomy regional distribution network of direct buy farm-shops	slow food Carinthia Gutes vom Bauernhof Tirol	National / inter-national organi-zations in the field of food and beverage	slow food international
transport	ropeway & bus companies, car rental, …	partners of the destination skiing area ticket system	regional transport network regional association of roapways	Cars Rhone-Alpes Bergbahnen Graubünden (BBGR)	National / inter-national organi-zations in the field of transport	FIANET (ropeways) RDA international bus touristic association
sports & events	ski & climbing schools, bike rental, skiing competitions, cultural events…	local FIS world cup committee for a biathlon passion play organization committee Oberammergau	skiing federation regional cultural heritage conservation organization	Ski Valais (CH) Gebirgsschützen Upper Bavaria	National / inter-national organi-zations in the field of sports / events	FIS (federation international du ski)
health & wellness	investors & mana-gement of SPAs, clinics, beauty & wellness,…	CEO of a large SPA attraction with more than 1 Mio guests per year	regional federation of health and SPA destinations	Bavarian federation of SPA towns	National / inter-national organi-zations in the field health & wellness	International SPA Association Österreichischer Heilbäderverband

framework elements: economy, ecology, society, politics and R&D					
economy	retailers, estate agents, artisans, farmers, producers of technology for tourism sector…	local association of retailers, cooperative of cheese / wine / ham producers	regional chamber of commerce regional farmers association	Les chambres de commerce et d' industrie Rhône-Alpes Federazione Regionale degli Agricoltori del Piemonte	National / international economic organizations	OECD Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia
ecology	members of the local committee of nature conservation organisations, …	local committee of the national alpine club, bird conservationists	regional committee of the national alpine club, bird conservationists	Alpenverein Südtirol Pro Natura Grischun	National / international environmental organizations	Deutscher Alpenverein CIPRA International ALPARC
society	members from local associations with social and cultural background	local action group supporting elder residents, women group tailoring traditional costumes	Regional hunting organizations regional federations conserving ancient customs	Fédération Régionale des Chasseurs de Rhône Alpes Allgäuer Gauverband der Gebirgstrachten und Heimatvereine	National / international social / cultural organizations	UNESCO ADHF Handicapés de France
politics	mayors, deputies from parliaments, members from political parties	working group tourism built by the mayors of a destination	government members and deputies of regional parliaments	ministers / member of regional government explicitly responsible for tourism policy (eg. Wirtschaftslandesräte Austrian Länder)	members of national or international policy relevant institutions and their bodies	EUSALP EU-CI Alpine Space Alpine Convention Ministries of Economics (-> tourism)
R&D	development department of technology companies, research institutes, satellite station of university / national research unit	satellite of a university research institute observing glaciers to analyse climate change and it local impacts	research (and higher education) institutions from federal level with a branch focussing tourism and related topics	universities and universities of applied sciences, eg. Bocconi Milano, Free University of Bolzano, EURAC, IMC Krems, Kempten, HSR Rapperswil, …	research (and higher education) institutions from national / international level with a branch focussing tourism and related topics	ESPON groups AIEST DGT (German Society of Tourism Sciences)

Table 3: overview about stakeholder groups on different levels and related examples

III.2. TOURISM GOVERNANCE: FINDINGS BY AN EXPERT SURVEY

A key aspect in the mandate was:

"collecting knowledge and experiences and proposing recommendations on how to coordinate the multilevel Alpine tourism governance system –including destination management as a part of it –to increase the share of sustainable tourism products continuously and in coherence with the Alpine Convention."

The knowledge collection was realized by a survey among experts in the field of sustainable tourism development. The members of the working group were asked to provide proposals from their country for potential interview partners. An interview guideline combined with a questionnaire were developed collecting information about cases of tourism governance processes. The information covered a short description of the case, type and structure of the governance process, results and a judgment about the success as well as failure[17]. Finally 23 experts were proposed (AT (4), CH (2), DE (4), FRA (3), ITA (5), SLO (3), EU/Alpine-Level (2)). All agreed to take part in a phone interview with a duration of about 30-45 minutes. These interviews took place in December 2015 and January 2016. To get as much background information as possible the interview partners got the confirmation that their responses will get treated anonymous.

The selected cases (see Table 4) covered a broad variety of tourism relevant development fields: mobility (5), natural heritage (4), regional products (2), accommodation (2), brand management, spatial planning, organizational, product- & cultural development, strategic approach (1). Out of the 23 cases 16 followed a clear formalized governance approach, 2 had an informal than an adjusted formalized approach, one mixed form (formal/informal) and the other 4 had an informal character. Most (19) where multi-stakeholder processes (including mixed forms – combination with horizontal and vertical), 1 had a clear vertical, 3 a clear horizontal character. The type of the projects or processes was either strategic development (16), product development (14), project development and implementation (9), development of instruments for regulation and management (7) or had a legislative background (1) (multiple responses in question allowed). Hence the realized sample can be seen as a good selection covering a broad variety of tourism governance processes.

The main concern of the survey was to identify conditions, which are needed to manage governance processes in an effective and efficient way that they lead to more sustainable tourism. Hence the objective of the survey was not only to classify governance processes as successful or not. Much more it was of interest to analyse by which governance elements sustainability aspects can get a higher weight or vice versa how barriers against more sustainability emerge. A very first check showed that the governance structure itself (horizontal / vertical) does not have an influence on the degree of sustainability or success of projects.

