MED - Routes

"Enhancing MED sustainable cultural tourism through the creation of eco-itineraries inside European Cultural Routes"

WP1 CATALOGUE OF OUTPUTS

WPT1 – ASSESSMENT OF OUTPUTS TRANSFERABILITY AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY PATTERNS IN THE CULTURAL TOURISM SECTOR

Document Control

Deliverable	D 1.2.1 Catalogue of outputs to be transferred and capitalised from INCIRCLE and EMBLEMATIC
WP/Activity	WP1 Activity 1.2. Preliminary analysis of INCERCLE and EMBLEMATIC outputs for transferability
Due Month	Period 1l, 7 - 12
Delivery Date	30.11.2024.
Document Status	Work in progress
Deliverable Responsible	LIBERTAS INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
Deliverable Reviewers	LP and Consortium

Revision History

Version	Date	Author(s)
Version 0.2.	30.11.2024.	MSc Vlasta Klarić MSc Ksenija Keča

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0. INTRODUCTION

MED-Routes overall objective is to establish and disseminate a local-based, low-impact model of sustainable tourism across Cultural Routes in the MED area, in particular, to establish a specific model of Mediterranean “slow tourism” rooted in the common heritage of 4 Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe: Phoenicians´ Route, Routes of the Olive Tree, European Route of Ceramics and Destination Napoleon. To tackle the project general objective, MED-Routes´ approach is rooted in a TRANSFER rationale: transfer mechanisms are put into place to cross-reference the most relevant, filed tested outputs from INCIRCLE & EMBLEMATIC projects for the design of eco-itineraries.

As outlined in Activity 1.2. of the project within the Catalogue of outputs, this deliverable offers an overview of the key outputs from INCIRCLE and EMBLEMATIC projects for transfer and capitalization. The action produced an exhaustive catalogue of the identified tools in order to consolidate a shared understanding and awareness among the partners about the core content of the outputs, as well as of the transfer potential in application to their own objectives within this proposal. PPs were all invited to contribute to this activity in the analysis of the outputs under the guidance and introduction which was given by Libertas at the last transnational meeting held in Varna May 30th 2024.

The catalogue focuses on the following tools: INCIRCLE REPLICATING PACKAGE for the transformation of the tourism sector according to the principles of the circular economy; INCIRCLE BOOKLETS presenting the touristic circular activities in identified local territories, INCIRCLE SCHOOL for training & capacity building, INCIRCLE REGIONAL & LOCAL ACTION PLANS for circular, sustainable tourism and EMBLEMATIC Guidelines for the creation of eco-itineraries.

The Catalogue is designed to provide an in-depth understanding of the INCIRCLE and EMBLEMATIC project components and methodologies employed to promote circular tourism in the Mediterranean region. Its purpose is to serve as a valuable resource for stakeholders, policymakers, and practitioners interested in replicating the successful strategies and practices developed through the INCIRCLE and EMBLEMATIC initiative. The content is organized into several key sections, each focusing on specific aspects of the project and its outcomes.

The first section deals with the INCIRCLE Replicating Package, which includes the operational model for developing regional and national strategies on circular tourism. This part of the document provides detailed frameworks and guidelines for creating effective circular tourism strategies. It also encompasses a Capacity Building Report, that includes a Participatory Toolkit, offering tools and methods for engaging stakeholders and building capacity for circular tourism. Additionally, it summarizes the insight into the strategies implemented in partner territories and outlines the key indicators used to measure the circularity of these tourism strategies. The section concludes with a Policy Brief Fiche, presenting policy recommendations and insights derived from the project.

The second section covers the INCIRCLE Booklets Fiche. Ten booklets focused on tourists & local businesses of five partnering territories present the circular activities of each territory & raise awareness in sustainable tourism. Focusing on educational initiatives, the third section presents the INCIRCLE School Fiche. The fourth section of the document is dedicated to the INCIRCLE Regional & Local Action Plans Fiche. Local action plans were analysed in terms of their stakeholder

involvement, and plan for implementation of the proposed measures and actions. The final section provides insights into emblematic projects through the Emblematic Project Handbook Fiche.

Each of the five key INCIRCLE and EMBLEMATIC documents outlines the main fields of intervention, and the methodologies adopted in the project. The strengths and weaknesses of the approach are evaluated, highlighting successful practices and key lessons learned. Comprehensive analysis of the methodological approaches used is explained, and the effectiveness of these approaches in achieving desired results highlighted. Successful practices and lessons learned that can be applied to future projects are also analysed, case studies of successful implementations and lessons that can be applied to future eco-itinerary development are included. The aim was to provide a thorough understanding of how both of these projects can contribute to the overall goal of fostering circular tourism on eco-itineraries.

This document is structured to offer a thorough understanding of the INCIRCLE and EMBLEMATIC projects' efforts to foster circular tourism, providing valuable frameworks, tools, and insights that can be leveraged to achieve sustainable and resilient tourism practices applied to eco-itineraries across the Mediterranean and beyond.

1. INCIRCLE REPLICATING PACKAGE FICHE

1.1. OPERATIONAL MODEL FOR REGIONAL/NATIONAL STRATEGIES ON CIRCULAR TOURISM FICHE

1.1.1 MAIN FIELDS OF INTERVENTION

The document Operational Model (D.3.1.I) provides a strategic framework for advancing circular tourism, beginning with definitions of sustainable and circular tourism. It then reviews current approaches, including those by the UNWTO, the ETIS, and the MED Programme Sustainable Tourism community, highlighting their methodologies and contributions.

INCIRCLE's main areas of action are listed as: energy efficiency, water and waste management and mobility. Also INCIRCLE **basic principles**: reduce, rethink, revalue, regenerate and innovate are highlighted.

The document presents **the INCIRCLE Operational Model** for circular tourism structured into six comprehensive phases. It begins with **Context Analysis**, which should examine the current tourism landscape, including policies, trends, and impacts. Following this, **Governance** should establish robust governance structures and identify key stakeholders to ensure collaborative decision-making. Next, **Shared Common Vision and Goals** should develop a unified vision and overarching goals for circular tourism. **Main Targets** chapter defines specific, measurable targets to guide the strategy. **Measure Planning** outlines concrete actions to achieve these targets, with associated output indicators. Finally, **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Funding** sets up mechanisms to assess the strategy's effectiveness and identifies potential funding sources, ensuring sustainability.

This model ensures a comprehensive and systematic approach to implementing circular tourism, promoting sustainability through thorough analysis, stakeholder involvement, clear goal setting, and effective monitoring and funding strategies.

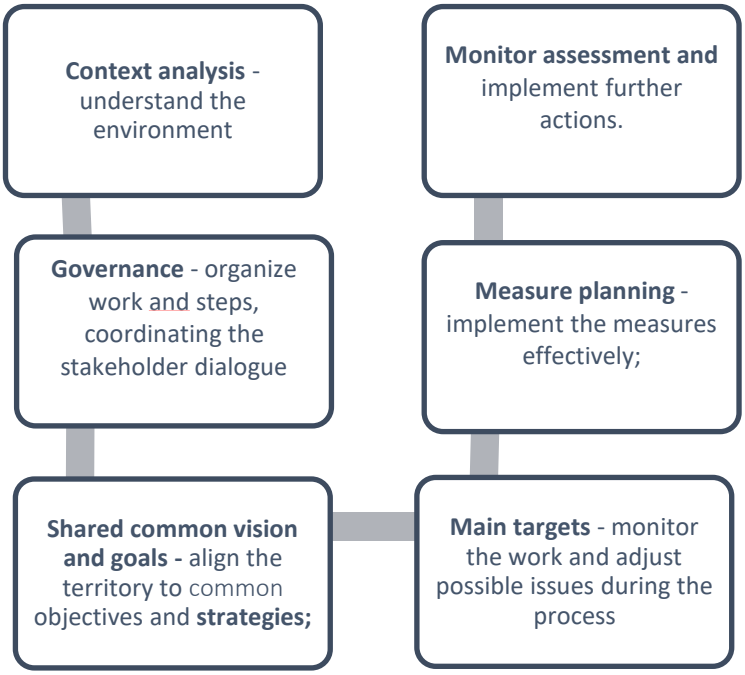
1.1.2 METHODOLOGY AND TRANSFERABILITY

The Operational Manual is based on the process and activities to be performed step by step so as to maximize the chances of producing an effective, ambitious and realistic regional or national strategy able to trigger a concrete shift towards a more responsible, circular and sustainable tourism sector. The general Operational model is described as guidance for the development of strategy, for policy and decision makers, and shifts into an Operational Plan when referring to a specific territory and conditions. It describes six basic phases.

TRANSFERABILITY:

Operational model can be transferred into the act of creating eco-itineraries through the very clear procedure which involves 6 phases or steps:

1. **Context analysis** -explaining the environment in which the operational model will run.
2. **Governance** - organizing the work of all the steps, coordinating the stakeholder dialogue.
3. **Strategy design - shared common vision and goals -** aligning the territory to common objectives and strategies;
4. **Main targets -** monitoring the work and adjusting possible issues during the process;
5. **Measure planning -** implementing the measures effectively;
6. **Monitoring, assessment and sources for funding** - implementing further actions.



Each phase provides instructions:

1. <u>Context analysis</u>

   Context analyses is the foundational step, where a thorough examination of the existing tourism and heritage landscape is conducted. This includes evaluating relevant EU, national, regional, and local policies, assessing current tourism features and trends, and identifying both the positive and negative impacts of tourism flows on existing cultural routes or itineraries. The analysis can also project mid- to long-term development trends and employ SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analyses to provide a clear understanding of the current situation and potential future scenarios. With this aim you can:

   - **Analyse the territory** to understand sustainability gaps in terms of mobility, energy, waste, and water management.
   - **Measure the seasonality pressure** – to understand the difference of tourism pressure on the destination that can also dramatically influence scarcely inhabited areas.
   - **Evaluate the impact of past actions** to the territory, for further investment or re-allocation of resources to different actions.
   - **Identify strong points to implement**, in order to make the territory more attractive from a touristic point of view: green policies as a touristic leverage.

In this sense context analyses is provided related to the common fields of actions covered by INCIRCLE project and Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe

EUROPEAN CULTURAL ROUTES	INCIRCLE PRINCIPLES	COMMON FIELDS for Cultural routes' ECO-ITINERARIES
Cooperation in terms of research and development	INNOVATE – innovation needs cooperation in order to develop - seeks to unify and guide territories towards a common sustainable development	Incorporating innovative methods from INCIRCLE can enhance the research and development activities of Cultural Routes, making them more effective and sustainable.
Valorization & enhancement of memory, history and European heritage	RETHINK - Emphasizes the impacts of decisions on resources, including cultural resources, across their lifecycle. Stresses management of heritage sites and cultural resources sustainably, ensuring they are preserved for future generations.	Stressing principles that advocate for a broad, inclusive approach that considers the impact on all stakeholders Implementing an inclusive process that involves all stakeholders from the beginning, ensuring a comprehensive and resilient plan.
Cultural and educational exchanges among the youngsters	REDUCE - Emphasizes education on sustainability practices, such as reducing waste and optimizing resource use in a participatory way. Incorporating sustainability education into cultural and educational exchanges	Stressing principles that involve education, active participation and engagement encouraging young people to engage in activities that promote both cultural understanding and environmental responsibility
Contemporary cultural and artistic practices	REGENERATE - Emphasizes innovative practices to regenerate resources and integrate sustainable tourism with local activities	Promoting synergies that not only celebrate European heritage but also promote regeneration of heritage including sustainable and modern cultural practices
Cultural tourism and development of Sustainable and Responsible Tourism practices	REVALUE - Focuses on upcycling and other methods (storytelling) to enhance the value of (heritage) resources, turning them into higher quality or more functional products.	Including aims that promote tourism that supports the maintenance and enhancement of cultural sites, thereby contributing to sustainable territorial development

Established framework must be in line with key postulates related to itineraries on European Cultural Routes such as:

- A cultural route is a physical, tangible section/spot in space (but not necessarily a continuous path) defined by an inventory of tangible and intangible cultural and historical elements connected by a theme, concept or definition as well as by the identification of sites of existing

cultural heritage linked in a dispersed, linear, spotted or regional structure creating a marked and interpreted continuous whole within the unified context of the route.

