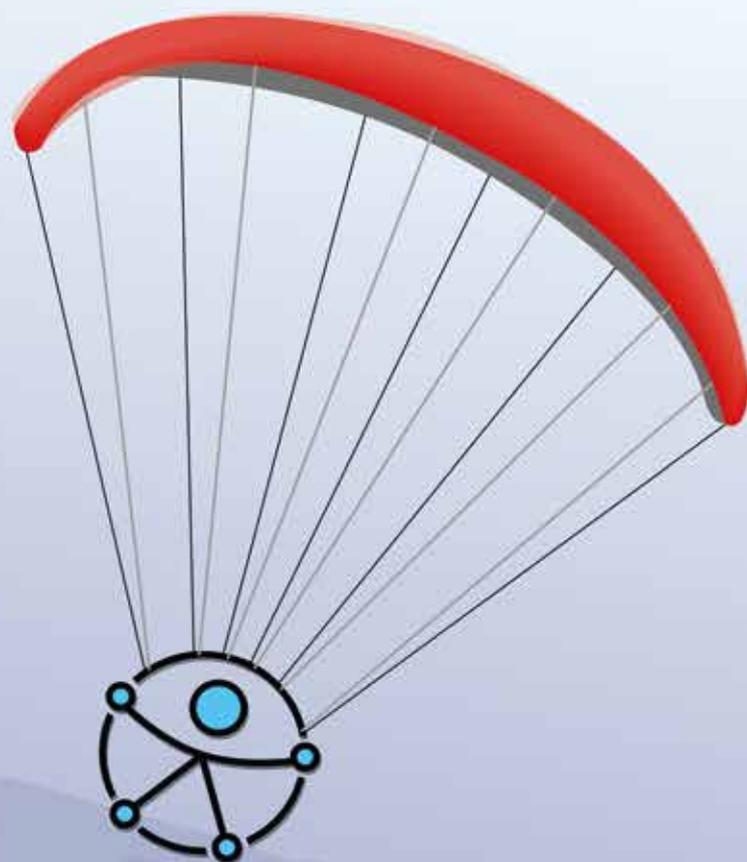# The European Tourism Indicator System

ETIS toolkit for sustainable destination management

March 2016

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The European Tourism Indicator System

ETIS toolkit for sustainable destination management

March 2016

Introduction

The European Commission launched the European Tourism Indicator System (ETIS) in 2013 with the aim helping destinations to monitor and measure their sustainable tourism performance, by using a common comparable approach.

ETIS is a voluntary management tool. Its monitoring results are based on self-assessment, observations, data collection and analysis by the destinations themselves. ETIS does not set minimum values to be achieved and it does not provide any certification.

In identifying a set of core indicators it does, however, provide destinations with the basic information they need to monitor sustainability and to manage tourism activity more effectively.

The first set of ETIS indicators was the result of several years of cooperation between the Commission and the Tourism Sustainability Group (TSG) [1] and the European Commission committed itself with its Communication [2] 'Europe the world's n.1 tourist destinations - a new political framework for tourism in Europe', notably action 11, 'To develop, on the basis of Necstour [3] or EDEN [4], a system of indicators for the management of destinations'.

The ETIS was based on **27 core indicators and 40 optional indicators**, subdivided into four categories:

1. destination management,
2. social and cultural impact,
3. economic value,
4. environmental impact.

The feasibility and practicality of the ETIS Toolkit and the entire system at destination level was tested through two pilot phases over a 2-year period. More than 100 destinations across Europe implemented and tested ETIS and provided the Commission with feedback about their experience.

The Commission, with the support of a pool of experts, analysed this feedback and revised the system in 2015-2016.

The current 2016 edition of the ETIS Toolkit is the result of this revision. It provides destinations with a fully tested system and a more realistic set of core indicators.

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[1]   The TSG was composed of public and private sector experts in sustainable toruism and it advised the Commisison on the development of policies to promote a more sustainable and competitive approach towards tourism management and development.

[2]   COM(2010) 352 final.

[3]   Network for Competitive and sustainable tourism regions.

[4]   European Destination of Excellence.

Contents

Sustainability of tourism at international and European level

The tourism sector's competitiveness is closely linked to its sustainability, as the quality of tourist destinations is strongly influenced by their natural and cultural environment and the attitudes of the local community.

Today, sustainable development and sustainability are integral parts of the debate about how tourism should use natural and social resources to gain economic benefits. It led to the growing recognition that public and private tourism actors need to consider the equal distribution of maximised economic benefits, the minimisation of the sociocultural impacts on hosts and tourists as well as the protection and the enhancement of the natural environment through tourism activities. Globally, several world-leading organisations have put sustainable tourism on their agenda, such as the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) (5) or the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) (6).

Similar initiatives are mirrored in Europe and developed and implemented by EU institutions, such as the European Commission and the European Environment Agency (7), or by international organisations such as the Council of Europe through the European Institute of Cultural Routes (8).

All of these activities try to reduce the difficulty of practically applying the theoretical concept of sustainability for a variety of stakeholders, which include the host community/destination, tourism businesses, policymakers (mainly at the local and regional level), non-governmental organisations, networks, clusters and tourists. In general, one of the main issues remains the complexity of the concept of sustainable tourism. Therefore, it continues to be a contested concept.