All 23 projects are individual and each had its own specific governance process. This process was or is embedded in the existing local, regional and national legal and administrative framework. In case of cross-border projects additional constraints had to get resolved because of different administrative systems and institutional disparities. Therefore, an analysis must concentrate on the identification of generalized, framework independent conditions supporting a "good governance in sustainable tourism".

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[17] The judgement by the experts is a single subjective statement from their personal perspective. This has no scientific evidence but is an important input into this qualitative study to develop a framework for an explanation of governance processes supporting sustainable tourism development.

name of project	key object	level	state
Alles Birne	regional product development and tourism development in the region of Mostviertel	region	AT
Allgäu Tourismus	brand Allgäu	region	DE
Alpine Pearls	network of cooperation of destinations with soft mobility	alpine space	EU
Bergsteigerdörfer ohne Grenzen	network of small alpinism municipalities	municipality	IT
Bioshärenpark Partnerkonzept	partner concept in the biosphere parc, promoting sustainable products and services	region	AT
Dolomiti 2040	sustainable tourism strategy for the UNESCO Dolomites	region	IT
European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected areas	practical management tool for ensuring a balanced economic, social and environmental development of protected areas in Europe	international	EU
Greeh scheme of Slovenian tourism	Certification program for destinations and providers	national	SL
Gseipur – Mobilitätsplattform	project development and implementation for gentle mobility	region	AT
Landerlebnisreisen	agriculture businesses linking them with tourism	region	DE
Les P'tites Routes du Soleil	project development and implementation, measures for gentle mobility - electric-bike	federal-state level	FRA
Nachhaltigkeits-Check für Tourismus- destinationen	certification, labelling for sustainable destinations	federal-state level	DE
Nattitude	network of accommodation that respect the tradition of the region Auvergne	region	FRA
Natur- und Geopark TERRA.Vita	developing a master plan for integrative & long-term development of the nature park	region	DE
NaturaValp	association for the development and promotion of responsible tourism in Valpelline	region	IT
Naturparke Steiermark	cooperation between 7 nature parks creating nature tourism products	federal-state level	AT
Schweizer Jugendherbergen	sustainable corporate and organizational development	national	CH
Sustainable Destina- tion Scuol Engadin Val Müstair Samnaun	NaTourCert - quality standards for nature-based tourism	region	CH
Sweet Mountains	network with reception facilities, offering soft tourism using the typical elements of the territory	region	IT
Tolmin Gorges	governance and maintenance of natural heritage through the use of environmentally friendly materials.	municipality	SL
Transboundary eco- region Julian Alps (TB Eco-region)	sustainable tourism in cross boarder Eco-region Julian Alps (SL, ITA)	transnational	SL
TURNAT - Governance of tourism in protected areas	strategy for sustainable tourism in the protected areas of Trentino	federal-state level	IT
Zones de tranquillitès au sens de la Convention alpine	aims to keep some natural areas accessible to outdoor users for harmonized meeting between nature and human being	national / alpine region	FRA

Table 4: list of projects commented by experts concerning governance experiences

By a review of scientific publications about "tourism governance" in general and more specifically with a focus on "sustainable tourism" ten criteria for achieving good tourism governance   effectiveness of in deep analysis could get identified: accountability, transparency, structure, effectiveness, efficiency, strategic visions, leadership, power, constructive communication, public participation (Beaumont & Dredge, 2010; Eagles, 2009; Ruhanen, Scott, Richie, & Tkaczynski, 2010). Reflecting these ten criteria even questions for a qualitative analysis of the 23 cases were developed:

1. Was there a setting of strategic objectives or a continuing with existing / revised strategic objectives?

2. Was there a concrete implementation plan / a list of in detail described measures?

3. Is there a continuous, objective and transparent controlling of the achievement of goals and the implementation of planned measures?

4. Are the management structures effective concerning task (= operational structure) and duties (organizational structure with linked competencies)?

5. Were appropriate resources (budget and human resources) allocated to the process (management and measures) a) while the process itself and b) for the follow up phase?

6. Which level (from just informing to active sharing of decisions and responsibilities) of participation was implemented in the process? Which role was taken by politics (leadership or participation) and administration (observer role or participation)?

7. How open was the participation over the project runtime (from few defined dates to always)?

Evaluating the 23 interviews along these guiding questions regarding sustainable tourism development shows the following interrelations between governance and success visible:

Clear and transparent operational process structure

Good governance processes have a clear operational structure following three pillars of a the typical management cycle:

1. They start by discussing and fixing strategic objectives. This discussion always must consider the principles of sustainability. There must be common understanding about what is meant by the agreed and sustainability compatible objectives. All involved stakeholders should share the same strategic vision.

2. While the development process is running an implementation plan should get established. This plan must show the workflow with milestones as well as the planned measures. Each measure must get cross checked against the strategic objectives.

3. Finally, within the process structure a control function should get established. The control should accompany the process from the very beginning, support the management to steer the process and organize a learning process. A control system thereby also should cover sustainability aspects. And it allows to discuss the need for adapting the objectives after some time as a week evaluation result might also be caused by unrealistic because overambitious objectives.

Some experts underlined that especially the control function is an element which increases the prospect of success or vice versa which reported that a partial failure of a project was mainly the result of a missing control:

o *„We should have structured a more formalized monitoring system focusing on the impacts of the measures",*

o *„We should have better evaluated the impacts",*

o *„In the evaluation of impacts, we should have provided a clearer feedback",*

o *„The most important thing is to have a feedback from the guests and we allowed it only at a 2nd project stage. Probably, with the knowledge of today, we would have allowed it before",*

The three pillars of a good governance from the management cycle above should be transparent to all involved stakeholders. Transparency thereby does not mean to make everything from the very beginning public to everybody. Its more that those persons getting involved later into the process can follow the discussion and decisions taken before. This transparency can on the one side get reached by providing updated information, which is a passive offer to interested stakeholders. But it also can be achieved by an active communication (e.g. newsletters, press releases, round tables, …).