- A route is a physical stretch of a journey through several countries , marked and managed as a thematic network of tangible sites and intangible concepts. (as such might be considered as a destination)
- Quoting COE 2010 „a cultural, educational heritage and tourism co-operation project aiming at the promotion and development of an itinerary or a series of itineraries based on a historic route, a cultural concept, figure or phenomenon with a transnational importance and significance for the understanding and respect of common European values".

Context analysis is there for stakeholders to understand the environment in which the operational model will run – analyse, measure, evaluate weaknesses and strengths more easily. Likewise tools are provided for this purpose and are reachable at : https://www.incircle-kp.eu/media/1326/template-for-incircle-strategy_en_final.docx

Accordingly SWOT and CAME matrices are at disposal for easier understanding of the context:

Figure 1 – SWOT matrix

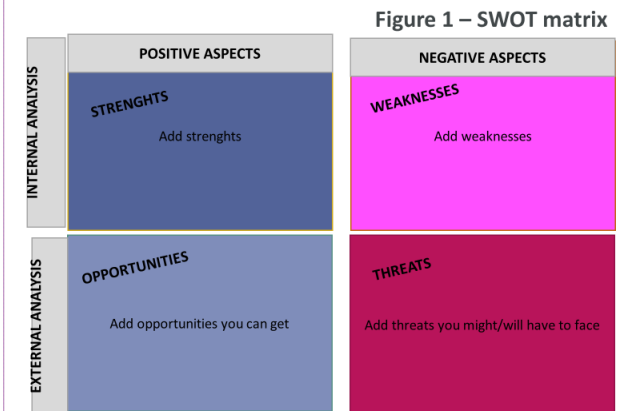


Figure 2 – CAME matrix

Each area should try to detect its own possible weaknesses that can be traced as for example:

- Imbalance in ARRIVALS and CARRYING CAPACITIES among seaside, rural and urban areas on itinerary?
- Overtourism versus under-tourism & less developed spots on eco-itinerary?
- Connectivity issues - less developed regions - remote areas, non-coastal, non-urban destinations?
- Declining number of inhabitants – HR, demography?
- Deficiencies of C&CT management, marketing, visibility of areas on eco itinerary?
- Lack of Visibility?
- Etc.

Or could detect some of the most common strengths such as:

- Abundance of undiscovered unique areas on eco-itineraries

- Diversified tourism offer on eco-itineraries
- Preserved identity levels of micro locations and sites on eco-itineraries
- Management of heterogeneous spaces
- Possibilities for smart and responsible **water, waste and energy management on eco-itineraries**

And there will be a number of questions to be answered within CONTEXT (PESTLE) ANALYSES:

- What is the tourism volume on eco-itinerary, in the area, in the surroundings? How many arrivals and how many overnight stays are there in the country, in the area of the eco-itinerary? What is the percentage of guests in the season (June to October) out of season? Percentage of guests in urban areas, rural areas, coastline areas?
- Who are the usual visitors? Individual / groups? Percentage? How are they served? Who are desired visitors?
- How do they feel? Any survey existing on their satisfaction? What is their expenditure per day?
- What sustainability measures already exist (mobility – biking, workshops – social sustainability and circularity, how do you use water, waste, energy, carrying capacity control)?
- Who are the key stakeholders? Etc.

2. **<u>Governance</u>,**
   Governance, as most important element, focuses on establishing robust structures of eco-itineraries to support the transition. Key stakeholders in tourism and circular economy initiatives are to be identified, and a Stakeholder Working Group (SWG) is to be formed. This group facilitates collaboration, decision-making, and ensures that the strategy is inclusive and representative of various interests.

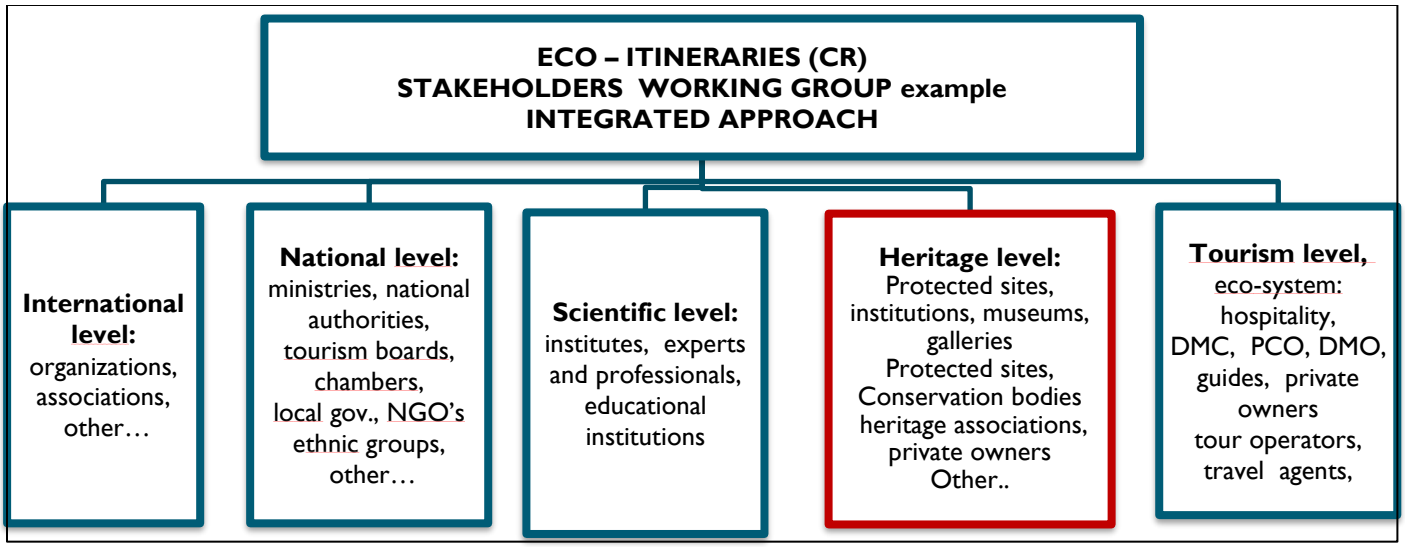
Governance supports coordinated, **multi-level synergies with an aim** to build capacity for:

- Achieving **shared goals, developing strategic** joint projects, fostering sustainability and managing complexity;
- Achieving **balance between the welfare** of residents and tourists, destination competitiveness and the context-specific needs of natural, built and cultural environments;
- C**reation of Stakeholder Working Groups (SWG**) – representatives of tourism eco-system.

Stakeholder working group is formed to:

- Collect and analyse data, identify needs and related action plan
- Define the vision, the targets and related measures
- Identify a strategy and related funding

Who are the right stakeholders for an eco-itinerary?



It is important to keep in mind that **key players** in the case of creating the eco-itinerary will also be stakeholders from the heritage sector.

In order to organize the work and all the steps coordinating the stakeholder dialogue, we will need to understand stakeholders' interests, so INCIRCLE has provided a matrix to help with that:

INCIRCLE Stakeholder analysis matrix					
Stakeholder name	**Interest in the INCIRCLE project** (high/medium /low)	**Influence on the INCIRCLE project** (high/medium /low)	**Needs** (What is important to the stakeholder?)	**Expectations** (How could the stakeholder contribute to the project)	**Strategy for engaging the stakeholder**
			.		

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3. Strategy design

Strategy design involves crafting the actual strategic plan. This begins with a clear definition of the current scenario, followed by the establishment of a shared vision, goals, and main targets for the eco-itinerary. Specific measures are defined and planned, with corresponding output indicators to monitor progress. A timeline is to be developed for implementing these measures, and future scenarios are to be created to prepare for various potential outcomes.

In order to achieve shared common vision and goals you may:

- Describe the **current state of the art** and set **the baseline** against which change will be measured
- Define a **shared common vision** of where the territory (eco –itinerary) wants to go in terms of circular touristic destination.
- Define the **main challenges** the territory wants to tackle

Prepared toolkit offers for that a template to summarize **INCIRCLE objectives, indicators and targets:**

Name of the strategy's objective	
Short description of the objective	
Related strategic indicator	
Baseline indicator (current trend)	

Target value	

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4. **Main targets** should be monitored and adjusted during the process:

   - **Strategic results indicators** are to be identified **for each strategy main objective.**
   - **A small number of easily measurable and understandable qualitative and quantitative indicators** is to be developed that are clearly linked to each of the objectives to be achieved**,**
   - **Targets must define what should be achieved**, in comparison to the current situation

In this particular task INCIRCLE result indicator template can be of use:

Result indicator for the objective [*specify number and name of the objective*]		**Target values and deadline**				**Data collection and reporting**		
Name of the indicator	**Definition**	**Baseline**	**Year n°**	**Year n°**	**Year n°**	**Frequency and report**	**Data source and collection methodology**	**Responsible for data collection**

Available at: https://www.incircle-kp.eu/media/1326/template-for-incircle-strategy_en_final.docx

5. . **Measure planning**

   Measure is an action able to address the identified territorial problems, contributing to meet one or more strategy goals. Key **stakeholders must be involved in the short listing**, definition and approval of measures. For each shortlisted **measure**, a **set of relevant information** is to be provided, able to convey:

   - WHAT goals the measure is pursuing
   - HOW the measure will be implemented
   - WHO will benefit from it
   - WHO and HOW will contribute to its implementation
   - WHICH resources and skills are required
   - HOW MUCH will the measure cost (including setting up and operation/maintenance costs)
   - WHEN it will be implemented
   - HOW its progress and performance will be monitored

Finally, **Evaluation, and Funding** ensure the strategy's sustainability and effectiveness. A monitoring plan is to be established to track the implementation and success of the strategy.

