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Introduction

The environment is a factor that is increasingly influencing tourist demand. As the demand for tourist products is partly determined by the quality of the related environment, it can have either a positive or a negative influence on tourism. In the same way, tourism may have a positive or a negative impact on the environment. A positive impact on the environment is for example better economical possibilities to maintain/restore cultural buildings and to protect the nature. Negative impact on the environment is for example air emissions from passenger transport.

A few international organizations such as EEA, OECD and WTO have developed indicators to measure sustainable tourism and environmental impacts on tourism. These sets involve a large number of indicators, which is difficult for the national countries to handle. There are also problems with the data availability on the regional and local levels.

For this reason, a demand has come up for a reasonable number of indicators, as well as a need for detailed descriptions of the indicators, including objectives, sources and calculation tools. This manual presents a core set of 20 sustainable development indicators for tourism, including detailed descriptions of each indicator, which makes it easier for the countries to use them.

Objective

The objective of the manual is to provide a core set of indicators in the field of sustainable development of tourism to the EU countries. This core set forms a base of indicators that can be used on national, regional and local levels in the EU countries. The set should also serve as a base for the forthcoming updated legal basis for tourism statistics.

Indicators: selection criteria

The indicators have been selected with regard to seven criteria, where the first criteria is the most important.

1. Relevant with regard to interactions between tourism and the environment.
2. Corresponding to the different areas within DPSIR framework.
3. Frequent in existing sets of tourism sustainable development indicators.
4. The data availability should be taken into account.
5. Suitable for different geographical levels, whereas indicators for special tourism areas need to be supplemented (see also half-time conclusions).
6. Clear to understand and possible to connect to general accepted environmental goals.
7. Limited number of indicators.

The criteria are described in more detail in the Technical report, section Methods.