Mandating a process management as core of the organizational structure

The above defined process structure defines only the objectives, the workflow and the control of the process. It is the operational structuring of the process. As a second element the organizational structuring is needed answering the question who is responsible for what. Looking at the four elements accountability, leadership, responsibility and transparency of a governance process the experts all underlined that a process management is needed. But they even went further and stated that a central organization, e.g. by a committee or person is needed steering the threads, supporting and guiding the stakeholders and representing the process against the publicity and other interest groups. This organization or person also takes the role of a trouble-shooter, taking care about all problems arising and increasing mutual trust among the participants. This means that all actors involved into a good governance process agree that this central organization or person

accountability: has the mandate to represent the process to the interior and exterior, to bundle the interest of the process participants and initiate decision-making

leadership: shall steer the process and guide the participants, arrange regular meetings, balance the different interest

responsibility: must take care about a precise defined set of tasks and duties and knows about the limitations of the management role

transparency: will be the information interface among the process participants as well as external actors about discussions, decisions and achieved results.

The installation of an organization or person with such a comprehensive mandate can be done either informal or formal. Informal means that by a transparent procedure a selection takes place and without a contract or other formal and binding agreements the management gets installed. The analysis of the cases showed that governance processes with an informal installed management are less successful and less effective or tend to fail. One reason mentioned by the experts is the missing precise description of the tasks and duties, the financing as well as the limitations of the role, which makes the management always vulnerable. If stakeholders ask, on which basis the management acts or refuses to get active, the management has a weak and less professional position. Instead formal agreements define very clear the tasks and duties, the competences but also the limitations for a management. They can get published and by this make the role clear, transparent and centralised. Furthermore, a formal agreement should always contain a section about the tasks and duties linked with the objective of sustainable tourism development. By this

sustainability gets not only anchored in the strategic objectives it is also a substantial field of the management agreement.

Besides all agreements a professional handling of all network partners supports good governance. Relationship management is not a task of only one person. It needs several actors to cover tasks as the coordination of partners, to balance the interest of competing stakeholders, to handle and make use of the dominance of single partners with a very high importance (e.g. strategic key companies as motivators), a continuous motivation of the stakeholders, building trust, fostering the network, encourage a culture of shared responsibility and sharing of knowledge or gaining a personal commitment of key actors. A good relationship management was mentioned by several experts as an important instrument of successful governance processes.

The analysis of the question, which organization or who took this central role in the 23 cases showed the following results:

- DMO (destination management organization): 10

- Administration of a protected area: 4

- A division / department of a public administration: 3

- Private tourism stakeholders: 2

- NGO (nongovernmental organization): 1

- No installed management: 3

There is no clear correlation between the organization type and the success of government processes. Some experts underline that confidence among the participants, good personal relations between the key actors of a process and especially the acceptance of the management in the group often decide about success or failure (Blasco, Guia, & Prats, 2014).

Process participation

The term "participation" in the context of good governance describes not only the level of participation but also the approach. There can be drawn a distinction between two general approaches: the top-down and the bottom-up. While policy makers and administration are the initiators of a top down process it's the civil society or parts of it in a bottom up process. Table 5 compares the two approaches.

Even though top down processes start by an initiative from the administration or policy they can change their character over the time by opening the possibilities to take part in the process. Nevertheless, they have a common core element: the wish to keep the control over the process by decision-making. Vice versa bottom up processes are open from the beginning but also there a process management must get installed and by this a "top-down" element takes the role to consolidate and filter the work.

In the 23 cases both approaches could get found and there are no evident findings that one of the two approaches is in any case the better one. Some experts mentioned that concerning their case it was a good way to start by a top down approach but from today's perspective and with the knowledge about the project an earlier opening and by this turning more to a bottom up thinking and working might have been better. Some experts underlined that a well-balanced participation of all stakeholder groups from the public and private sector is a key for successful governance. This can also be achieved in the starting phase of a top down approach by a systematic identification and a balanced selection of the participants who are directly affected as well as a step by step widening the participation to other stakeholders.

	Top down	**Bottom up**
Initiative	Begins with administration/policy; often involves issues which should be solved efficiently and broadly supported	Begins with civil society organisations or committed individuals.
Target group	Defined by the topic potential interest is a prerequisite	Forms and organises itself.
Topic Set	through policy planning or programmes	Evolves from everyday life
Concernment	Must be developed based on the topic	Exists and is the main motive.
Awareness	Must be developed with relevant information and awareness campaigns.	Developed by experience and by working on the topic or issue
Motivation	More efficiency, less opposition, better legitimacy	Social contacts and wishes for a change
Direction of impact	Seeks activity and engagement from the "top"	Seeks to achieve from the bottom changes in policy and administration ("top").
Forms of activity	Planned by administration; often with external moderation.	Originates from the process; often by applying well-known methods.