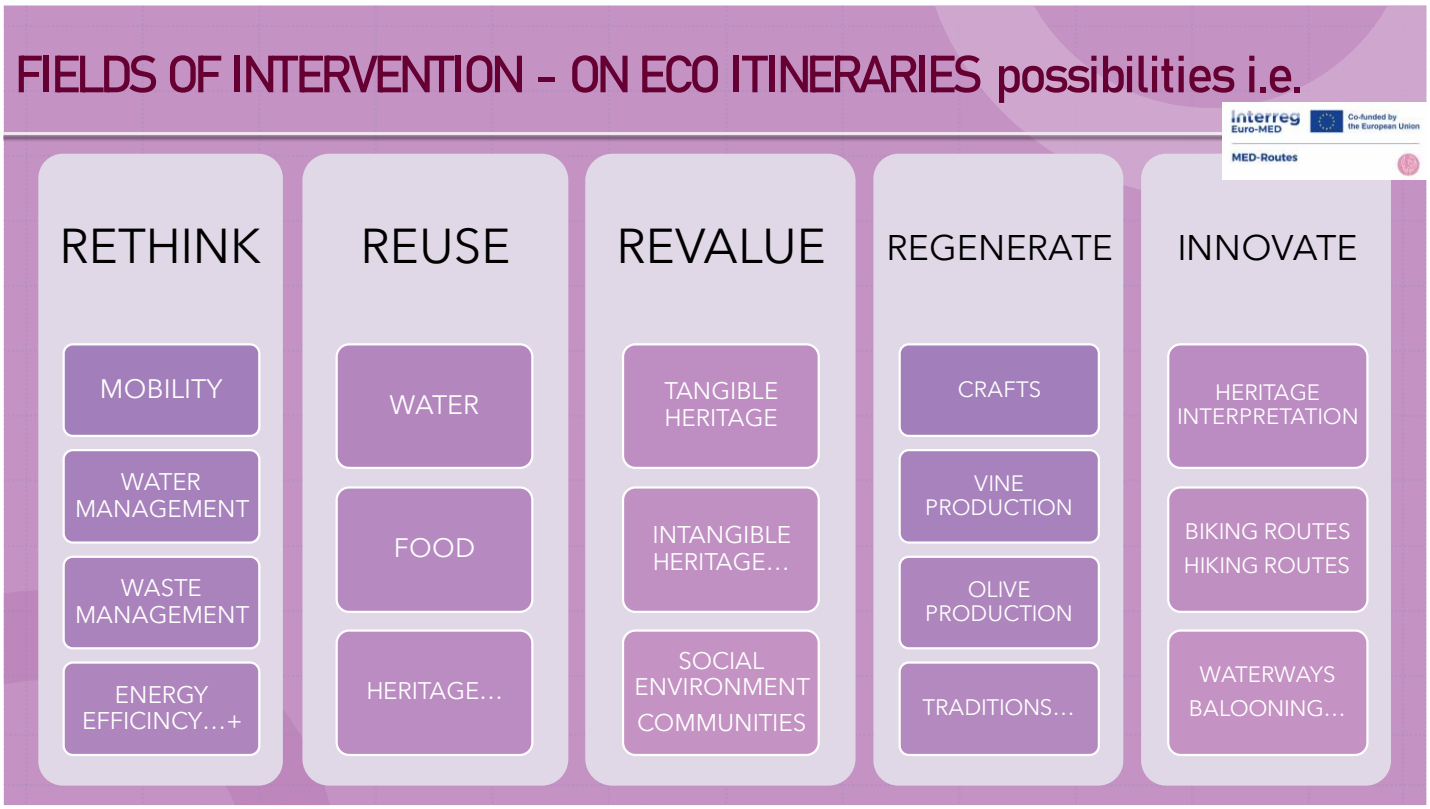
Additionally, potential sources of funding are to be identified to support the various initiatives and measures outlined in the plan.

Next steps are also expected:

- **Designating a person/team** responsible for the monitoring process: determine who will be in charge of every step/ milestone during the development of the strategy.
- **Defining the milestones** to evaluate along the Strategy life span, along with indicators and source of data to evaluate every defined milestone;
- **Defining the critical points** which could have a determinant impact. Identify actions to be taken in case the critical events take place.
- **Establishing a calendar** including the previous elements.

Such structured approach could ensure a systematic transition towards more sustainable and circular tourism practices. By thoroughly analysing the current state, involving key stakeholders, designing a clear strategic plan, and securing funding and monitoring mechanisms, the strategy aims to foster a more sustainable tourism sector.

POSSIBLE FIELDS OF INTERVENTION - ON ECO ITINERARIES possibilities i.e.



1.1.3 STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES OF THE APPROACH IN APPLICATION TO THE RESULTS

Strengths:

Comprehensive Framework: The operational model provides a well-rounded framework that addresses multiple aspects of sustainability.

Stakeholder Inclusion: The model's emphasis on stakeholder engagement ensures that various perspectives and needs are considered, enhancing the likelihood of success.

Scalability: The model is designed to be scalable, allowing it to be adapted to different regional and national contexts.

Weaknesses:

Resource Intensity: Implementing the model can be resource-intensive, requiring significant time, funding, and human resources.

Complex Coordination: The need for extensive coordination among various stakeholders can pose challenges, especially in regions with diverse or conflicting interests.

Adaptation Challenges: Some regions may face difficulties in adapting the model to their specific contexts due to differences in infrastructure, culture, and existing policies.

1.1.4 SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES AND APPLICATIONS

Successful Practices and Applications are not listed in this document, but could lead to further examples on eco itineraries as mentioned in later documents:

Example 1: Waste Management on eco-itineraries

Initiative: Eco itineraries can implement comprehensive waste management programs focusing on recycling and reducing single-use plastics.

Outcome expected: Significant reduction in plastic litter along itineraries and increased awareness among tourists and local communities about waste management practices.

Example 2: Sustainable Mobility in eco-itineraries including urban centres

Initiative: Urban areas along cultural routes can develop infrastructure for cycling and electric public transport.

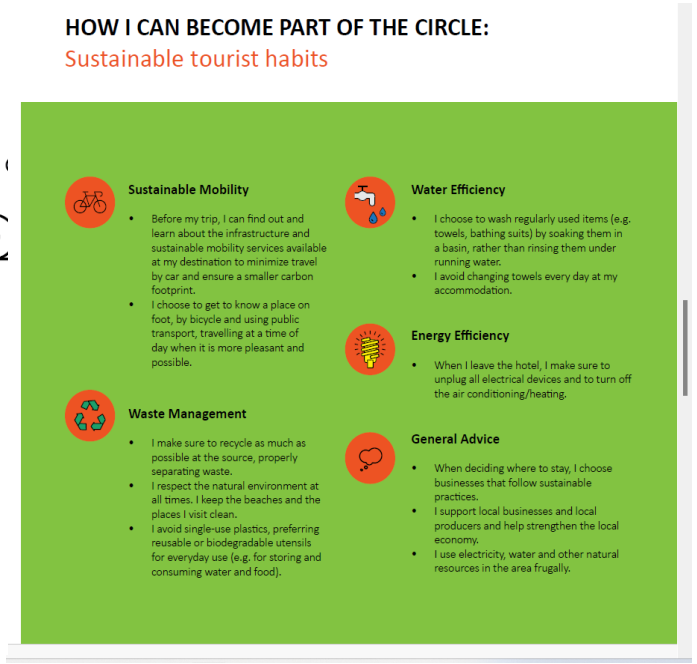
Outcome expected: Reduced traffic congestion, lower emissions, and improved accessibility for tourists and residents.

Example 3: Energy Efficiency in heritage sites along eco-itineraries

Initiative: Installation of energy-efficient lighting and renewable energy systems in historical buildings.

Outcome expected: Decreased energy consumption and costs, while maintaining the integrity and aesthetics of heritage sites.

Some examples are listed in INCIRCLE BOOKLETS such as:



FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR APPLICATIONS:

SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY

Public Transport and Cycling:

- Provide information about public transport options.
- Create infrastructure for cycling, such as bike rental stations and safe bike paths along the routes.
- Biking routes, hiking routes, ballooning routes, waterways…

Low-Emission Transport:

- Promote the use of electric or low-emission buses and shuttles for transportation between cultural sites

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Energy Efficient Lighting and Renewable Energy:

- Use energy-efficient lighting and renewable energy sources such as solar panels, at cultural heritage sites and along the routes.
- Use energy-efficient lighting, heating, and cooling systems in tourism operations.

Green Building Standards:

- Construct or renovate buildings following green building standards like LEED or BREEAM to ensure energy efficiency and sustainability.
- Ensure any new buildings or renovations along the routes follow green building standards, focusing on sustainability and energy efficiency.

Smart Technology:

- Implement smart technologies to monitor and optimize resource use, such as smart lighting and energy management systems at cultural sites.

WATER MANAGEMENT - Optimize use:

- Install water-saving fixtures, such as low-flow toilets and faucets, in restrooms and public areas of cultural sites.
- Promote water conservation practices among visitors.
- Use native and drought-resistant plants for landscaping cultural sites to reduce water usage

WAST MANAGEMENT

- Reduce - Prohibit single-use plastics in cultural sites and encourage the use of reusable water bottles, utensils, and containers.
- Waste management programs - Set up comprehensive recycling bins and composting systems at cultural sites and along routes, with clear signage to guide visitors.
- Recycling - Establish systems for recycling paper, glass, metals, and electronics within tourism facilities.
- Upcycling - Create art installations or community projects that upcycle waste materials found along the routes, engaging local artists and visitors.
- Reuse and Repurpose - Repurpose materials from renovations of cultural sites into new uses, such as turning old bricks into garden paths or converting old wood into furniture.

1.1.5 KEY LESSONS LEARNT

a) **Holistic Approach:** A holistic approach that integrates various aspects of sustainability (environmental, economic, and social) is crucial for the success of circular tourism.

b) **Local Context Matters:** Tailoring strategies to the specific needs and characteristics of each region is essential for effective implementation.

c) **Continuous Improvement:** Ongoing monitoring and willingness to adapt strategies based on feedback and results are vital for achieving long-term sustainability goals.

d) **Community Engagement:** Engaging local communities from the outset ensures buy-in and fosters a sense of ownership, which is critical for the sustainability of initiatives.

e) **Capacity Building:** Providing education and training to stakeholders helps build the necessary skills and knowledge to support circular tourism practices.

In summary, the INCIRCLE Operational Model may offer a robust framework for promoting circular tourism through targeted interventions, inclusive methodologies, and adaptive practices. While challenges exist, particularly in terms of resource requirements and stakeholder coordination, the model's successes in pilot regions demonstrate its potential to significantly enhance sustainability in tourism in MED area.

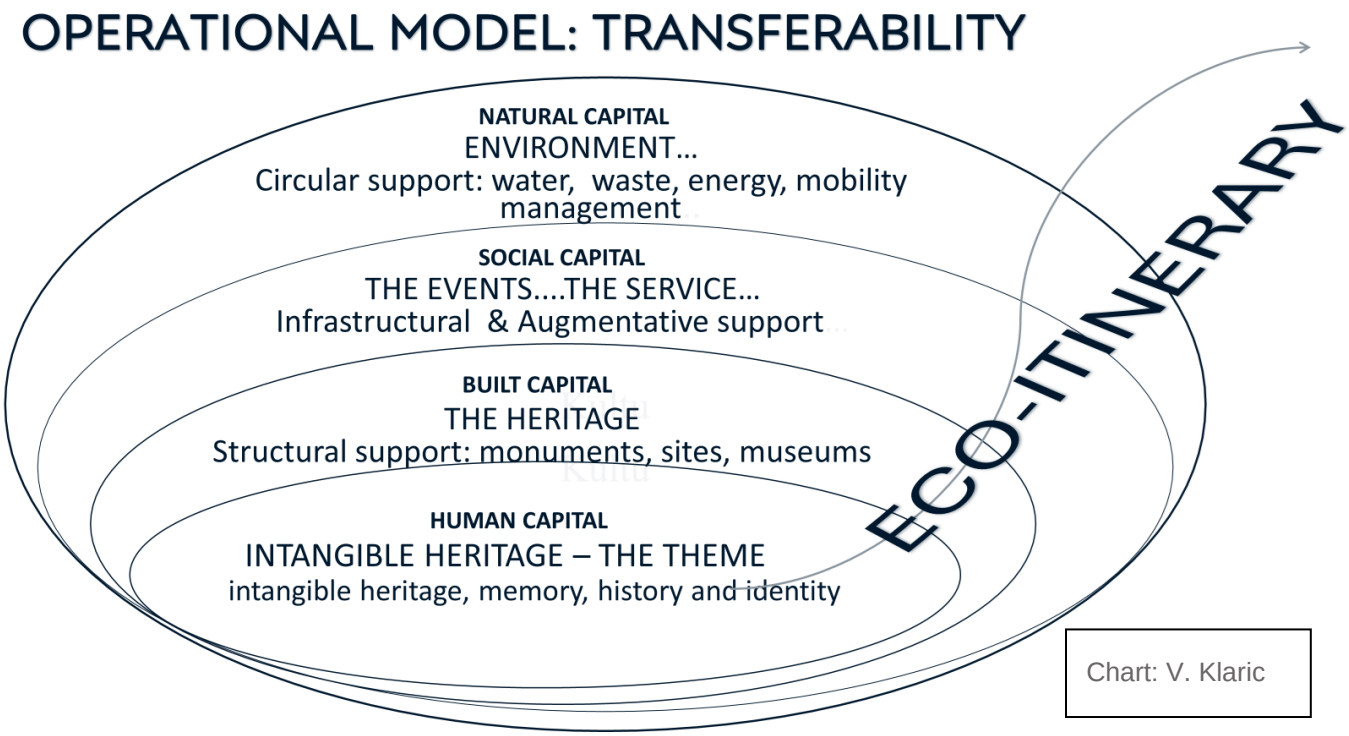


Chart: V. Klaric

SOURCES:

- https://www.incircle-kp.eu/media/1219/incircle_d-311_-operational-model_eng.pdf
- https://www.incircle-kp.eu/media/1326/template-for-incircle-strategy_en_final.docx

1.2. PARTICIPATORY TOOLKIT FICHE - CAPACITY BUILDING REPORT

1.2.1 MAIN FIELDS OF INTERVENTION

The INCIRCLE project focuses on promoting the circular economy in island and coastal regions through created stakeholder working groups (SWGs). These SWGs aim to gather diverse stakeholders to collaboratively address the unique challenges faced by these regions. The primary goal of the SWGs was to facilitate the sharing of best practices, foster collaboration, and develop sustainable strategies tailored to the needs of island and coastal communities. To achieve this, the project plans regular meetings where stakeholders can engage in ongoing dialogue, review progress, and refine their strategies.

Main fields of intervention thus are related to **Facilitating INCIRCLE SWGs** and **Participatory Tools (D. 3.4.1)** used by INCIRCLE for that purpose. Facilitation of the SWGs was considered to be crucial for the success. It involved **organizing and managing meetings, ensuring active participation from all members, and maintaining a structured process** for discussions and decision-making. Effective facilitation helped in harnessing the collective expertise and insights of the stakeholders, driving the group towards actionable outcomes.

1.2.2 ADOPTED METHODOLOGY AND TRANSFERABILITY

The methodology adopted for capacity building in the INCIRCLE project is multifaceted, designed to address the diverse needs of stakeholders ranging from local authorities to businesses and community groups. The approach combines theoretical knowledge with practical applications, ensuring that participants not only understand the principles of the circular economy but also know how to implement them effectively. Key components of the methodology include:

1. **Workshops and Training Sessions**: These were organized to provide hands-on experience and foster interactive learning. Experts in circular economy practices facilitated these sessions, covering topics such as waste management, sustainable tourism, and resource efficiency.

2. **E-learning Modules**: e-learning modules were developed to ensure broader accessibility. These modules allowed participants to learn at their own pace while including multimedia resources to enhance understanding.

3. **Case Studies and Best Practices**: Real-world examples of successful circular economy initiatives were analyzed. These case studies helped participants visualize the application of theoretical concepts and draw inspiration for their projects.

4. **Mentorship and Support Networks**: Experienced mentors were paired with participants to provide ongoing guidance. Additionally, support networks were established to foster peer-to-peer learning and collaboration.

TRANSFERABILITY can be achieved through the tools used:

Overall, the INCIRCLE project employed a comprehensive set of participatory tools and techniques to ensure effective stakeholder engagement and collaboration, those can be further used to drive the circular economy on eco-itineraries as well.

Participatory approach for the SWGs relies on **heterogeneous tools and** techniques. Online platforms like VideoFacilitator and Zoom can be used to host meetings, ensuring that stakeholders can participate remotely. For brainstorming, tools such as the Phillips 66 technique and the 1-2-4-All technique can be utilized. The Phillips 66 technique involves small group discussions to generate ideas, while the 1-2-4-All technique encourages collaborative brainstorming in progressively larger groups. These methods ensure that a wide range of ideas and perspectives are considered.

Ice-breaking tools can also be employed to facilitate interaction and ease communication among participants, fostering a more collaborative environment. Additionally, collaborative digital tools such as Miro, Jamboard, and Mentimeter are used to enhance visual collaboration and real-time engagement during meetings. Miro and Jamboard are online whiteboard tools that support visual brainstorming, while Mentimeter allows for interactive presentations and immediate feedback from participants.

Another significant participatory tool mentioned and useful is the European Awareness Scenario Workshop (EASW). This method has a rich history and is designed to engage stakeholders in scenario planning and discussions. The EASW method involves structured sessions that encourage participants to explore different scenarios and collaboratively develop solutions to the challenges they face. This approach ensures that the strategies developed are well-rounded and take into account various future possibilities.

Transferability is closely related to:

1. **Stakeholder Working Groups (SWGs)**:

   Aim: SWGs aim is to bring together stakeholders to discuss and address circular economy challenges in island and coastal areas. These groups are designed to foster collaboration, share best practices, and develop sustainable strategies.

   Planned Meetings: Regular meetings are planned for the SWGs to facilitate ongoing dialogue, review progress, and update strategies.

2. **SWG potential tasks:**

   - the collection of data and relevant information for analysis and assessment according to INCIRCLE circularity indicators;

- the identification of main sustainable tourism bottlenecks and challenges in the territory;
- the identification of best practices to be included in the INCIRCLE Knowledge Platform;
- the elaboration of PPs regional/national strategies, by providing inputs in the different phases of the development of the strategies;
- the elaboration of local action plans, coherent with the above mentioned national/regional strategies.

3. **Facilitation of the SWGs**:

   - The facilitation of SWGs involves organizing and managing the meetings, ensuring active participation, and maintaining a structured process for discussion and decision-making.

4. **Participatory Tools (as used by INCIRCLE)**:

Online Platforms:

VideoFacilitator: A tool used to host participatory processes and meetings online.
Zoom: Another platform for hosting virtual meetings.

Brainstorming Tools:

Phillips 66 Technique: A method for generating ideas through structured small group discussions.
1-2-4-All Technique: A collaborative brainstorming approach involving progressively larger groups.

Ice-breaking Tools: Techniques to foster interaction and ease communication among participants.

Collaborative Digital Tools:

Miro: An online whiteboard tool for visual collaboration.
Jamboard: A digital interactive whiteboard for brainstorming and collaboration.
Mentimeter: An interactive presentation tool for real-time feedback and engagement.

European Awareness Scenario Workshop (EASW):

- **Origins**: Background and development of the EASW method.
- **Functioning**: The process and methodology of conducting EASW sessions to engage stakeholders in scenario planning and discussions.

1.2.3 STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE APPROACH IN APPLICATION TO THE RESULTS

The capacity-building approach adopted by the INCIRCLE project exhibited several **strengths**:

Comprehensive and Inclusive: The combination of workshops, e-learning, and mentorship ensured a thorough and inclusive training experience. Participants could choose the format that best suited their learning style and schedule.

Practical Orientation: By emphasizing real-world applications through case studies and practical sessions, the methodology ensured that participants could immediately apply what they learned.

Flexibility: The use of e-learning modules provided flexibility, allowing participants to learn at their own pace and revisit materials as needed.

However, there were also some **weaknesses:**

Resource Intensive: Organizing workshops and maintaining mentorship networks required significant resources, both in terms of time and funding.

Variable Engagement: While the e-learning modules provided flexibility, some participants did not engage as fully with the online materials as they might have in face-to-face sessions.

Adaptability: The approach needed continuous adaptation to address the varying levels of prior knowledge and differing regional contexts of the participants.

1.2.4 SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES AND APPLICATIONS

The report highlights several successful practices and applications that emerged from the capacity-building activities:

1. **Local Adaptation of Circular Practices**: In several regions, local authorities successfully adapted the principles learned during the training to their specific contexts. For instance, some islands implemented waste segregation and recycling programs that significantly reduced landfill use.

2. **Business Innovation**: Several businesses developed innovative products and services based on circular economy principles. For example, a tourism business incorporated eco-friendly practices and waste reduction strategies into their operations, enhancing their sustainability and appeal to eco-conscious tourists.

3. **Community Engagement**: The capacity-building efforts also led to increased community engagement. Local communities, empowered with knowledge and tools, initiated grassroots projects such as community gardens and repair cafes, fostering a culture of sustainability.

1.2.5 KEY LESSONS LEARNT

The INCIRCLE project's capacity-building initiatives provided valuable insights:

1. **Tailored Approaches Are Essential**: One size does not fit all. Training programs need to be tailored to the specific needs and contexts of different regions and stakeholder groups. Flexibility in content and delivery is crucial.
2. **Continuous Support and Follow-Up**: Ongoing support and follow-up are essential for the sustained implementation of circular economy practices. Mentorship and peer networks play a vital role in maintaining momentum and addressing challenges as they arise.
3. **Integration of Local Knowledge**: Successful capacity building must integrate local knowledge and experiences. Engaging local experts and incorporating indigenous practices can enhance the relevance and effectiveness of the training.
4. **Engagement and Motivation**: Keeping participants engaged, especially in online formats, requires innovative approaches. Interactive content, regular feedback, and incentives can help maintain high levels of participation.
5. **Scalability and Replication**: The success of capacity-building programs in pilot regions demonstrates the potential for scalability and replication. However, careful planning and customization are necessary to replicate success in different contexts.

Deliverable D 3.4.1 from the INCIRCLE project underlines the importance of comprehensive and flexible capacity-building strategies in promoting circular economy practices. The adopted methodology, while resource-intensive, proved effective in equipping stakeholders with the necessary knowledge and skills. The strengths of this approach were evident in the successful local adaptations and innovations that emerged. However, the report also highlights areas for improvement, particularly in ensuring consistent engagement and adapting to diverse regional contexts. The key lessons learned provide a roadmap for future capacity-building initiatives, emphasizing the need for tailored approaches, continuous support, and the integration of local knowledge.

SOURCE:

- INCIRCLE-Capacity_building_report_English.pdf - English|

1.3. SUMMARY OF STRATEGIES FICHE

1.3.1 MAIN FIELDS OF INTERVENTION

"This report "Synthetic version of assessed regional strategies" summarizes the main aspects of Deliverable 4.1.2: Collection of assessment reports of regional/national strategies (The Energy and Water Agency, 2021a), with the scope to be used in aiding replicating activities (D4.4.1: Replication package). Deliverable 4.1.2 builds on other INCIRCLE deliverables, including the Deliverable 3.1.1: Operational Model (AREA Science Park, 2021), acting as the methodological tool for the drafting of strategies, and is supported by Deliverable 3.3.1: INCIRCLE Set of Circular Tourism Indicators (Sant' Anna School of Advanced Studies, 2020a), and Deliverable 3.5.3: Assessment reports on current state of circular tourism in partner territories (Sant' Anna School of Advanced Studies , 2020b).

This document presents the evaluation findings of five proposed circular strategies developed for Albania, Balearic Islands, Crete, Cyprus, and Malta. The strategies focus on the INCIRCLE pillars, including water and waste management, efficient energy use and sustainable mobility and the management of cross-cutting issues within the tourism sector. "

1.3.2 ADOPTED METHODOLOGY

Outlines the assessment process of partners' strategies using the Evaluation Pack: Strategy Assessment Framework. This framework comprises two documents: the Strategy Evaluation Framework Report and the Synthetic Strategy Summary Template. The evaluation employs a structured and formative approach to enhance the value and effectiveness of the draft Strategy. It begins with a summary of each Strategy, providing context on the state of the tourism sector and its circularity. A Gap Analysis is conducted to identify disparities between shared visions and existing policies, as well as between the Strategy's measures and objectives.