The international dimension for global sustainable development

Two major initiatives at international level are the GSTC and the UNWTO sustainable tourism indicators. Both aim at contributing to the objectives of the United Nations 2030 agenda for sustainable development.

The GSTC was formally constituted in 2010 as a body for establishing and managing standards for sustainable tourism. It represents global membership, including UN agencies, leading travel companies, hotels, country tourism boards, tour operators, individuals and communities — all striving to achieve best practices in sustainable tourism. The GSTC was drawn up to identify the minimum sustainability standards that businesses, governments and other stakeholders should meet to achieve social, environmental, cultural and economic sustainability in destinations. To date, two sets of GSTC criteria have been developed for hotels, tour operators and destinations. The GSTC provides services to its members through the destinations and the education and training programme. In addition, its market access and its integrity programme verify that certification programmes comply with the GSTC criteria for sustainable tourism.

The UNWTO has been promoting the use of sustainable tourism indicators since the early 1990s. Its guidebook on indicators of sustainable development for tourism destinations is designed to help identify the key factors that make a destination sustainable, viable and attractive. By 2030, the UNWTO aims to devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism which creates jobs and promotes local culture and products. It also develops and implements tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism. The global mandate of UNWTO, in line

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(5)   www2.unwto.org
(6)   www.gstcouncil.org
(7)   www.eea.europa.eu
(8)   www.coe.int; www.culture-routes.net

with the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns (10YFP) (⁹), is to catalyse changes in tourism operations through evidence-based decision-making, efficiency, innovation and collaboration among stakeholders, monitoring and the adoption of a life cycle approach for continuous improvement.

European Commission initiatives supporting tourism sustainability

The European Commission has long committed itself to promoting sustainable development of tourism in Europe. A number of initiatives have been put in place to facilitate sound environmental, social, cultural and economic management for businesses and destinations. These include:

- the EU eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS) and the EU Ecolabel,
- the Tourism and Environment Reporting Mechanism (TOUERM),
- the Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives (CSR).

The EU eco-management and audit scheme

EMAS (¹⁰) is a tool developed by the Commission allowing actors in the tourism sector to improve their environmental performance and promote the quality of their services.

This voluntary tool and certification scheme aims to help its users to achieve enhanced performance. Registered organisations also gain credibility and transparency thanks to a verification of performance and the validation of external communication (the EMAS environmental statement) by a third-party verifier.

The European Commission, in consultation with EU Member States and other stakeholders, has developed **sectoral reference documents** (SRDs) (¹¹). The objective of SRDs is to provide additional guidance and inspiration to organisations aiming to improve and communicate their performance. The **SRD for the tourism sector** covers best environmental management practices within organisations in the tourism sector that provide accommodation, food and beverage services, manage tourism destinations or provide travel, accommodation or activities for tourism (travel agents and tour operators).

The EU Ecolabel

The EU Ecolabel (¹²) is a voluntary label of environmental excellence of the European Union. It helps consumers identify products and services that have a reduced environmental impact throughout their life cycle, from the extraction of raw material through to production, use and disposal. The EU Ecolabel is recognised throughout Europe.

The Tourism and Environment Reporting Mechanism

TOUERM (¹³), developed by the European Environment Agency, is based on the use of indicators. These indicators are policy relevant, feasible and regularly updated in order to be able to reflect both environmental impacts (baseline and threshold) and sustainability trends at a European scale. Some of the indicators may also address specific geographical contexts, such as coastal zones, rural areas and urban areas. Some relevant information deriving from destinations might also be included if relevant.

(⁹)   http://www.unep.org/10yfp/About/Whatisthe10YFP/tabid/106245/Default.aspx
(¹⁰) www.emas.eu
(¹¹) http://susproc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/activities/emas/
(¹²) www.ecolabel.eu, http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/products-groups-and-criteria.html
(¹³) http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications#c14=&c12=&c7=en&c11=5&b_start=0

Corporate social responsibility

In its 2011 Communication ([14]) on Corporate Social Responsibility, the European Commission defined CSR as 'the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society'. According to the communication, enterprises should have a process in place that integrates social, ethical, environmental, human rights and consumer concerns in their core business.

By definition, CSR is a cross-cutting issue relevant to a variety of European policies including: enterprise and industrial policy, social affairs, employment, corporate governance and company law; environment, consumer affairs and trade; development, external relations, human rights, justice, home affairs, research, education and training.

Enterprises are important stakeholders in the destination and sustainable destination management by adopting a more responsible business model, and the integration of CSR by companies plays a strategic role. Moreover, it must be said that CSR is increasingly seen as an integral part of competitiveness and brand loyalty, since nowadays enterprises are faced with stronger pressure from stakeholders and consumers regarding their responsibility.

Since the start of the 2000s, the European Commission has actively supported the development of CSR ([15]) and the Europe 2020 strategy identified it as a contributor to inclusive growth. At the same time, CSR maintains its voluntary nature and is seen as complementary with EU and Member States legislation.

Other initiatives taken by private stakeholders

In addition to the above, several private organisations representing the tourism industry or destinations have established monitoring tools and certification schemes in the area of sustainable tourism.

As an example, the Network of European Regions for Sustainable and Competitive Tourism (Necstour) ([16]) has since 2007 been committed to implementing the 10 principles of the agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism ([17]).