Table 5: comparison of top down and bottom up processes (Müller & Stotten, 2011, p. 8)

A second aspect of participation is the involvement level of stakeholders. Müller and Stotten (see Figure 14) differentiate between 4 levels of participation and related implication for the organization and structuring of a process as well as the achieved experiences by the participants. It is obvious that a higher level of involvement has implications concerning the time budget: as higher the level as longer the process and the amount of work which must get invested. In general, and not only in the field of sustainable tourism governance a higher level of participation creates a better acceptance of results and a broader engagement of the civil society. It creates a common understanding of the strategic vision, it contributes to a more creative development of the measures and it supports the installation of a control and management system. By this the principles of sustainability also get a part of the discussion and involved environment-NGOs can bring in their knowledge and competences.

But not only NGOs also public bodies can explain procedures which must be followed because of the legal framework. This helps to create acceptance for some administrative steps which take some time and slow down the progress. Some experts stated that an involvement of public authorities can be of use as they can support the implementation of specific goals:

- *„take into account bureaucratic obstacles"*
- *„check in advance: legal and financial frameworks among the regions / provinces"*

Finally, a higher level of participation supports a broader commitment of stakeholders to the results and by this contributes to the process success to more participants. This creates a more solid basis for the long term acceptance of the governance results and potential follow up activities.
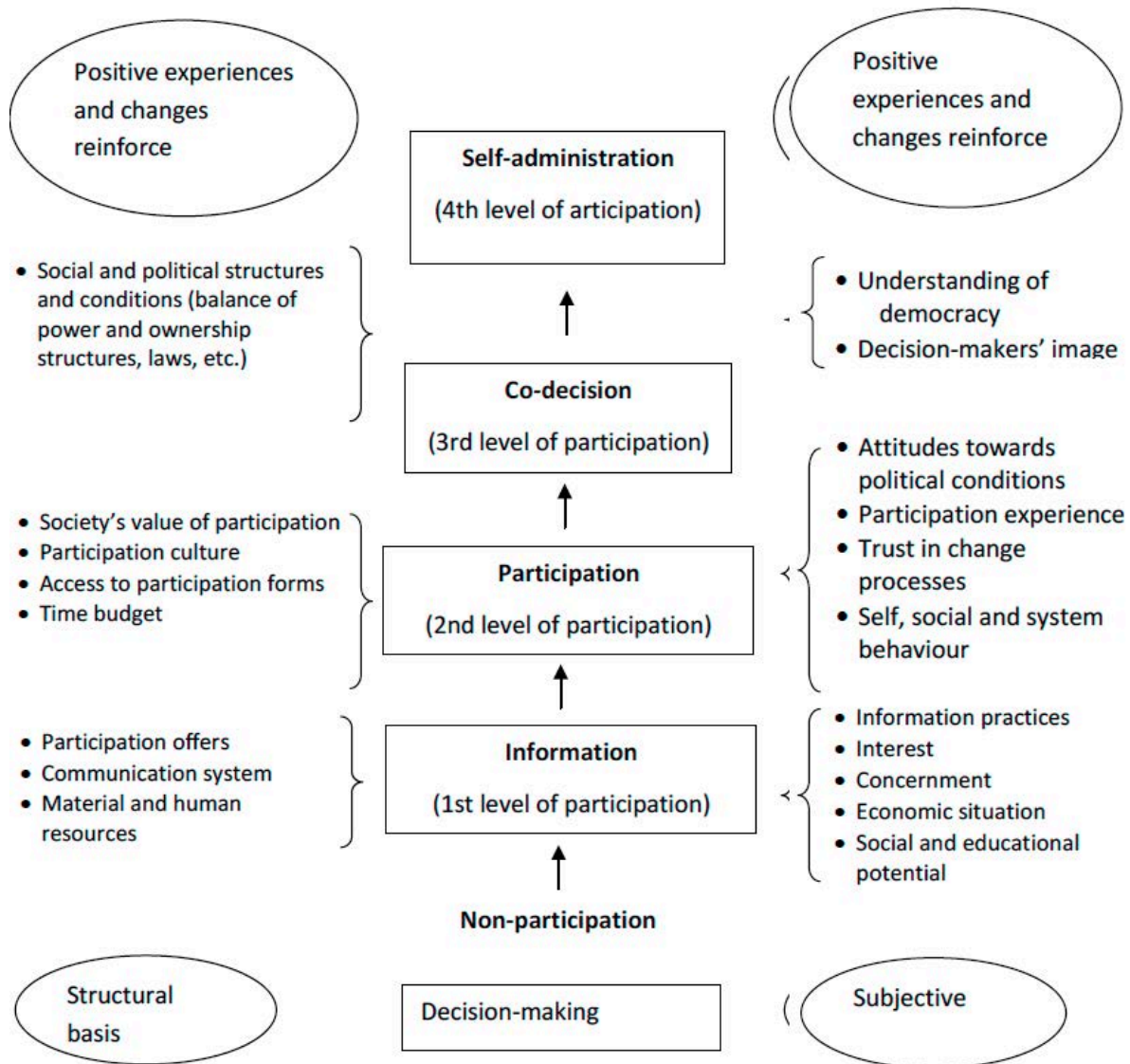
Levels of participation

Figure 14: different levels of participation in governance processes (Müller & Stotten, 2011, p. 11)

The analysis of the answers from the survey concerning participation do not show a direct correlation of the process success and the level of involvement. But in many cases the experts describe a flexible participation approach, which means that the level of active involvement increased during the process. Many described cases started with core steering groups with only a few people and step by step the groups got enlarged. By this at the end of the process a higher level was reached including co-decision making by installed committees.

