

FACTSHEET PROJECT SASTDes

Smart Assessment Sustainable Tourist Destinations



Goal

Project SASTDes aims to resolve key issues in the sustainability assessment process of tourism destinations, with the objective to reduce the costs of assessments both in time and money, and to use the results of assessments for destination branding and marketing. Core research question: 'How can sustainability assessments effectively and efficiently contribute to the sustainable development of tourism destinations and tourism products?'



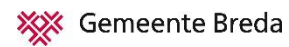
Importance

The large growth in tourism not only brings economic progress, but also causes negative effects on destinations and beyond, environmentally, socio-culturally and economically. For instance, tourism contributes 5% of all anthropogenic CO₂ emissions worldwide. The tourism industry has responded with a number of sustainable tourism initiatives. A much used method is to subject tourism products to a sustainability assessment, frequently leading to a label. The goal here is to motivate destinations to perform more sustainably and to stimulate consumers to make more sustainable touristic choices. Until now, participation in sustainability assessments in tourism is limited. Hence the effect on consumer choices is also small.



Limitations sustainability assessments

Most assessments suffer from limited participation and interest from tourism businesses. Conducting assessments is too costly for them, also time wise, and the added value is unclear to them. Moreover, the assessments hardly lead to behavior changes among the relatively small group of end users interested in sustainability. Finally there is a problem with the content of the assessments: the impacts from transport to destinations is not accounted for, whereas these are often of great importance when determining the environmental impact of tourism trips.

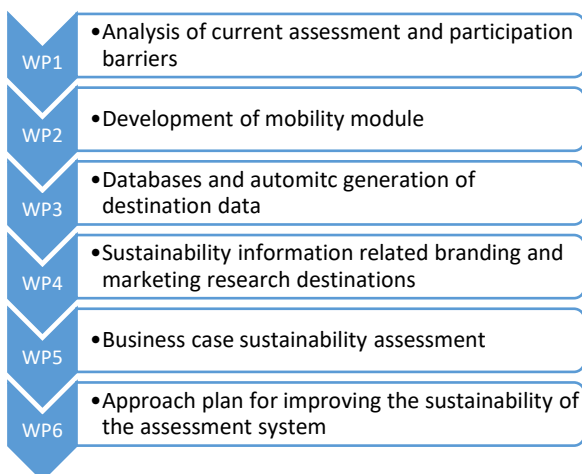


Network

The consortium is led by the associate professorship 'Centre for Sustainability, Tourism and Transport' (CSTT) of NHTV Breda University of Applied Sciences. The CSTT has been investigating the external impacts of tourism since 2002. NHTV's associate professorship 'Sustainable Business Models' (SBM) has relevant expertise on attractive revenue models in tourism. 'Wageningen Environmental Research' (WENR), part of Wageningen University & Research (WUR), delivers knowledge and expertise on environmental information, GIS and automation. The research group 'New Marketing' of the Centre of Expertise for Sustainable Business (ESB) of Avans University of Applied Sciences develops knowledge for the 21st century marketer, e.g. concerning digitalization and sustainability. Green Destinations (GD) is a foundation with a platform for destinations that want to develop more sustainably, through certification. Green Destinations BV is GD's for-profit branch, specialized in destination data and databases. A number of Dutch destination management organisations (DMOs), the municipalities of Breda, Goeree-Overflakkee and Schouwen-Duiveland combine ambition towards sustainability and tourism with experience in policymaking. Tourist office and GD-member Zuid-Limburg brings in experience on making destinations more sustainable. Other partners are Bookdifferent, an international hotel booking site which provides information on the sustainability of accommodations and destinations, and enables a 'green' ranking. ECEAT, the European Centre for Eco Agro Tourism, is an NGO with a wide network in sustainable tourism. Treinreiswinkel offers unique knowledge on booking and using trains in Europe. TUI Benelux has a wealth of experience with the tourism market, including on sustainability.



Project set-up



Programme
[RAAK-PRO](#)

Project lead & contact
Dr. Paul Peeters
Centre for Sustainability, Tourism & Transport
NHTV Breda University of Applied Sciences
Mgr. Hopmansstraat 1 / 4817 JT Breda
076-5332013 / 0318-692390 / peeters.p@nhtv.nl

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