In addition, Europarc (the Federation of European protected areas) has created and disseminated the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas, a practical management tool for ensuring that tourism contributes to a balanced economic, social and environmental development of protected areas in Europe.

Since 1993, the European network for sustainable tourism development, Ecotrans, has been helping to make tourism more sustainable through the sharing of experience and know-how with its members as well as through global networking, supporting and contributing to joint projects and its DestiNet portal. DestiNet is managed by Ecotrans as a UN-registered Partnership for Sustainable Development to support the sustainable development goals 2030. The 'Green Travel Maps' on DestiNet provide transparency on sustainable tourism certification worldwide and help destinations and their businesses to monitor, manage and market their green tourism offer.

A summary of private initiatives and a (non-exhaustive) guide to the existing labels can be found in the booklet *A guide through the tourism label jungle*. It was edited by the Working Group on Tourism and Development, Bread for the World, Tourism Watch and Naturefriends International ([18]).

([14]) COM(2011) 681 final.
([15]) http://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/corporate-social-responsibility/index_en.htm
([16]) www.necstour.eu/necstour
([17]) COM(2007) 321 final.
([18]) http://www.tourism-watch.de/en/content/guide-through-tourism-label-jungle

European Tourism Indicator System

What is the European Tourism Indicator System?

The ETIS is a management, information and monitoring tool specifically intended for tourism destinations. It is designed as a locally owned and led process for collecting and analysing data with the overall objective to assess the impact of tourism on a destination.

The specific objective of the ETIS is to contribute to improving the sustainable management of destinations. It aims at helping destinations and the stakeholders within to measure their sustainability management processes, enabling them to monitor their performance and progress over time.

Why measure and monitor sustainability indicators?

For too long local policymakers have relied on a limited range of statistics, such as visitor-arrival numbers, employment surveys and visitor-satisfaction ratings, to monitor tourism in their destination. These statistics do not tell the whole story of tourism's impact. Collecting data and information on a broad range of issues relevant to the impact on local economy, community and environment will help destinations build an accurate picture of what is really going on.

Although definitions, agendas, guiding principles and regional strategies have been well established, there are few tools available to help local destination coordinators make informed decisions to improve the tourism in their destination.

What is a destination?

For the purposes of this system of indicators, a destination can be defined as:

- a geographic area that is currently or potentially attractive to visitors/tourists;
- a place or area which is recognised and can easily be defined as a visitor destination and has a range of facilities and products in place for tourism purposes;
- a place or area which is promoted as a destination;
- a place or area where it is possible to measure the supply of and demand for tourism services, i.e. the visitor economy;
- a place or area where the visitor management process usually includes a range of public and private-sector stakeholders together with the host community.

Large areas like national or regional areas that do not directly manage tourism resources and facilities but engage with stakeholders are not appropriate for this system.

Tourism destinations are the focal point of tourism activity. Eurostat ([19]) data show that Europeans made just over one billion trips in 2014. The average trip spend was EUR 334; a total of EUR 391 billion in expenditure.

This economic impact is felt in employment, increased tax revenues, successful business growth, environmental conservation and cultural heritage protection. However, every tourist also leaves waste behind, uses water and energy and has an impact on the communities they visit. Therefore, informed and collaborative destination management is essential for European tourism destinations to be viable in the long term.

([19]) http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Tourism_trips_-_introduction_and_key_figures

Why implement the European Tourism Indicator System?

The ETIS represents a common methodology towards sustainable destination management. It is not a certification system or an eco-labelling scheme, but a highly effective management tool provided by the European Commission.

The ETIS is specially designed for tourism destinations to allow monitoring of performance and for helping destinations to develop and carry out their plans for greater sustainability with a long-term vision.

A dedicated **ETIS Toolkit** is guiding destinations in the implementation process. Through a step-by-step guide, destinations can learn an effective process that finally leads to the establishment of the indicator system, starting from raising awareness, engaging stakeholders and defining responsibilities and then going ahead with collecting data and analysing results for continuous improvements.

A key step is **the multi-stakeholder approach** that encourages destinations to form a Stakeholder Working Group (an interdisciplinary team), establishes priorities, roles and responsibilities among players, stimulates cooperation and coordination and supports the management and monitoring process.

The set of core indicators, which cover the main dimensions of sustainability, contributes to collecting data about the various aspects and activities of the tourism destination from different information sources at local level. In this respect, the ETIS promotes the development and improvement of an integrated information system that can be a support for filling the gap of information and also for other analysis and evaluations.

Finally, since tourism competitiveness is closely linked to its sustainability, the ETIS allows policy and decision-makers to monitor the main elements that determine the destination attractiveness and competitiveness on the market so they can enhance the visitor experience **and ensure customer satisfaction.**

The key benefits for your destination:

- improved information for decision-making,
- effective risk management,
- prioritisation of action projects,
- performance benchmarking,
- improved community buy-in and support for tourism stakeholders,
- enhanced visitor experience,
- increased bottom-line/cost savings,
- increased value per visitor.

How does the European Tourism Indicator System work?

The ETIS is a complete management process based on a set of sustainability indicators.

It contains **43 core indicators** and an indicative set of **supplementary indicators**. These can be used as needed and appropriate: the system can be used in its entirety or integrated into existing destination-monitoring systems.