A last aspect of governance already discussed is the type: horizontal, vertical on the one side and single, multi-stakeholder on the other is that multi-stakeholder-governance automatically creates at the end of the process a higher level of participation. Governance processes were rated as less successful by the experts if deficits in the management structure guiding the participation were identified.

Allocation of adequate resources for governance processes

There are four main elements which are linked with resources in a governance process:

- the installation of an effective and professional operative process management
- fixing the approach (top down / bottom up), the level (from information to self-administration see Figure 14) and the type (esp. single / multi-stakeholder) of participation
- the implementation of measures
- the duration of the process.

Furthermore, the spatial perimeter of a governance process has an influence on local governance processes which are mostly horizontal can get organized much easier than vertical processes on destination or regional level. They lead faster to concrete results which strengthens the process itself among the participants.

Many experts stated that there is a tendency of policy and administration to underestimate the amount of organization and communication work needed to set up a governance process and keep it running. By this the staff resources are often not adequate calculated in the budgeting concerning the working capacities but also the needed qualification level. People who are qualified to manage larger governance processes as well as have a certain expertise in tourism as well as sustainable development usually need at least an academic diploma or master degree.

The interviewed experts reported a significant correlation between a lack of resources (e.g. staff, in kind contributions from stakeholders, budget) and a lower success or partial failure of processes.

They stated that insufficient resources to install an effective governance process management slowed down the work, did not allow a broad participation and caused problems while the implementation of the measures. Furthermore, they underlined the risk of long term failure even if adequate resources while the development process runtime were allocated. But at the end of the development process the operative management had to stop its work. By this the created networks can crash down rapidly, follow up activities get suppressed as well as communication of later achieved successes will not take place. They recommended to think more in permanent governance processes than in projects with a fixed start and end.

III.3. DESTINATION MANAGEMENT: HOW TO FOSTER SUSTAINABILITY?

The UN World Tourism Organization defines a destination as follows:

"A local tourism destination is a physical space in which a visitor spends at least one overnight. It includes tourism products such as support services and attractions, and tourism resources within one day´s return travel time. It has physical and administrative boundaries defining its management, images and perceptions defining its market competitiveness. Local tourism destinations incorporate various stakeholders often including a host community, and can nest and network to form larger destinations."

The definition shows that a destination management organization (DMO) takes an interface role between the stakeholder groups in the destination and the market. Beritelli et. al. (Beritelli, Bieger, & Laesser, 2011) list four main functions of a DMO:

1. vision and targeting: positioning of destination brand, setting up a development strategy and related implementation plans

2. coordination of supply: product development (innovation and quality improvement), people (qualification), process (coordination of the service chain), price (packages and destination guest cards)

3. stimulating demand: promotion (communication strategy and implementation) and placement (distribution channels)

4. lobbying: representing the destinations interests against politics, NGOs, tourism organizations

Fostering sustainability in a destination by the destination management means to integrate the principles of sustainability in the management process in each of the four functions as well as to commit the tourism stakeholders to follow this way.

The first and most important step is the integration of sustainability in the first function of vision and targeting. Giving sustainability a high weight in core values of the destination brand has a long lasting effect. The principle of sustainability must become a part of the destinations development strategy. This means that the destination fixes objectives which support sustainability as e.g. in fields as guest mobility, energy and water consumption, use of regional organic produced products, waste management, soil consumption, protected areas and other. The objectives can be linked to quality standards as described in this report in section II.2. By this not only objectives but also linked implementation plans for an improvement can be integrated into the strategy.

A high importance for the implementation of the principles of sustainability is the management field "product innovation and improvement" as part of the second management function, the coordination of the supply. A DMO can push the integration of sustainability principles in its destination brand or the objectives of its development strategy. In the field of concrete products most DMO depend on the tourism stakeholders as they are the suppliers of the tourism services. A DMO cannot force tourism entrepreneurs in the destination to innovate or to improve their products in a specific way. A DMO can only support them and set incentives to consider sustainability when innovating or improving.

Such incentives can be found in the third management function. The DMO can give a higher weight in promoting sustainable products and its producers. The DMO can promote sustainable products or their suppliers on its own destination WEB-site or by placing these products by distributors of sustainable products in the market. Supplementary the DMO can

start an information campaign by press and similar publicity work to support its partners from the region.

In the field of lobbying the DMO can introduce the aspect of sustainability into the political discourse. Thereby, new coalitions may be possible in the field of political support, sponsoring or cross sectoral cooperation, e.g. with regional producers of high quality organic food, additional options can get used to support the overall sustainable development approach.

The introduction of sustainability principles seems to be quite easy. But why are not more DMOs pushing sustainable tourism development? There are two important reasons:

1) the destination managers do not believe in the market success of sustainable products as they do not see a mass market with a significant demand,

2) the destinations managers do not have the mandate respectively the influence to turn tourism development in the destination towards a more sustainable approach.

Concerning the first reason the market research results do not deliver a clear picture. On the one side data from the German travel market show that in future about 36 million persons would like to travel sustainable (FUR, Forschungsgemeinschaft Urlaub und Reisen e.V., 2014). Other publications show a significant lack between awareness and behaviour. This phenomenon the awareness – attitude gap is widely described in literature (see (Ralitsa Antimova, Jeroen Nawijn, & Paul Peeters, 2012)) and these authors state:

"In fact, the opposite seems to be the case, as few are willing to change their behaviour; people with the greatest awareness are even least likely to change their behaviour. Thus, an awareness/attitude behaviour gap exists."