Next, the evaluation calculates the Strategy's Circularity based on the revised Strategy Evaluation Framework. This framework utilizes metrics and measures to assess circularity, with 125 measure types identified across five pillars. Each measure type is given a rating and weightings are assigned to calculate the total score for the Strategy. The scoring equation takes into account the weighting and rating of each measure type, with a maximum score of 24 for each principle and 120 for the overall Strategy. The final score is expressed as a percentage and classified according to circular tourism performance classifications.

The evaluation process also considers the costs of INCIRCLE measures, categorized by pillars and principles. It identifies instances of underestimation or overestimation of costs, ensuring accurate financial assessments. Furthermore, Annex A provides a list of measure types, regrouped by pillar, and Annex B offers a visual representation of these measures.

In summary, the assessment process evaluates partners' strategies using a structured approach, considering contextual factors, gap analysis, circularity metrics, and cost assessments. By analyzing the effectiveness of strategies in promoting circular economy principles, the evaluation aims to improve their value and impact in the tourism sector.

1.3.3 STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE APPROACH IN APPLICATION TO THE RESULTS

The five partner territories face common challenges and weaknesses due to their insular nature and peripheral location. Reliance on air and sea transport leads to high transportation costs and significant carbon emissions. The tourism sector, vital for social and economic development, is vulnerable to external shocks like the Covid-19 pandemic, disrupting livelihoods.

Seasonality is a major challenge, causing resource and environmental stresses, especially in coastal and marine tourism. Changing tourism demand trends towards shorter stays and personalized planning pose further challenges. Each territory has distinct socio-economic situations, resulting in specific needs and objectives to promote circular and sustainable tourism.

Albania, amidst EU accession, lacks tourism-enabling infrastructure, necessitating development aligned with EU standards. The Balearic Islands, a highly developed region, grapple with negative impacts of tourism activity on natural resources and social aspects. Crete faces environmental and socio-economic problems from tourism overdevelopment, necessitating awareness and engagement on circular practices.

Cyprus experiences strong seasonality, impacting infrastructure, resources, and environmental sustainability. Malta invests in infrastructure but faces challenges in waste reduction, renewable energy uptake, and sustainable mobility. Strategies focus on diversifying tourism products, reducing seasonality, and promoting sustainable practices.

The INCIRCLE Strategies show commitment to circular economy principles, albeit to varying degrees. Progress towards circularity is evident in partner territories, though assessment of the Balearic Islands' circularity is incomplete. Strategies aim to build on existing progress to enhance tourism sector sustainability further.

1.3.4 SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES AND APPLICATIONS

The analysis of the circularity of the five INCIRCLE strategies reveals variations in the number and focus of measures, as well as their effectiveness in achieving circularity goals.

Malta presented the highest number of measures (37), primarily focusing on water, energy, and mobility. Cyprus followed with 32 measures, mainly related to waste and horizontal pillars. Albania and the Balearic Islands had similar numbers of measures (22 and 23, respectively), addressing circularity across all pillars. Crete had the fewest measures (6), solely focusing on the horizontal pillar.

Water and mobility were the most targeted pillars across all strategies, while energy and horizontal measures received the least attention. Malta received the highest circularity score (51.6), followed by Cyprus (44), Albania (38.3), and the Balearic Islands (35). Crete scored the lowest (12).

Across the principles of reduce, regenerate, innovate, revalue, and rethink, most measures fell under reduce and regenerate, with weaker representation in innovate, revalue, and rethink principles. Cyprus had the best balance across principles, with a significant focus on reduce and regenerate.

By pillar, all territories scored relatively high in the horizontal pillar. Cyprus achieved the highest score in the horizontal pillar (16), followed by the waste pillar. Malta had the most balanced distribution across all pillars, with the highest score in the water pillar (13) and the lowest in the energy pillar (8).

Limitations of the circularity score framework include its exclusive focus on measures, potentially overlooking the holistic approach of the strategy. The framework's complexity and ambitious requirements may pose challenges in implementation. However, it provides a standardized measure of circularity and highlights areas for improvement.

Recommendations for improving long-term feasibility include ensuring stakeholder involvement, effective strategy design, and monitoring. Strategies should align with existing frameworks and objectives at EU, national, regional, and local levels. Efficiency in resource utilization and coherence with policy objectives are crucial for long-term success.

Efforts to estimate implementation costs accurately and ensure adequate funding are essential. Strategies should be coherent internally and externally, fostering synergy among different actions and aligning with broader policy objectives. Internal coherence ensures that actions complement each other, contributing to the overall success of the strategy.

Transferable Methodology for Evaluating the Circularity of Proposed Strategies encompasses:

Evaluation Framework

An evaluation framework was developed to assess the circularity of proposed strategies within the INCIRCLE project. The framework was designed to be applicable beyond the INCIRCLE project, suitable for other tourism destinations in the Mediterranean region.

Indicators

Indicators were selected from the European Tourism Indicator System (ETIS) and the INCIRCLE CET-KPI dashboard (Deliverable 3.3.1), developed by Sant' Anna School of Advanced Studies (SSSA).Original indicators aimed at assessing tourism destinations and firms were reformulated to evaluate strategies. Detailed lists of selected indicators are available in D.4.4.I Appendices A and B.

INCIRCLE Principles and Metrics

The evaluation framework is based on five INCIRCLE principles: Reduce, Regenerate, Rethink, Innovate, and Revalue. For each principle, four specific metrics focus on water, energy, waste, and mobility, with a fifth horizontal metric addressing the tourism sector as a whole. Each metric includes five measures, leading to a total of 25 metrics and 125 measures for the framework.

Weighting and Rating

Metrics are weighted based on their importance in achieving INCIRCLE principles:

- The first four metrics (water, energy, waste, and mobility) each have a weighting of 2.
- The fifth, horizontal metric has a weighting of 4, reflecting its broader impact on the tourism sector.

Each measure is rated based on its presence in the strategy, with a maximum score of 2 per measure.

Summary and Visualization

Measures and metrics are thoroughly researched and adapted from existing assessment tools (detailed in Appendices A and B). A summarized version of the measures and metrics is provided in Appendix C.The framework uses a visual representation (Fig. 1) to aid in the assessment of strategies.

This methodology ensures a comprehensive and systematic evaluation of the circularity of tourism strategies, tailored to the specific needs and contexts of Mediterranean destinations.

Source: https://incircle.interreg-med.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/Sites/Sustainable_Tourism/Projects/INCIRCLE/Synthetic_version_of_assessed_regional_strategies_INCIRCLE_Replication_Package_EN.pdf

1.3.5 KEY LESSONS LEARNT AND TRANSFERABLES

The analyses of the five INCIRCLE strategies underline the unsustainability of the status quo in the tourism sector, marked by environmental and socio-economic challenges. Mass tourism worsens issues such as pollution, congestion, and overdevelopment, posing threats to the territories' sustainability. Long-term planning and responsible management are imperative, especially post-COVID-19. The tourism sector's deep interconnections with other economic sectors highlight its key role in transitioning to circularity.

The strategies demonstrate stakeholders' commitment to shifting tourism activities towards circularity, though commitment levels vary. Crete shows initial concern, while Albania and the Balearic Islands exhibit higher concern, and Cyprus and Malta are notably proactive. Stakeholder engagement throughout planning and implementation processes is crucial for success. Effective strategy design, implementation, monitoring, and enforcement are essential, requiring early involvement of responsible bodies and sufficient resources. Overall, the strategies represent significant progress towards fostering circular tourism in the Mediterranean region, but sustained efforts are needed to realize long-term sustainability goals.

Current State: The tourism sector's conventional practices pose significant environmental and socio-economic challenges in partner territories, including pollution, congestion, and overdevelopment.

Long-term Planning: Post-COVID-19, responsible, long-term planning and management are essential to address these challenges and ensure sustainability.

Role of Tourism: Given its deep interconnections with other economic sectors, the tourism industry plays a crucial role in transitioning to circularity and sustainability.

Commitment Levels: The INCIRCLE strategies reflect varying levels of commitment among partner territories, ranging from initial concern to proactive engagement.

Stakeholder Involvement: Success depends on stakeholder engagement throughout the planning and implementation processes.

Strategy Effectiveness: Effective strategy design, implementation, monitoring, and enforcement are crucial for achieving sustainability goals.

Progress and Challenges: While significant progress has been made in advancing circular tourism in the Mediterranean region, sustained efforts are needed to overcome challenges and realize long-term sustainability objectives.

SOURCES:

- Synthetic_version_of_assessed_regional_strategies_INCIRCLE_Replication_Package_EN.pdf - English| PDF - 1 MB(D.4.4.1: Replication Package: Synthetic version of assessed regional strategies /62/)
- INCIRCLE_D4.1.2_Strategies_Assessment_Report_Final_26.11.21__2_.pdf - English| PDF - 3 MB (D.4.1.2: Collection of assessment reports of regional/national strategies /228/)

Evaluation Pack

- Strategy Evaluation Framework/48/; https://www.incircle-kp.eu/media/1278/incircle-d411-strategy-evaluation-framework.pdf
- Strategy Evaluation Toolkit Template /19/) https://www.incircle-kp.eu/media/1250/incircle-d411-synthetic-strategy-summary-template.pdf

Six regional strategies on circular tourism in new MED territories:

- Synthetic_circular_tourism_strategy_of_Attica_Region.pdf.pdf - English|
- Synthetic_circular_tourism_strategy_of_the_Consorzio_Oltrepo_Mantovan.pdf - English| Synthetic_circular_tourism_strategy_of_Bergueda_County.pdf - English|
- Synthetic_circular_tourism_strategy_of_GAL_Terra_Barocca.pdf - English| Synthetic_circular_tourism_strategy_of_Parco_Nacional_Delta_Ebre.pdf - English| KB

1.3.6 ANNEX

The template, based on Deliverable 3.3.1 (Operational Model, final version dated 30/06/2020) and on the Template for INCIRCLE strategies, was used to produce the synthetic report in English language of each area providing all essential information on main findings resulting from strategies of INCIRCLE replicating organisations.: https://www.incircle-kp.eu/media/1326/template-for-incircle-strategy_en_final.docx

KEY LESSONS LEARNT AND TRANSFERABLES FROM THE ATTICA REGION TOURISM STRATEGY

SWOT analyses of the Attica region detected strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in all relevant fields: mobility, energy, waste and water management.

Strategy objectives were accordingly selected, related strategic and baseline indicators detected, and target values set.

OBJECTIVES: Key lessons and transferable results derive from the **set objectives** that can also be found to be effective on CR eco itineraries. This should be determined separately on each itinerary, depending on their individual SWOT analysis, showing the need and potential for:

- Encouraging sustainable, active and smart mobility
- Accessibility for all
- Improvement of road safety & public health
- Regeneration of public space and improvement of natural environment
- Support the Green energy transition and the modern energy services provision
- Enhance energy sufficiency through local RES energy production
- Reduce energy poverty
- Establishment of energy communities
- Reduce the amount of waste generated
- Increase Reuse, Recycling, Separate Collection and Recovery of MSW
- Improving the waste management system and developing an integrated waste management plan
- Water savings and implementation of CE practices
- Optimization of water service
- Ensuring adequate quality of drinking water
- Raising awareness, sharing information, training, encouraging participation
- Data recording and processing for Circular transition monitoring

Following the above, an exhaustive list of measures with related performance indicators was planned.