An important added value of the system is that destinations can choose themselves the most relevant indicators they wish to adopt and monitor in order to meet the needs of the destinations, the interest of local stakeholders and the specific sustainability issues that the destination faces. This provides additional flexibility to the system and improves the potential of feasibility and success.

The basic principle of the indicator system is that destination responsibility, ownership, and decision-making is shared. Engaging a group to come together and work to collect and report information is a powerful way to undertake effective destination management.

The Toolkit

The process of putting into action the ETIS is summarised in the present Toolkit. It is a simple, easy-to-implement tool intended to help destinations manage and monitor greater sustainability.

The Toolkit consists of two parts. Part 1 is a step-by-step guide to the application of the system and Part 2 contains a synopsis of the core indicators and of the set of supplementary indicators.

The indicators in this Toolkit are part of an integrated approach to destination management. This approach stresses the importance of collaboration, cooperation, ongoing assessment, effective communication and a holistic perspective.

Several **IT supporting documents** have been developed to help the destinations in the implementation of the ETIS, such as: *destination datasheet* (which is a tool to capture the data collected by stakeholders); *destination profile*; *invitation letter template and surveys* (visitor, resident, destination management and enterprise); and *glossary*. These documents are available on the ETIS website of the European Commission ([20]).

Who is the Toolkit for?

The execution of this Toolkit should be coordinated by a local 'champion' who is motivated to initiate the implementation of the system in their destination. This could be a senior representative from the destination management organisation, destination marketing board, tourist board, local/regional tourism authorities, tourism ministry, private sector or tourism association. As the 'champion' can come from a range of backgrounds, for the purposes of the ETIS, the individual leading the implementation of the indicator system in their destination is known as the **local destination coordinator**.

The role of local destination coordinators

The role of the local destination coordinator is crucial. It normally includes the planning, coordination, stakeholders' management, tourism indicators monitoring, communication and marketing. It can also include the organisation of capacity building and other training activities, as well as some research activities related to the assessment and the selection of quality standards. To take on this role an individual will need the ability to gather and influence stakeholders, have access to relevant data (or the ability to access it through others), be entrusted to store the data (some of it may be sensitive) and have some level of management authority.

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[20] http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/offer/sustainable/indicators/index_en.htm

Part 1: The seven-step guide to the implementation of the European Tourism Indicator System

Step 1: Raise awareness

Once a destination decides to measure its sustainability using the ETIS, it is important to communicate the decision to as many stakeholders as possible. This will help increase participation, raise awareness of the destination's commitment to sustainable tourism and increase support for actions that might need to be undertaken based on the indicator results.

Local destination coordinators should use all methods of communication at their disposal and make sure that their local authority/municipality is doing the same. Social media can be useful and cost-effective for communicating quickly and simply. It also has the added benefit of encouraging discussion, which will be particularly valuable as implementation progresses.

> ***Lesson learnt from the pilot phases***
>
> *Destinations piloting the ETIS have also emphasised the importance of obtaining relevant local political support for implementation and it can be useful to have this commitment publically announced.*

Step 2: Create a destination profile

Defining the boundaries of the destination and providing other stakeholders with a general overview on it are crucial steps in data collection. The ETIS tool provided to facilitate this is the **destination profile form**, which is the key starting point to implementation. This form, which is a useful resource for destination management, can be downloaded from the European Commission's website [21]. The form is simple to complete. It helps define the destination and provides a useful frame (i.e. about the geography, tourism amenities, transport links and visitor numbers) of reference for stakeholders.

Step 3: Form a Stakeholder Working Group

The next step is to establish a Stakeholder Working Group. **The SWG is a collection of organisations and individuals in the destination with an involvement and interest in the tourism industry.** This should be hosted by the local destination coordinator with his/her staff and, if appropriate, the national or regional tourism organisation.

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[21] http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/offer/sustainable/indicators/index_en.htm

To be able to gather enough data to be representative and meaningful, it will be essential to have representatives from the **private sector** and the **destination management organisation** or tourism authority playing an active role in the SWG. Other sectors that are important to include are community groups, utility providers, local authority departments responsible for employment, economic growth, planning, protected areas and the environment. Local destination coordinators should encourage representatives from these and other relevant sectors to get involved by emphasising the benefits of participation to both the individual and the organisation they represent.

An average stakeholder group will generally consist of around 15-20 people (less in a small destination).

Some suggested organisations to have represented on the SWG are:

- a regional/local tourism organisation and tourism development company,
- local planning, transport and rural/urban development departments,
- a waste management department (water and solid),
- a water supply department or company (local and regional),
- an energy department and/or supplier,
- a police/security department,
- a forestry/protected area or parks management department,
- an airport/port authority (if applicable),
- a local hotel or tourism association,
- tour guide, camping, caravan, villa or apartment associations,
- relevant non-governmental organisations,
- the local chamber of commerce,
- tourism employee associations and/or unions,
- relevant academic institutions involved in associated research.

> **Lesson learnt from the pilot phases**
>
> *Previous piloting of the ETIS has shown that there is no one set formula that works for every destination. It is important to be flexible and take an approach that best suits the destination and the group of people involved.*

If destinations have an existing committee or task force that meets for a similar purpose, it would make sense to try to integrate the ETIS process into the scope of the existing group (by explaining the implications, gaining agreement and, if necessary, inviting some other members). Where there is no existing committee, starting with a small group of key stakeholders and then building up participation over time can be very effective and is more manageable than starting with a very large group. The ideal group will be large enough to include a diverse group of key stakeholders but not so large that making decisions becomes difficult.