The studies have to be taken serious but also analysed in detail. Most studies deal with questions about long haul destinations and climate change aspects in the context with air transport. Some were done in Australia where in many cases the consumers have to leave the continent to fulfil their individual travel preferences. Hence the decision they have to take is to resign from their preferred destination without real alternative or to keep a certain destination even they know that this will contribute to high carbon emissions. These cases cannot be transferred to the main part of trips to alpine destinations. There mostly exist destination alternatives within the given set of preferences.

Supposing that consumers can choose between a set of destinations and their products with a relative low sustainability and a set of destinations providing sustainable travel options the question is, which destination will be selected. Eventually, he will take the product matching best his preferences. In the set of preferences sustainability might be one of many criteria. Most consumers will not choose a destination only because of one single criterion. Therefore, sustainable products must not only be "sustainable", they must be equal or better in many attributes. So sustainable products must create a higher benefit. By many reasons they have this potential as they are more authentic, they provide better and healthier food and they create unique experiences linked to the natural and cultural heritage.

Looking at the second reason it has to be taken much more serious, that the share of sustainability oriented destinations is low because of the missing mandate. A DMO is not in the position, does not have the authority to force sustainable development in the region. DMOs are installed and owned by either the municipalities of a region or by the tourism stakeholders.

A DMO can only act if it gets a mandate to take the leadership in the network of stakeholder, policy maker and other tourism relevant stakeholder groups. Hristov and Zehrer (Hristov & Zehrer, 2015) call this the destination management leadership cycle as shown in Figure 15.
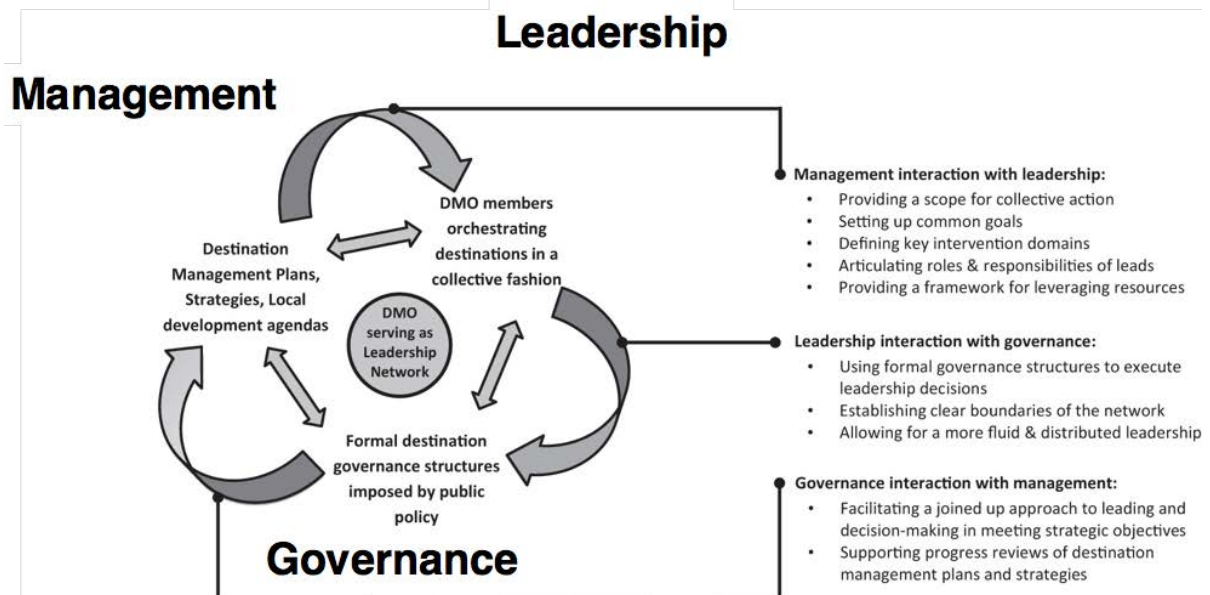

Figure 15: The destination management leadership cycle
See (Hristov & Zehrer, 2015, p. 123, figure 2)

This management leadership cycle shows that a DMO will only be able to give sustainability principles a higher importance if the governance interaction facilitates a joined up approach to leading and decision-making in meeting sustainability principles as a strategic objective. These formal destination governance structures must be imposed by public policy and the tourism stakeholders who are a part of destination governance.

Fostering sustainability at destination level therefore is primarily not a matter of strategy building and implementation plans of DMOs. The starting point is the destination governance giving a mandate to the DMO to take the leadership to turn tourism development towards sustainability.

III.4. THE ROLE OF LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS AND DMO IN DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

The governance and management of sustainable tourism means the ability to guarantee two intertwined conditions. First, tourism as an economic activity requires to operate effectively in a competitive market and to be appealing for the final demand. In addition, sustainable tourism means the safeguard of the specific identity of the destination and – as such – of its resources (natural, cultural, social and related to the traditional economic sectors of the place)

The operative approach to the general principle of sustainability depends on a series of variables that influence its application in terms both of possible interventions (what to do) and of possible tools to be used locally (how to do).

The variables that are more meaningful are:

- The dimension of the tourism economy (and also the demographic dimension) at destination level

- The phase of development of the destination in its tourism life cycle (which means also its positioning on the international market and its tourism image/notoriety)

- The tourism back-ground and know-how of the local economic players

- The mix of the economic and productive environment of the destination (which means the specific contribution of the tourism industry to the local economy) DMOs are by no means a useful managerial approach and tool for the governance of a sustainable policy at local level, however they require two conditions to be implemented:

- The local tourism offer must be sufficiently complex and the intensity of tourism flows adequate

- The institution of a DMO and its objectives and functions should be shared among the local stakeholders in all the phases of the process.