MEASURES: Depending on the detected needs of each eco-itinerary, here is the **catalogue of measures** some of which might be selected as transferable**:**

Waste Management Available Measures	Energy Efficiency Available Measures
- Prohibition or minimization of the use of certain types of plastics - Prohibition of use of disposable plastics for residents, public and municipal authorities, and tourism enterprises - Increase home and community composting for on-site treatment of urban organic waste - Increase reuse, through the creation of Reusing Centers - Enhance Separate Collection and Recycling Rates - Replace rubbish bins with zero waste stations - Collection of marine debris and development of appropriate infrastructure for the management of waste generated from sea-based activities - Access to economic instruments to improve waste management and reduce operating costs - Contract establishment with alternative recycling and management systems - Reuse of fried oil and organic waste (produced by the tourism industry) to produce biofuels	Development and implementation of Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAP) - Incentives for saving energy and reducing CO2 in tourism sector businesses (restaurants, hospitality, transportation, etc.) - Energy retrofitting of municipal buildings, facilities, and infrastructures - Electricity distribution/transmission networks' upgrade and provision of "smart grid" services - Promotion of small-scale RES projects for electricity and heat production - Incentives to support energy-poor households - Establishment of Municipal energy poverty offices for tackling energy poverty - Setup of Energy Community/ies by local authorities for net-metering municipal electricity consumption and promoting related activities - Setup of Energy Communities by the citizens
Water Management Available Measures	**Sustainable Mobility Available Measures**
Reuse of recycled water from WWTP's - Construction of small stone dams – stepped weirs - Construction of cisterns in public and private buildings and hotels - Installation of telemetry in the water supply network to reduce losses - Elaboration of Water Resources Management Master Plan - Upgrade of infrastructure and operation of existing water supply networks - Elaboration and implementation of Water Safety Plans - Construction of Wastewater Treatment Plants that use the brine from small desalination plants in small settlements	- Elaboration of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP), Urban Accessibility Plans (UAP), and Electrical Vehicle Charging Plans - Development of Soft Mobility Networks prioritizing the most touristic areas - Development of a Mobility as a Service (MaaS) scheme based on a dense network of green mobility hubs - Economic, fiscal, and other instruments favoring the use of electric vehicles of small size and engine capacity - Modernization and enlargement of Public Transport vehicle fleet with cleaner and smaller vehicles, adequate for PRM (people of reduced mobility) - Development of PRM accessibility infrastructure, especially within major settlements - Legislation framework adaptation - Establishment of motorized vehicle access and parking regulations in high-demand areas (UVAR) - Establishment of a 30km/h speed limit where needed - Development of an off-street Parking Spaces' Network in the periphery of island settlements - Redistribution of public road space in island settlements in favor of sustainable mobility and green spaces - Development of smart car-pooling schemes for residents and visitors - Promotion of e-mobility / sustainable mobility and necessary infrastructure for tourism businesses

Each measure was complemented by the related main activities to be performed, main target group, main stakeholders involved and their responsibility, external support required, related output indicator and target (s), timeframe for implementation, complementary measures, cost estimation and potential source of funding.

Main target group and stakeholders group involved as a rule tour operators, tourism offices, professional associations, public authorities.

KEY LESSONS LEARNT AND TRANSFERABLES FROM THE OLTREPO MANTOVANO TOURISM STRATEGY

SWOT analyses of the Oltrepo Mantovano region detected strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in all relevant fields: mobility, energy, waste and water management.

Strategy objectives were accordingly selected, related strategic and baseline indicators detected, and target values set.

Key lessons and transferable results derive from the set objectives that can also be found to be effective on CR eco itineraries. This should be determined separately on each itinerary, depending on their individual SWOT analysis, learning from the **objectives proposed for Oltrepo Mantovano**:

- Encourage the use of renewable energy sources in the tourism sector
- Reduce energy consumption in the tourism sector
- Stimulate a creative reuse of waste
- Safeguard the water resources from pollution
- Make a conscious use of the water resource by reducing the impact of tourism
- Making the territory more and more cyclable by increasing the possibilities of slow fruition of the territory
- Adapt transport infrastructures to sustainable mobility
- Monitoring of the approach to circularity (tourists and residents)
- Awareness campaigns on virtuous circular behaviors

Equally, following the above, an exhaustive list of measures with related performance indicators was planned. Depending on the detected needs of each eco-itinerary, here is **the catalogue of measures some of which might be selected as transferable:**

Waste Management Available Measures	Energy Efficiency Available Measures
- Increase the use of non-packaged products - Installation of reuse material collection box - Artlab of recycling	- Promote the creation and development of renewable energy communities - Encourage the spread of small plants for the production of Biogas -Spreading the use of energy saving systems
Water Management Available Measures	**Sustainable Mobility Available Measures**
- Saving the canals, their water and natural richness - Reduction of bottled water consumption (i.e. Mapping of tourist places, identification of feasible stations (including pilot area), purchase and installation of water gazebos or fountains, creation of promotional materials Establish a reward system for virtuous companies	- Define a system for maintenance - Promote services for cyclists (and walkers) - Agreements with public transport companies - Recovery of railway toll booths for low cost accommodation - Encourage sustainable mobility in the area
Cross pillar Monitoring of tourists and residents Awareness campaigns on circular behaviors	

Each measure was complemented by the related main activities to be performed, main target group, main stakeholders involved and their responsibility, external support required, related output indicator and target (s), timeframe for implementation, complementary measures, cost estimation and potential source of funding.

Main target group and stakeholders group involved as a rule tour operators, tourism offices, professional associations, public authorities.

KEY LESSONS LEARNT AND TRANSFERABLES FROM BERGUEDA COUNTY TOURISM STRATEGY

SWOT analyses of the Bergueda County detected strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in all relevant fields: mobility, energy, waste and water management.

Strategy objectives were accordingly selected, related strategic and baseline indicators detected, and target values set.

Key lessons and transferable results derive from the set objectives that can also be found to be effective on CR eco itineraries. This should be determined separately on each itinerary, depending on their individual SWOT analysis, learning from the **objectives proposed for Bergueda County:**

- To provide a structured, functional and well-communicated network of companies and agents interested in circular tourism that enables the integration of tourism with the surrounding natural areas and communities.
- Disposing of an Active Strategy for Circular Tourism in Berguedà
- To train agents for the professionalisation of circular tourism
- To carry out continuous (non-seasonal) environmental dissemination education campaigns in the field of Circular Tourism.
- To know the capacity of the natural areas of the Berguedà to attract visitors and to propose actions to improve the management of visitor flows.
- Promote the Berguedà as an area with sustainable, safe, accessible and shared mobility
- Promote the development of the necessary infrastructures to implement and maintain an interconnected network of sustainable and efficient mobility, with priority given to walking and cycling routes, for the use of residents and visitors.
- Promote the development of the necessary infrastructures to implement and maintain an interconnected network of sustainable and efficient mobility, with priority given to walking and cycling routes, for the use of residents and visitors.
- Apply measures to promote the development of sustainable transport solutions
- To achieve a high degree of energy self-sufficiency with renewable sources for tourist facilities, accommodation and businesses.
- Commit to a reduction in energy consumption (and associated carbon footprint) associated with tourists visiting the Berguedà region
- To increase the energy efficiency of buildings for tourist use (building, bioconstruction, etc.), promoting the recharging of electric transport systems (nighttime recharging)
- Minimise food wastage and promote the use of organic waste linked to the tourism sector, by improving the local agricultural fields.

- Promote initiatives that raise visitor awareness of the need to reduce the amount of waste they produce
- To apply systems of positive discrimination in the face of good practice in waste management and more effective control (or penalties) for misuse.
- To raise the awareness of visitors to become involved in the good ecological status of water bodies (rivers, streams, gorges, reservoirs).
- To reduce water consumption linked to tourist facilities and establishments, especially during the low water season
- To ensure good management of the different qualities of water in order to favour different uses (from drinking water to reclaimed water).

Following the above, an exhaustive list of measures with related performance indicators was planned.

Depending on the detected needs of each eco-itinerary, here is **the catalogue of measures some of which might be selected as transferable:**

Waste Management	Sustainable Mobility
- Campaign or training for the reduction and reuse of waste in the tourism sector	- Inform about sustainable mobility options in Berguedà (residents and visitors)
- Joint, centralised, and bulk purchasing in the tourism sector to reduce waste and carbon footprint	- Campaign to raise awareness of sustainable mobility: "La setmana saludable" (Healthy week)
- Reduction and reuse of single-use packaging in the tourism sector (rental vials, reusable bottles, collection points)	- Create and dynamize "carsharing" points in safe and controlled strategic locations
- Implementation of organic waste composters in rural lodgings, involving the client	
- Welcome zero-waste picnic pack (reusable covers, a bottle, a bag, etc., for visitors' picnics)	
Water Management	**Energy Efficiency**
- Decalogue of good practices in the use of water in the landscaping of tourist accommodation (and technical support)	- Promote photovoltaic installations in public buildings and facilities for self-supply
	- Training workshops and information on resources and funding for energy-saving practices in tourism establishments

Each measure was complemented by the related main activities to be performed, main target group, main stakeholders involved and their responsibility, external support required, related output indicator and target (s), timeframe for implementation, complementary measures, cost estimation and potential source of funding.

Main target group and stakeholders group involved as a rule tour operators, tourism offices, professional associations, public authorities.

KEY LESSONS LEARNT AND TRANSFERABLES FROM GAL TERRA BAROCCA TOURISM STRATEGY

SWOT analyses of the **GAL Terra Barocca** detected strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in all relevant fields: mobility, energy, waste and water management.

Strategy objectives were accordingly selected, related strategic and baseline indicators detected, and target values set.

Key lessons and transferable results derive from the set objectives that can also be found to be effective on CR eco itineraries. This should be determined separately on each itinerary, depending on their individual SWOT analysis, learning from the **objectives proposed for GAL Terra Barocca:**

- Improve the water management system, integrating the use of unconventional water within the tourism sector
- Reducing the impact of waste within the tourism sector
- Increase the number of users who use sustainable mobility services within the territory
- Increasing the use of energy from renewable sources within the tourism sector
- Be recognised as a sustainable and circular tourist destination

Following the above, an exhaustive list of measures with related performance indicators was planned.

Depending on the detected needs of each eco-itinerary, here is **the catalogue of measures some of which might be selected as transferable:**

Waste Management	Sustainable Mobility
- Public-private consultation meetings to determine waste prevention needs	- Planning sustainable mobility actions for funding
- Identify public initiatives for waste prevention and management (e.g., demonstration actions)	- Consultation meetings to establish mobility needs
- Database of existing services and good practices in waste management	- Integration of mobility services at communication and accessibility centers (e.g., journey planning)
- Engagement actions for tourism facilities in waste reduction (e.g., adherence to labels)	- Notices and coaching for final beneficiaries on specific mobility actions
- Social campaigns/online tools for waste awareness and data collection through gamification	- Installation of charging stations
	- Monitoring sustainable mobility data and communicating results
Energy Efficiency	**Water Management**
- Adoption of incentive systems for creating/managing energy communities (Local Authority/GAL)	- Installation of water treatment systems to prevent water waste and diversify urban and rural supply sources
- Awareness activities on renewable energy use in tourism	- Monitoring data on water usage and implementing water-saving systems
- Training courses on renewable energy sources	- Distribution of water-saving kits (water bottles, etc.) for visitors
- Monitoring renewable energy implementation and usage	

Cross-cutting measures:

- Good practice database to be transferred
- Planning of training and refresher courses
- Planning of the solutions to be incentivized / financed
- Notices and coaching for final beneficiaries
- Organization of public-private management committee to establish members responsibility (ex. Consumeless model)
- Creation of a supporting/coaching/incentive system for the final beneficiaries
- Engagement actions for tourism facilities (facilities adherent to the label / or label subscriber)
- Public-private consultation meetings to determine the needs and possible actions to be transferred
- Database of existing services and good practices to be transferred
- Data collection for the observatory on the circularity of tourism within the territory
- MANIFEST elaboration for circular destination - Creation of an Observatory that periodically monitors the level of circularity
- Training/resource usage information days - Creation of an Observatory that periodically monitors the level of circularity
- Distribution of gadgets / water saving kit / waste kit … (water bottles, canvas bags) for visitors
- Implementation of social campaign / online tools and gamification for awareness and data collection

Each measure was complemented by the related main activities to be performed, main target group, main stakeholders involved and their responsibility, external support required, related output indicator and target (s), timeframe for implementation, complementary measures, cost estimation and potential source of funding.