The aim is for a good mix of people who are able to obtain relevant data, influence policy and are also motivated and committed to the process. Destination coordinators are encouraged to make contact with other destinations that have implemented the ETIS for additional support and advice on forming the SWG. A sample letter of invitation to join the SWG is also provided on the European Commission's website ([22]). This can be used as appropriate and can be adapted to suit particular circumstances. In certain circumstances it may be easier to approach people by telephone or email for example, while some stakeholders, particularly those from other sectors (energy and water suppliers, police, etc.), may need a slightly amended invitation to emphasise the relevance of the initiative for their sector.

Stakeholder Working Group meeting

The most effective way to involve all relevant stakeholders is by inviting them to a meeting or workshop. A broad range of representatives from tourism and all related sectors should attend the

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([22]) http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/offer/sustainable/indicators/index_en.htm

meeting. At this event, the ETIS can be presented and its relevance to both the destination and the individuals in attendance can be explained. Ideally, this meeting should be held in a fairly central location within the destination.

- It is an opportunity to give SWG members an overview of the ETIS and the benefits the destination will gain from using it. It may prove difficult to gather suitable stakeholders from every relevant discipline at the initial meeting of the SWG. However, as long as some of the key stakeholders are represented and are ready to get involved, the system can be adopted. The size of the group and the data collected can be expanded over time.
- At the meeting, the **local destination coordinator should also introduce the core indicators to the SWG** and gain feedback on their relevance to the destination and the needs of the stakeholders. They should also discuss the availability of existing data and how data for some or all of the remaining indicators could be obtained.
- As the meeting is participatory, **SWG members can also be invited to share their knowledge and experience of particular aspects of the destination.** It is important to listen to the stakeholders as well as to speak. It is also important to help steer the group towards understanding the process and help reach an agreement on how to move things forward.
- An important outcome from the meeting is a clear agreement on the engagement of the stakeholders, the responsibilities of SWG members and a timeline for data collection, i.e. which stakeholder is collecting data for each indicator, when and how.

Step 4: Establish roles and responsibilities

As mentioned above, clear responsibilities of SGW members' roles and interests, as well as for the data collection, should be agreed on at the SWG meeting. This process will not only help in prioritising data collection for core indicators, but will also generate a sense of ownership and commitment to the process.

For example, the representative from the municipality waste disposal team should be able to report back with data on recycling rates, the representative from the local electricity provider on energy consumption, etc.

It is the role of **the local destination coordinator to steer stakeholders towards an agreement on setting targets, taking action and planning how to achieve these aims,** as appropriate. It is important to clearly define which member of the SWG will be responsible for which target and obtain their agreement to this.

Step 5: Collect and record data

Initially, the SWG should aim at establishing a steady workflow of data collection.

As mentioned before, **destinations can themselves choose the most relevant indicators they wish to adopt and monitor to meet the needs of the destination**.

Most indicator data should be readily available from each SWG member's sector, employment role and interest or be accessible through other authorities, e.g. at a national level. **Data collection should simply be a process of bringing the various data sources together in one place to build a detailed picture of the destination's tourism industry.** Detailed explanations of how to collect the data necessary for each indicator is provided in the ETIS datasheets available on the European Commission's website ([23]).

Some indicators will have data that are missing or that need expanding. This information can be sourced by conducting surveys, questionnaires and other types of activities. A selection of sample survey forms is annexed to the ETIS Toolkit and is available on the European Commission's web-site ([24]). **These can either be used as they are or adapted to suit the destination's needs.** For example, existing surveys can be used or questions can be added from the templates to modify existing surveys. If the destination lacks the resources to implement surveys, coordinators can collect the available data for the other indicators and discuss with the SWG how they may be able to address the resource requirements to undertake the surveys in the future.

Data do not have to be collected for every indicator every year. The SWG will need to agree on the suitable data collection cycles.

Lesson learnt from the pilot phases

Destinations piloting the ETIS have found that while some figures are easy to collect annually, others (such as data from surveys) are more cost-effective if undertaken perhaps every 3 years.

The most important thing is to start collecting data. It does not matter if data are only available for a few indicators, it is much better to start the process and build up the indicator information over time than delay starting until every single piece of data is on hand.

The local destination coordinator should be able to act as the point of contact for collation of the indicator data collected by the SWG. A simple tool, the destination datasheet, allows coordinators to collect the data on the various indicators that are received from stakeholders. It also helps the results of the data collection to be captured and easily shared with the SWG and facilitates comparison of the performance of the destination over time.

Step 6: Analyse results

Prioritising needs and setting an action plan

Once data collection works smoothly and the indicator data are collected and submitted by stakeholders, then collated into the **destination datasheet** online, the SWG can move towards analysing the findings and defining the necessary actions.

The local destination coordinator should call a further meeting of the SWG. The group can then review and analyse the results, decide on some realistic benchmarks or targets and agree on a plan on how to achieve these.