With regard to the first condition, the feasibility and sustainability of a DMO is critical in the case of small Alpine destinations, at the boarder of tourism flows, and with a low-structured offer. These destinations have low (or moderate) tourism flows and have a tourism model based just on the valorization of their local resources (natural, cultural, social).

With regard to the second condition, there is large evidence of cases of failure of DMOs when the process of implementation is top-down or just led by the public sector but without a clear recognition by the local tourism players. As such, the failure does not depend on the DMO as a valuable managerial tool. The obstacles are rather related to the lack of trust, recognition, and operative involvement of the local stakeholders.

On the other hand, it must be clear that DMOs have not a normative power to decide and put into practice strategies to pursue a sustainable tourism. Rather, their authority in this direction largely depends on the endorsement and recognition of the local stakeholders. It has to be remembered that sustainability, as an ethical value and a behavioral model, cannot be programmed, but only encouraged with the suitable tools. And this is true also for the tourism demand, which is the one and only subject to decide where to spend its own vacation. The objective should be that of creating a cultural itinerary (with a long term vision) to bring attention to these values as part of the consumers' utility function.

Even considering that every single tourism destination is in a different phase of it life cycle, all the Alpine destinations should concentrate their efforts towards tourism consumption

models characterized by a strong "experiential" dimension, where direct relations, both internal and with the external visitors, have a crucial importance, rather than work toward a growth, which is merely quantitative.

More and more popular is the opinion according to which the small-town-model characterizing the vast majority of the Alpine destinations represents an important asset in creating competitive advantage for the Alps (lifestyle, heritage, culture, social models,…) compared to other regions worldwide (USA, Japan, emerging markets) and it gains a central role while speaking of sustainable competitiveness' governance. A widespread involvement in the tourism activity is not only a precondition for a successful and sustainable development in the industry, but also a fundamental tool in the governance of the sustainability. The presence in the destination of a wide range of accommodation structures surely represents a positive signal toward this direction; in fact it implies a more active involvement of the local community in the tourism activity, which very often also involves the restoration of the traditional housing units.

In this sense, Grossartal (A), named by a study[18] from the Federal Tourism Office of Switzerland the most competitive tourism destination in the Alpine region, represents an example: hotel-beds are just the 48% of the total accommodation capacity. The Austrian destination is not an isolated incident, even if Grossartal model cannot be implemented everywhere. On the contrary, every Alpine community should try to foster the active participation of its residents to the activity of the local DMO as Grossartal did: the Tourismusverband Großarltal (TVB) is a body governed by public law constituted in January 1997, which today counts 419 members (over a valley population of 4.646 inhabitants).

Often just "large numbers" cases tend to be considered, while examples of important results even with limited resources tend to be overlooked. Very small villages, which were populated only by a few old retirees, where all the shops had closed down, revived (and literally new kids are born) thanks to the effort of young people, who didn't accept the fact the territory where they grew was dying and decided to bet everything on this project and to commit personally. This is the case of Cerreto Alpi, a small place (less than 100 residents) in the Apennines, where the development of the center as a tourism destination has involved everyone in the community, producing a "community-based tourism" model, which every year attracts international researchers to study its characteristics[19].

Completely different models, in different contexts have a common denominator: a very wide, widespread and active participation of the local community to the decision process and to the management of the tourist development of the territory in which they live, resulting in winning and sustainable strategies.

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[18] Source: Programma di benchmarking internaziona-le per il turismo svizzero: fase di progetto 2014–2015
[19] http://www.ibrigantidicerreto.com/

III.5. CONCLUSIONS PART 2

The term governance is widely used in a variety of academic and practitioner circles. It implies "systems of governing" and the ways in which societies are governed, ruled or "steered". Therefore, Alpine Tourism Governance focuses on systems of tourism governing in the Alpine area.

Governance processes are not static. The type of governance can change over time. Very often processes start on local or destination level as the proposal for a tourism infrastructure project or a change of the product focus in destination management was made by tourism stakeholders on site. Therefore, processes can have a horizontal character at the beginning but because of the political dimension and dynamics of development they change over the time to a more vertical type.

Good Governance, also referred to Sustainable Governance, needs conditions (see chapter III.2) and support both on the project level and in the overall political dimension; in the latter on local, regional, national and international, alpine wide level.

III.5.1. PROJECT LEVEL

General Commitment

Expressed Commitment for Good Governance in Sustainable Tourism by the unit(s) being responsible for the project. Early information and gaining common understanding with all involved entities.

Intensive analysis of the initial situation

Before or with the start of the project an intensive preliminary analysis of the initial situation and stakeholders of the project to clarify the project's objectives and to know who should be necessarily involved in or informed about the project. If useful, seek multi stakeholder governance. Clarify planned cooperation of participating public authorities in advance.

Clear structuring of project management

Clear structuring of the process flow with clear strategic and operational objectives, stages of development and implementation measures including time management. Make a conscious decision about which stakeholders should be involved in the process by conducting an in-depth pre-analysis.

Participation of relevant actors and stakeholders

Setting up a continuous participatory process with as many relevant actors and stakeholders using appropriate participatory methods. Thereby achieving long-term results (effectiveness) in the destination or in the acting network. Identify challenges due to heterogeneity of partners and requirements for partner coordination. Weighing of costs and benefits in planning and carrying out participatory processes.