Main target group and stakeholders group involved as a rule tour operators, tourism offices, professional associations, public authorities.

KEY LESSONS LEARNT AND TRANSFERABLES FROM THE EBRO DELTA NATURAL PARK (EDNP) TOURISM STRATEGY

SWOT analyses of the Ebro Delta Natural Park (EDNP) region detected strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in all relevant fields: mobility, energy, waste and water management.

Strategy objectives were accordingly selected, related strategic and baseline indicators detected, and target values set.

Key lessons and transferable results derive from the set objectives that can also be found to be effective on CR eco itineraries. This should be determined separately on each itinerary, depending on their individual SWOT analysis, learning from the **objectives proposed for Ebro Delta Natural Park (EDNP)**

- Mobility: Ensure smart, sustainable, safe and inclusive mobility facilitating a proper visitor flow management based on low-emission transport (such as bicycles or electric vehicles), and prioritise public or shared transportation, while discouraging the use of private vehicle
- Energy: Moving towards energy self-sufficiency (bringing generation closer consumption), based on renewable sources (e.g. solar) and working for responsible consumption based on degrowth, energy efficiency and greater rationality of this resource;
- Waste: Reducing the amount of waste, they generate, especially plastic, and to reduce its impact on the landscapes of the Delta. At the same time to encourage projects that contribute to the circularity of resources, such as the use of organic waste of the tourism sector, or pilot projects to give value to raw materials;
- Water: Reducing water consumption associated with accommodations and other touristic facilities, especially in the high season with greatest scarcity, and improving the quality of drinking water on the public network
- Cross pillar: Promote a resilient and inspiring model of circular tourism in the Ebro Delta based on good governance and adequate structures of coordination (participation and decision making) as well as training, awareness and constant communication of its stakeholders involved.

Following the above, an exhaustive list of measures with related performance indicators was planned.

Depending on the detected needs of each eco-itinerary, here is **the catalogue of measures some of which might be selected as transferable:**

Waste Management	**Sustainable Mobility**
Organise awareness and cleaning campaigns to enjoy beaches, ponds and river without plastics;	Evaluation of the carrying capacity of NPAs in the Ebro Delta and propose actions to improve the management of visitor's flows;
Encourage the selective collection and use of waste linked to the tourism sector, for the improvement of the fields of local cultivation;	Promote the Ebro Delta as a cycling, safe and family destination and place to live;
Promote initiatives that make the visitor aware of reducing the amount of waste they produce;	Implement an interconnected mobility network sustainable and effective, for residents and visitors;
Promote and Implement the pilot projects to give value to local raw materials (eg. from rice crops, fishing, or salt industry);	Promote pilot projects for the use of collective and/or public transport associated to tourist uses;
Energy Efficiency	**Water Management**
Achieve a high degree of energy self-sufficiency with sources renewable by facilities, accommodation and tourism companies;	Improving the quality of drinking water in the public network and promoting its consumption by publishing quality data.
Reduction of the energy consumption (and of the associated carbon footprint) associated with tourists visiting the Ebro Delta;	Reduce water consumption associated with accommodations and other touristic facilities, especially in the high season with greatest scarcity.
Increase the energy efficiency of buildings for tourist use (insulation, bioconstruction, etc.), favouring the recharging of electric transport systems;	Communication and raise awareness among visitors of the deep-rooted existing water culture in the Delta, linked to the river, the canals, the lagoons, and the sea.
Cross sectoral pillar	
Implement The Circular Tourism Strategy in coordination with all the public and private agents involved in the tourist management of the territory.	
Design and implement the training program for technicians and tourism companies in Circular Tourism;	
Carry out a benchmarking action every year (exchange with other territories) to learn about pioneering experiences in Circular Tourism	

Each measure was complemented by the related main activities to be performed, main target group, main stakeholders involved and their responsibility, external support required, related output indicator and target (s), timeframe for implementation, complementary measures, cost estimation and potential source of funding.

Main target group and stakeholders group involved as a rule tour operators, tourism offices, professional associations, public authorities.

CATALOGUE OF SUMMARIZED REGIONAL (INCIRCLE) OBJECTIVES – Transferable for the usage on eco-itineraries.

Transferability should be determined separately for each eco-itinerary, depending on their individual SWOT analysis,

Energy

1. Support the Green energy transition and the provision of modern energy services.
2. Enhance energy sufficiency through local renewable energy sources (RES) production.
3. Reduce energy poverty.
4. Establish energy communities.
5. Encourage the use of renewable energy sources in the tourism sector.
6. Reduce energy consumption in the tourism sector.
7. Achieve high energy self-sufficiency for tourist facilities, accommodations, and businesses.
8. Increase the energy efficiency of buildings for tourist use, promoting nighttime recharging of electric transport systems.
9. Move towards energy self-sufficiency, focusing on renewable sources like solar and promoting responsible consumption.

Waste

1. Reduce the amount of waste generated.
2. Increase reuse, recycling, separate collection, and recovery of municipal solid waste (MSW).
3. Improve the waste management system and develop an integrated waste management plan.
4. Stimulate the creative reuse of waste.
5. Increase reuse, through the creation of Reusing Centers
6. Minimise food wastage and promote the use of organic waste linked to the tourism sector to improve local agricultural fields.
7. Promote initiatives that raise visitor awareness of the need to reduce waste production.
8. Apply systems of positive discrimination for good waste management practices and enforce penalties for misuse.
9. Reduce the impact of waste within the tourism sector.

10. Encourage projects that contribute to resource circularity, such as the use of organic waste in tourism.

Water

1. Implement water savings and circular economy (CE) practices.
2. Optimize water services.
3. Ensure adequate quality of drinking water.
4. Safeguard water resources from pollution.
5. Encourage conscious use of water resources, reducing tourism's impact.
6. Reduce water consumption linked to tourist facilities and establishments, especially during low water seasons.
7. Ensure good management of different water qualities for various uses, from drinking to reclaimed water.
8. Improve the water management system, integrating the use of unconventional water within the tourism sector.
9. Raise awareness of the ecological status of water bodies and promote involvement.

Sustainable Mobility

1. Encourage sustainable, active, and smart mobility.
2. Ensure accessibility for all.
3. Improve road safety and public health.
4. Regenerate public space and improve the natural environment.
5. Promote the development of infrastructure for interconnected networks of sustainable and efficient mobility, prioritizing walking and cycling routes.
6. Apply measures to promote the development of sustainable transport solutions.
7. Increase the number of users of sustainable mobility services within the territory.
8. Promote destinations on eco-itineraries as areas with sustainable, safe, accessible, and shared mobility.
9. Ensure smart, sustainable, safe, and inclusive mobility facilitating proper visitor flow management with low-emission transport.

Cross-Pillar Issues

1. Raise awareness, share information, train, and encourage participation.
2. Record and process data for monitoring circular transition.
3. Conduct continuous environmental education campaigns in circular tourism.
4. Provide a structured, functional, and well-communicated network of companies and agents interested in circular tourism.
5. Develop an active strategy for circular tourism on eco-itineraries.
6. Train agents for the professionalization of circular tourism.
7. Recognize the capacity of natural areas on eco-itineraries to attract visitors and propose actions for better visitor flow management.
8. Promote a resilient and inspiring model of circular tourism based on good governance, coordination, training, awareness, and constant communication among stakeholders on eco-itineraries.

CATALOGUE OF SUMMARIZED REGIONAL (INCIRCLE) STRATEGIC CIRCULAR TOURISM MEASURES – Transferable for the application on eco-itineraries.

Transferability should be determined separately for each eco-itinerary, depending on their individual SWOT analysis,

Energy

1. Develop and implement Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAP) for eco-itineraries.
2. Promote renewable energy communities and small-scale RES projects for electricity and heat production.
3. Encourage energy-saving systems and incentives for reducing CO2 in tourism sector businesses related to eco-itineraries.
4. Retrofit municipal buildings and facilities on eco-itineraries for energy efficiency.
5. Promote photovoltaic installations in public buildings for municipal self-supply.
6. Upgrade electricity distribution networks to provide smart grid services on eco-itineraries.
7. Reuse fried oil and organic waste from the tourism industry to produce biofuels.
8. Incentivize energy-poor households and establish municipal energy poverty offices.
9. Achieve energy self-sufficiency with renewable sources for tourist facilities and accommodations.
10. Increase energy efficiency in buildings for tourist use and support the recharging of electric transport systems.

Waste

1. Prohibit or minimize the use of certain types of plastics and disposable plastics.
2. Organize Artlab of recycling workshops on eco-itineraries
3. Organize awareness and cleaning campaigns for plastic-free beaches, ponds, and rivers.
4. Install reuse material collection boxes
5. Enhance separate collection, recycling rates, and replace rubbish bins with zero waste stations.
6. Increase the use of non-packaged products.
7. Stimulate reuse through the creation of Reusing Centers and material collection boxes.
8. Collect marine debris and develop appropriate infrastructure for sea-based waste management.
9. Access economic instruments to improve waste management and reduce costs.
10. Establish contracts with alternative recycling and management systems.
11. Promote selective waste collection linked to tourism for improving local cultivation fields.
12. Implement pilot projects to give value to local raw materials, such as fishing, or salt industry.

Water

1. Elaborate and implement Water Resources Management Master Plans.
2. Save canals, their water, and natural richness; reduce bottled water consumption.
3. Promote the installation of water fountains and gazebos, and create promotional materials.
4. Establish water reuse systems from WWTPs and construct small stone dams and cisterns.
5. Install telemetry in water supply networks to reduce losses and upgrade infrastructure.
6. Elaborate and implement Water Safety Plans.
7. Construct wastewater treatment plants using brine from desalination plants.
8. Raise awareness and communicate the existing water culture in the Delta.
9. Improve the quality of drinking water in the public network and promote its consumption.

Sustainable Mobility

1. Promote services for cyclists and walkers
2. Encourage sustainable cycling and walking services and recover railway on eco-itineraries
3. Create and dynamize "carsharing" points in strategic locations on eco-itineraries.
4. Install or promote existing column charging stations on eco itineraries
5. Develop soft mobility networks and a Mobility as a Service (MaaS) scheme with green mobility hubs.
6. Support e-mobility and sustainable mobility infrastructures for tourism businesses.
7. Use economic and fiscal instruments to favor small, electric vehicles.
8. Modernize public transport with cleaner, smaller vehicles and (people with reduced mobility) accessibility.
9. Adapt legislation and establish motorized vehicle access and parking regulations in high-demand areas.
10. Develop off-road parking networks in settlement peripheries and redistribute public road space next to eco-itineraries in favour of sustainable mobility and green spaces
11. Promote car-pooling schemes for residents and visitors and implement a smart car-pooling scheme for eco-itineraries.
12. Evaluate carrying capacity in eco-itineraries destinations and improve visitor flow management.
13. Promote interconnected mobility networks and pilot projects for collective public transport to eco-itineraries.
14. Integrate sustainable mobility services into journey planning and information centers on eco-itineraries.
15. Elaborate Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP), Urban Accessibility Plans (UAP), and Electrical Vehicle Charging Plans.