([23]) http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/offer/sustainable/indicators/index_en.htm
([24]) http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/offer/sustainable/indicators/index_en.htm

For example, if the results show that the destination has:

- a decline in biodiversity;
- poor accessibility for disabled visitors;
- a low percentage of tourism accommodations engaged in water saving activities.

Local destination coordinators can decide together with the SWG **which of these issues is a priority for the destination and agree to take action.** Some suggestions for action are included in the datasheets available on the European Commission's website ([25]).

When the issues have been prioritised, those requiring most urgent attention can be compiled into an action plan (i.e. which indicators and issues require action, in what order, when, how and by whom).

For example, the SWG may feel that saving and storing water is the highest priority issue for the destination. In this case, SWG members will need to work together to come up with an action plan to implement water conservation. The plan could be championed by the destination's water provider, the local equivalent of the hotel association and/or the local coordinator.

The SWG may also be able to make improvements in more than one indicator at a time, i.e. perhaps when communicating with hoteliers on saving water; it may also be possible to engage them in saving energy and/or improving biodiversity.

Step 7: Enable ongoing development and continuous improvement

Defining a strategy, maintaining the use of the European Tourism Indicator System and communicating results

Once the SWG has an action plan in place to tackle immediate priorities, a **strategy** for longer-term improvement can be developed. The SWG should aim to draw up a 3-year plan which outlines what the group expects to achieve and when, with areas of responsibility clarified. Each member should be able to commit to some small improvements in their own particular area of work, which over time will add up to significant changes and improvements.

It is important that the indicators and the data are regularly reviewed and that additional supplementary indicators are included when possible, as appropriate to the destination. Broadening the range of indicators measured will help build a more complete picture of the destination. It will also allow for improvements of a larger scope of performance.

Another issue to consider is whether funding could be obtained to support the long-term use of the ETIS and cover the cost of improvements, data collection and other work undertaken by the SWG.
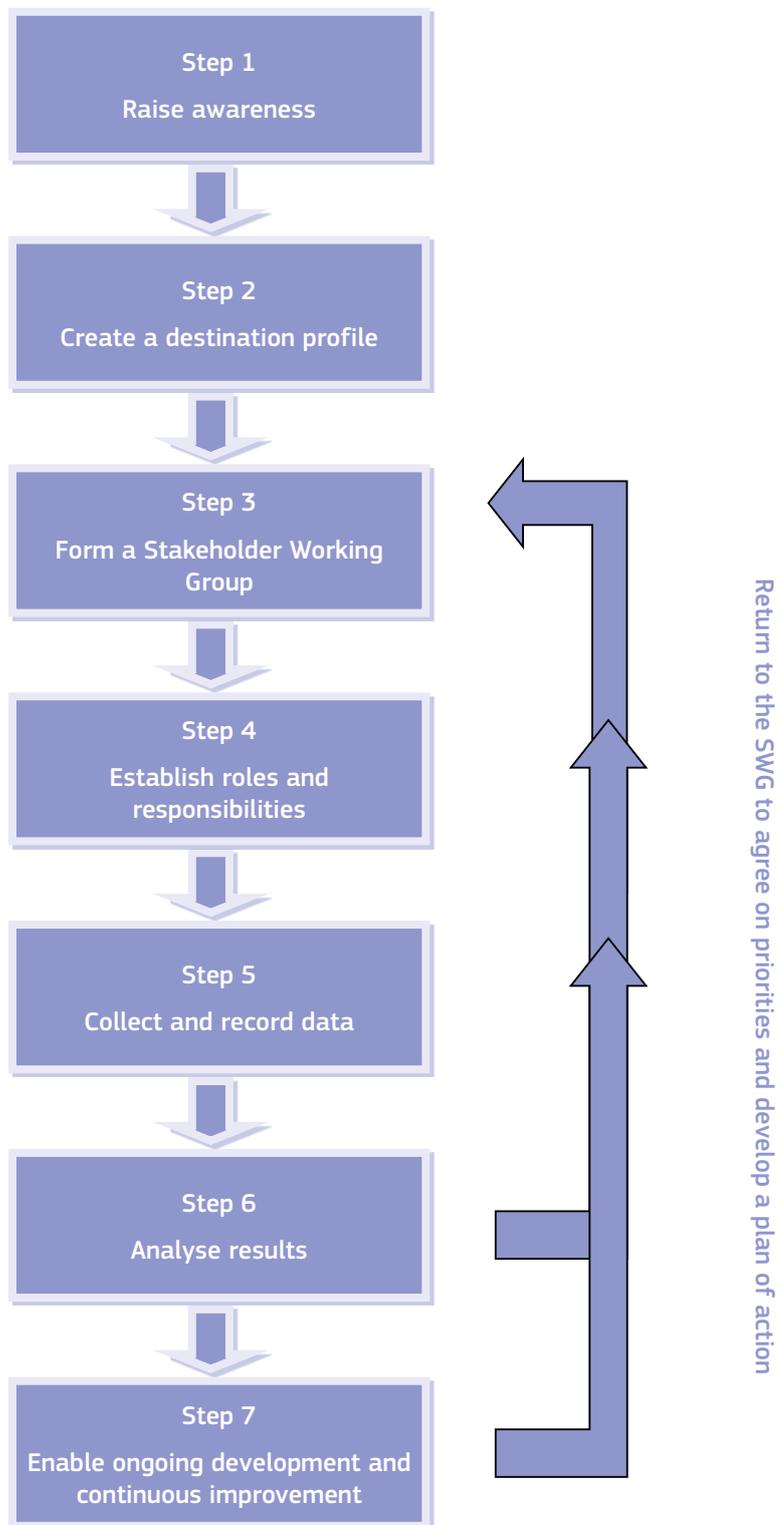

([25]) http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/offer/sustainable/indicators/index_en.htm

It is also useful to discuss and gain an agreement on the communication of results and eventual success stories to wider groups of stakeholders, the local community and other organisations and people outside the destination.