Clearly structured participation processes

Within participatory processes early clarification of the detailed design of the process (methods of participation), the liability of the results and the facilitation / moderation of the process. The latter should not be done by a stakeholder that is directly involved or affected by the project.

Communication and sensitization of locals and guests

Intense and targeted communication and sensitization of locals and guests regarding governance of sustainable tourism and project-related goals. Profound explanation of particular projects where local acceptance on public funding has to be reached.

Presence of a committed person

Continuous engagement of a committed person with specific competencies and functions, granting of a corresponding mandate. Thereby ensuring the ongoing exchange of information among stakeholders and the efficient bundeling and transparent provision of expertise (Relationship Management).

Provision of finance and management of resources

Creating a detailed and realistic project budget (personnel and material costs, investment and operating costs). Adequate securing of resources (financial, human resources, tourism resource) for efficient implementation of sustainable tourism projects. Ensuring subsequent financing and continuity, especially concerning the role of the committed person.

Evaluation and quality management/assurance

Integrating evaluation and monitoring as solid blocks in the project. Continuous and stepwise evaluation regarding the achievement of aspired strategic and operational project objectives (milestones, overall result). If necessary, adapt project objectives and measures in the course of the process. Transparent handling of evaluation and monitoring results

III.5.2. POLITICAL LEVEL

Provision of adequate frameworks on all levels

Formulation and implementation of objectives and measures of sustainable development in basic areas of actions such as energy and climate policy, mobility policy, spatial policy and social policy at international, national, regional and local level. Inclusion of appropriate objectives, criteria and measures relating to sustainable development in tourism, respectively to the principles of good governance and sustainable tourism. Defining the role of public authorities regarding the implementation objectives of sustainable tourism.

Comprehensive sensitization

Implementing comprehensive sensitization strategies about the content and the need for sustainable development at political and other stakeholders. Likewise, in terms of tourism with the target group population in general and tourism stakeholders incl. tourists in particular. Introduction of good and adaptable examples of sustainable tourism and pointing out feasible objectives and stages of development on a short-term and long-term scale.

Creation of incentive systems for sustainable tourism

Aligning the tourism and tourism-related funding policies with the objectives of sustainable development for encouragement. No public funding of non-sustainable tourism strategies, initiatives and offers. No authorization of non-sustainable infrastructure projects.

Strengthening the role and competencies of DMO or regional tourism marketing

Transferring more competencies to destination management organizations or similar regional tourism marketing divisions to foster sustainable tourism product development and to highlight these products in promotion and public relation work.

IV. OPEN CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING VALORISATION OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE OF THE ALPS AND ALPINE TOURISM GOVERNANCE

OPEN CHALLENGES

The report has presented several examples of the positive social and economic interlinkages between natural and cultural heritage sites, especially when they are part of touristic concepts and offers that are based on sustainability criteria. Nevertheless, the establishment and maintenance of such sites remain a challenge from several points of view; for example, it is essentially to clearly communicate the overall and long-term value of such sights to the local population and other stakeholders. The analysis in the report highlights how in the tourism destinations, there is still the need to further emphasize the economic and social benefits of cultural and natural heritage conservation as basis for sustainable tourism.

Another main challenge is the development of support for the dissemination of this knowledge in order to boost the introduction of quality standards at destination level to foster and stimulate sustainable tourism product development and the creation of a regional added value.

AREAS TO FOCUS ON AND RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS

SETTING UP AN ALPINE-FOCUSED RESEARCH NETWORK ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

In the context of the challenges cited above, stimulating the exchange of knowledge and experience - for example by setting up an expert network focusing on sustainable alpine tourism governance, with the aim of bringing together DMOs and experts networks - seems to be a viable approach.

Since there is not yet an established research community in the area of sustainable alpine tourism, creating a scientific focal point may be a first step towards bundling existing research results and defining a research agenda for current and future issues. Especially governance, certification and impact analysis, destination mangement useing regional resources and facilities or guests mobility might be interesting topics. A possible instrument for launching the network could be, for example, the organization of an international scientific kick-off conference for the international research community on alpine tourism in the context of green economy and sustainability.

The involvement of already existing Alpine–wide research networks could strengthen the effectiveness of a Research Network on sustainable tourism. Among the already existing instruments, the Alpine Convention Young Academics Award could be used to promote the work of young scientists in the field of sustainable tourism.

PILOT DESTINATIONS FOR ALPINE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM GOVERNANCE

Since a large number of destination types in the Alps exists and shows a diverse set of vocations, strategies for fostering sustainability at destination level are needed. The selection and designation of Alpine pilot destinations where a comprehensive sustainable tourism approach is implemented can be an instrument in order to put research into practice and promote the application of existing innovative concepts of sustainable alpine tourism. The selected pilot regions can enlighten future tourism concepts and strategies, particularly if

activities in the pilot destinations are accompanied by a joint evaluation considering customer satisfaction and feedbacks by local stakeholders as well as the effectiveness and the progress of the initiatives.

AWARENESS RAISING AND TRAINING

The report highlighted the need to invest more thinking and action into the transfer of research results and their implications for future tourism strategies to practitioners in order to ensure the implementation of sustainable tourism approaches and products in the market. Tourism training curricula should be adapted accordingly.

ACKNOWLEDGING AND PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Finally, instruments and initiatives should be undertaken in order to foster political acknowledgment and recognition of destinations that already have implemented sustainable tourism concepts or are currently in the process of establishing sustainable tourism governance processes. This would help convincing more stakeholders to engage in such processes and concepts.

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