In time, the data collected should help tell a story about the destination that can be integrated into marketing and communication plans, as well as informing long-term strategy and policy. When communicating to the public, the SWG can then consider the different types of tourists that may now be encouraged to visit the destination and present it to potential visitors highlighting their points of interest. This will help to maximise the economic benefit that can result from better management and a more sustainable destination.

Flow chart: Seven steps to using the system

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┌─────────────────────────┐
│        Step 1           │
│    Raise awareness      │
└─────────────────────────┘
            │
            ▼
┌─────────────────────────┐
│        Step 2           │
│ Create a destination    │
│        profile          │
└─────────────────────────┘
            │
            ▼
┌─────────────────────────┐
│        Step 3           │
│ Form a Stakeholder      │
│    Working Group        │
└─────────────────────────┘
            │
            ▼
┌─────────────────────────┐
│        Step 4           │
│ Establish roles and     │
│   responsibilities      │
└─────────────────────────┘
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│        Step 5           │
│ Collect and record data │
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            ▼
┌─────────────────────────┐
│        Step 6           │
│    Analyse results      │
└─────────────────────────┘
            │
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┌─────────────────────────┐
│        Step 7           │
│ Enable ongoing          │
│ development and         │
│ continuous improvement  │
└─────────────────────────┘
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Return to the SWG to agree on priorities and develop a plan of action

Part 2: The core and supplementary indicators

Definition of core and supplementary indicators

Core indicators

The core indicators gather together the essential, key or baseline information that a destination needs to understand, monitor and manage its performance.

The **43 core indicators** cover the fundamental aspects of sustainability monitoring and provide the basis for effective destination management. They also **allow for comparison over time and for benchmarking between destinations**.

Ideally, all the indicators should be regularly monitored, but not all destinations will be able to obtain all the data required at the outset. This should not prevent them from starting the process of sustainability monitoring as collecting some data can help to establish the process, secure a link into the ETIS and lead to better information gathering.

Supplementary indicators

Once a clear process has been established for monitoring the core indicators, destinations may wish to collect additional information that is tailored more to their destination type or category or the particular tourism market that they serve or promote.

The ETIS therefore includes the opportunity to consider **supplementary indicators** that add to the basic information provided and allow destinations to tailor the system to their own particular needs or destination category, e.g. mountain, city, rural, coastal, island and urban areas, as well as coordinated approaches and macroregional and/or transnational dimensions.

Such indicators will need to be provided with a clear methodology for data collection and be tested if they are to be shared with and/or used by other destinations.

A list of possible supplementary indicators has been included to provide an example of what can be considered, covering **coastal, maritime, accessibility and transnational cultural routes** issues.

Section A: Destination management

Criteria	Indicator reference#	ETIS core indicators
A.1 Sustainable tourism public policy	A.1.1	Percentage of tourism enterprises/establishments in the destination using a voluntary certification/labelling for environmental /quality/sustainability and/or Corporate Social Responsibility
A.2 Customer satisfaction	A.2.1	Percentage of tourists and same-day visitors that are satisfied with their overall experience in the destination
	A.2.2	Percentage of repeat/return visitors (within 5 years)

Section B: Economic value

Criteria	Indicator reference#	ETIS core indicators
B.1 Tourism flow (volume and value) at destination	B.1.1	Number of tourist nights per month
	B.1.2	Number of same-day visitors per month
	B.1.3	Relative contribution of tourism to the destination's economy (% GDP)
	B.1.4	Daily spending per overnight tourist
	B.1.5	Daily spending per same-day visitors
B.2 Tourism enterprise(s) performance	B.2.1	Average length of stay of tourists (nights)
	B.2.2	Occupancy rate in commercial accommodation per month and average for the year
B.3 Quantity and quality of employment	B.3.1	Direct tourism employment as percentage of total employment in the destination
	B.3.2	Percentage of jobs in tourism that are seasonal
B.4 Tourism supply chain	B.4.1	Percentage of locally produced food, drinks, goods and services sourced by the destination's tourism enterprises

Section C: Social and cultural impact

Criteria	Indicator reference#	ETIS core indicators
C.1 Community/social impact	C.1.1	Number of tourists/visitors per 100 residents
	C.1.2	Percentage of residents who are satisfied with tourism in the destination (per month/season)
	C.1.3	Number of beds available in commercial accommodation establishments per 100 residents
	C.1.4	Number of second homes per 100 homes
C.2 Health and safety	C.2.1	Percentage of tourists who register a complaint with the police
C.3 Gender equality	C.3.1	Percentage of men and women employed in the tourism sector
	C.3.2	Percentage of tourism enterprises where the general manager position is held by a woman
C.4 Inclusion/accessibility	C.4.1	Percentage of rooms in commercial accommodation establishments accessible for people with disabilities
	C.4.2	Percentage of commercial accommodation establishments participating in recognised accessibility information schemes
	C.4.3	Percentage of public transport that is accessible to people with disabilities and specific access requirements
	C.4.4	Percentage of tourist attractions that are accessible to people with disabilities and/or participating in recognised accessibility information schemes
C.5 Protecting and enhancing cultural heritage, local identity and assets	C.5.1	Percentage of residents that are satisfied with the impacts of tourism on the destination's identity
	C.5.2	Percentage of the destination's events that are focused on traditional/local culture and heritage

Section D: Environmental impact

Criteria	Indicator reference#	ETIS core indicators
D.1 Reducing transport impact	D.1.1	Percentage of tourists and same-day visitors using different modes of transport to arrive at the destination
	D.1.2	Percentage of tourists and same-day visitors using local/soft mobility/public transport services to get around the destination
	D.1.3	Average travel (km) by tourists and same-day visitors from home to the destination
	D.1.4	Average carbon footprint of tourists and same-day visitors travelling from home to the destination
D.2 Climate change	D.2.1	Percentage of tourism enterprises involved in climate change mitigation schemes — such as: CO_2 offset, low energy systems, etc.— and 'adaptation' responses and actions
	D.2.2	Percentage of tourism accommodation and attraction infrastructure located in 'vulnerable zones'
D.3 Solid waste management	D.3.1	Waste production per tourist night compared to general population waste production per person (kg)
	D.3.2	Percentage of tourism enterprises separating different types of waste
	D.3.3	Percentage of total waste recycled per tourist compared to total waste recycled per resident per year
D.4 Sewage treatment	D.4.1	Percentage of sewage from the destination treated to at least secondary level prior to discharge
D.5 Water management	D.5.1	Water consumption per tourist night compared to general population water consumption per resident night
	D.5.2	Percentage of tourism enterprises taking actions to reduce water consumption
	D.5.3	Percentage of tourism enterprises using recycled water
D.6 Energy usage	D.6.1	Energy consumption per tourist night compared to general population energy consumption per resident night
	D.6.2	Percentage of tourism enterprises that take actions to reduce energy consumption
	D.6.3	Percentage of annual amount of energy consumed from renewable sources (Mwh) compared to overall energy consumption at destination level per year
D.7 Landscape and biodiversity protection	D.7.1	Percentage of local enterprises in the tourism sector actively supporting protection, conservation and management of local biodiversity and landscapes

Supplementary indicators

The following **indicative list of supplementary indicators** has to be considered as a starting point and as an example of specific indicators which have already been tested and can be tailored for a specific type of destination or for other needs.

Therefore, the current list can be further enriched with additional indicators in the future, once they have been implemented by destinations.

Maritime and coastal tourism
Passengers and ports
Number of incoming and outgoing passengers per port per month
Number of berths and moorings for recreational boating
Water quality
Level of pollution in seawater per 100 ml (faecal coliforms, campylobacter)
Beaches
Percentage of beaches awarded the Blue Flag
Area and volume of sand nourishment
Total km of free beaches relative to total km of beaches
Percentage of beaches accessible to all
Number of days per year the beach/shore is closed due to contamination

Accessible tourism
Sustainable tourism policy
Percentage of the destination with an accessible tourism strategy/action plan, with agreed monitoring, development control and evaluation arrangement
Equality/accessibility
Percentage of commercial accommodation with rooms accessible to people with disabilities and/or participating in recognised accessibility information schemes
Does the destination have an identified accessibility management office or person available to the public?
Percentage of businesses that have a budget for accessibility improvements
Reducing transport impact
Percentage of each category of transport in the destination that is accessible, i.e. public transport and private hire coaches, minibuses, taxis or minicabs

Transnational cultural routes
Destination management survey
Is your destination part of a cultural route certified by the Council of Europe?
If yes, is there any policy in place for the cultural route's visibility?
If yes, does the local community participate in this policy?
Do cultural/tourist events linked to the cultural route take place in your destination?
Is the logo of the cultural route of the Council of Europe present on the documents or visible in tourist offices?
Percentage of tourist offers available in your destination highlighting the theme of the cultural route
Enterprise survey
Is your enterprise located along a cultural route certified by the Council of Europe?
If yes, are the products of your enterprise linked within the theme/activities of the cultural route?
If yes, is the communication on your enterprise/products mentioning the links with the cultural route?
Is the cultural route promoting/making visible your enterprise/products?
Resident survey
Benefits for the community from the cultural route involving my destination
Is the community informed about the cultural route?
Is the local community involved in the actions organised within the framework of the cultural route's activities?
Are there benefits for me from the cultural route involving my destination?
Percentage of residents satisfied with their involvement and their influence in the planning and development of the cultural route
Percentage of residents who have positive or negative views on the impact of the cultural route on my destination's identity
Effect of the cultural route on the distinctiveness and local identity, culture and heritage of the destination
Effect of the cultural route on the quality of life in the destination
Percentage of residents who have positive views on the impact of the cultural route on tourism
Effect of the cultural route on cultural and tourism offers of the destination

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The pool of experts has been coordinated by the unit responsible for the development and the implementation of the ETIS, Unit F.4 — Tourism, Creative and Emerging Industries — of the Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs [26].

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