Cross-Pillar Issues

Education

1. Support awareness campaigns, training, and participation for circular tourism.
2. Database of existing services and good practices
3. Design and implement training programs for technicians and tourism companies in circular tourism.
4. Plan training and refresher courses for circular tourism best practices.
5. Provide resources and funding information for implementing energy-saving measures in tourist establishments.
6. Organize continuous environmental education campaigns focusing on circular tourism.
7. Promote good energy practices through training workshops and information sessions.
8. Create a welcome zero waste picnic pack for visitors to use during their stay.

Financing

1. Establish a "Circular Card" offering rewards for contributions to circular practices.
2. Develop data recording and monitoring systems for circular tourism transitions.
3. Plan sustainable mobility actions for funding.
4. Adopt incentive systems for creating and managing energy communities.
5. Develop a supporting, coaching, and incentive system for final beneficiaries.
6. Identify and support public initiatives for waste prevention and management.
7. Support joint, centralized, and bulk purchasing in the tourism sector to reduce waste and carbon footprint.

Communication

1. Conduct regular communication and promotion campaigns for local produce consumption.
2. Distribution of gadgets / water saving kit / waste kit … (water bottles, canvas bags) for visitors
3. Prepare and distribute “Welcome zero waste picnic pack” (with reusable covers, a blister, a bottle, a bag, and a wrapper so that visitors can use them during their picnics) on eco-itineraries
4. Implement social campaigns, online tools, and gamification for awareness and data collection.
5. Promote good energy practices through training workshops and information sessions.
6. Monitor tourists and residents for circular tourism practices.
7. Establish an observatory to periodically monitor the level of circularity in tourism practices.
8. Plan and implement a comprehensive Circular Tourism Strategy in coordination with public and private agents.

Networking

1. Set up Energy Communities by local communities on eco-itineraries
2. Create a network of companies interested in circular tourism and support them with implementation agents.
3. Organize public-private consultation meetings to determine needs and actions.

4. Establish good practice databases and plan sustainable mobility actions for funding.
5. Organize public-private management committees to establish member responsibilities.
6. Engage tourism facilities in adhering to circular tourism labels and practices.
7. Carry out benchmarking actions to learn about pioneering experiences in circular tourism from other territories.

1.4. SUMMARY OF CIRCULARITY TOURISM INDICATORS FICHE

1.4.1 MAIN FIELDS OF INTERVENTION

Deliverable D 3.3.1 presents a comprehensive Set of Circular Tourism Indicators aimed at measuring tourism as a sustainable and circular economic sector. The document is structured as follows.

A general overview about the tourism sector is provided including the **main industry's features**, such as classification of tourism, tourist's typologies, tourism actors and value chain. as well as tourism assessment by defining the unit of analysis and the importance of indicators.

The **relationship between tourism and sustainability** was elaborated by introducing the concept of sustainable development, discussing the main impact of tourism activities, defining sustainable tourism and its assessment. As conclusion the presentation of a set of existing best practices related to sustainable tourism at global scale was given.

The **concepts of circular economy and circular tourism** and its assessment was explained. Global best practices related to circular tourism are described.

The core results of Deliverable 3.3.1 are presented - **the INCIRCLE set of circular tourism indicators**. Measurement framework, methodology adopted and CET-KPIs dashboard are described. Then, the preliminary dashboard of indicators is explained, along with future improvements.

The characterization of the partners' territories involved in INCIRCLE project through the template is presented as "**Partners' territories preliminary information**" and its main results.

Conclusions are provided in the last chapter. The **Circular Tourism Indicators** cover various fields of intervention essential for promoting sustainability and circularity within the tourism sector. These fields encompass waste management, resource efficiency, community engagement, sustainable infrastructure, and circular business models. These may be categorized as:

1. **Waste Management**: Effective waste management practices are vital for reducing the environmental impact of tourism activities. The indicators focus on measuring waste generation, recycling rates, and the implementation of circular waste management systems such as composting and material recovery.

2. **Resource Efficiency**: Resource efficiency indicators assess the sustainable use of natural resources, energy, and water in tourism operations. Key metrics include energy and water consumption per visitor, carbon emissions intensity, and the adoption of renewable energy sources and energy-efficient technologies.

3. **Community Engagement**: Community engagement indicators evaluate the level of local community involvement in tourism planning, decision-making, and benefit-sharing. These

indicators assess initiatives such as community-based tourism projects, cultural heritage preservation, and capacity-building programs for local stakeholders.

4. **Sustainable Infrastructure**: Sustainable infrastructure indicators measure the development of eco-friendly transportation, accommodation, and recreational facilities. Metrics include the presence of green buildings, the availability of public transport options, and the accessibility of nature-based attractions.

5. **Circular Business Models**: Circular business model indicators examine the adoption of circular economy principles by tourism businesses. These indicators assess practices such as product-service systems, resource sharing platforms, and closed-loop supply chains that minimize waste and maximize resource efficiency.

Among all indicators analysed for the case of eco-itineraries especially valuable was the indicative list of supplementary ETIS indicators for transnational cultural routes:

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

1.4.2 ADOPTED METHODOLOGY AND TRANSFERABILITY

The methodology for developing the Circular Tourism Indicators is based on a participatory and interdisciplinary approach. It successfully explains context analyses. It involves stakeholder engagement, data collection and analysis, indicator selection, and validation through pilot testing.

1. **Stakeholder Engagement**: Stakeholder engagement is central to the methodology, ensuring that the indicators reflect the priorities and perspectives of diverse stakeholders, including government agencies, businesses, communities, NGOs, and tourists. Stakeholder consultations and workshops are conducted to gather input and feedback throughout the indicator development process.

   An effective SWG rests upon the proactive involvement of no more than 30 participants, **that might be selected** from the following list, according to your own considerations and opportunities to be seized:

   - The regional/local tourism organization and tourism development company
   - Local planning, transport and rural/urban development departments
   - Tour guide, camping, caravan, villa or apartment associations
   - The local hotel or tourism association
   - The local chamber of commerce
   - Tourism employee associations and/or unions
   - The airport/port authority (where applicable)
   - Relevant academic institutions involved in associated research
   - Environmental Associations
   - Representative of the local community,
   - residents and possibly tourists.
   - The waste, water, energy management agency /city department
   - The forestry/protected area or parks management bodies etc…

2. **Data Collection and Analysis**: Data collection involves gathering quantitative and qualitative information from various sources, including official statistics, surveys, interviews, and case studies. Data analysis techniques such as statistical analysis, trend analysis, and benchmarking are used to identify trends, patterns, and gaps in sustainable tourism performance. Circular Assessment Report Template – Tourism Destination version has been prepared transferable to destinations and itineraries, with detailed instructions available at https://www.incircle-kp.eu/media/1232/circular-assessment-report-template-tourism-destination-version-incircle-replication-package.pdf

3. **Indicator Selection**: The selection of indicators is guided by established frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Principles of Sustainable Tourism. Indicators are chosen based on their relevance, measurability, feasibility, and ability to capture key aspects of sustainability and circularity in tourism.

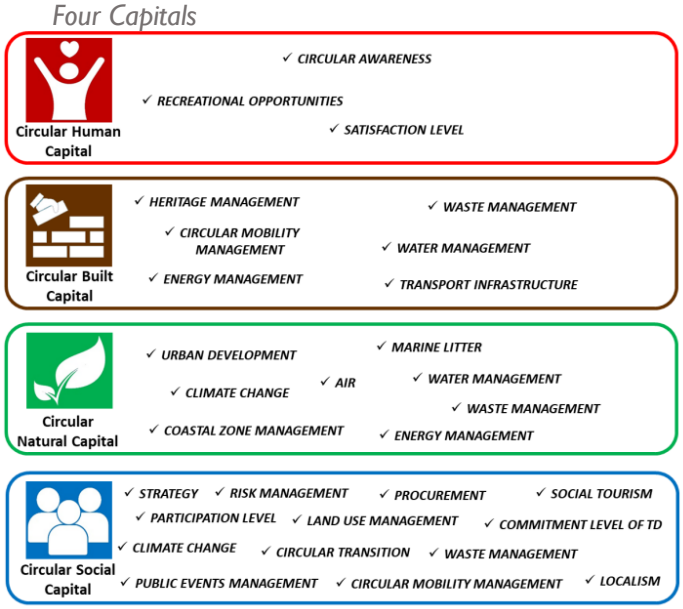
4. **Validation and Pilot Testing**: The selected indicators are validated through pilot testing in real-world tourism destinations. This involves applying the indicators to assess tourism sustainability and circularity, collecting feedback from stakeholders, and refining the indicators based on lessons learned.

The template of preliminary partners' information was formed with aims at gathering an in-depth overview of the partners' territories, in order to identify the main characteristics of such areas and accordingly develop customized circular Tourism indicators. It was composed of several sections:

The section related to **general characteristics** encompasses questions related to partners' name, number of inhabitants, population growth rate and presence of sea, rivers or mountains in the area.

The Circular Tourism Destination Tool has been elaborated, starting from the measurement framework developed within INCIRCLE project.

Figure 1 INCIRCLE CE Circular Capitals
Source: authors' elaboration



The framework is **based on four capitals** (natural, social, built, human) (Figure right) and on three levels (tourism destination level, tourism industry level and the networking level composed by the interactions that nourish sustainability and circularity between a tourism destination and a tourism industry). The framework includes also five principles of the Circular Economy model (Reduce, Regenerate, Rethink, Innovate, Re-value) (Figure below) that represent at the same time rules on which choices – at every level - should be taken and objectives that a sustainable and circular tourism should achieve. https://www.incircle-kp.eu/media/1232/circular-assessment-report-template-tourism-destination-version-incircle-replication-package.pdf

The section concerning **Tourism impacts** includes a broad set of questions investigating the number of incoming tourists per month during the last year, the incoming tourists' trend in the last 5 years, the contribution of international and domestic Tourism to the whole economic value of the area and to national GDP, the presence of specific categories of Tourism (recreational, cultural, sports/adventure, health, convention and incentive Tourism) and the main accommodation facilities present in the area.

The section related to the **economic characteristics of the area** explores the presence of companies and their contribution to the economy according to the main economic sectors, namely Tourism, fisheries and aquaculture, energy industry, commercial navigation, touristic navigation, manufacturing industry, retailers and agriculture and livestock.

The section related to the **mobility of the area** aims at investigating the main transport terminals present in the area (airports, railway stations, bus stations and harbours), the characteristics of the main mobility issues and the main mobility problems connected with tourist flows, as well as the initiatives of green urban mobility and sustainable Tourism mobility developed in the area.

The section concerning the **municipal solid waste management and initiative of waste prevention** gathers information about municipal solid waste (MSW) production, recycling rate, disposal rate, waste management system and initiatives of waste prevention. Specifically, this section investigates the amount of MSW produced per capita in the last year, the average production per month in the last year and the trend over the last five years, as well as recycling and disposal rates of MSW in the last year and the trend over the last five years. Furthermore, the descriptions of the waste management system of the area and the initiatives of waste prevention developed in the area have required.

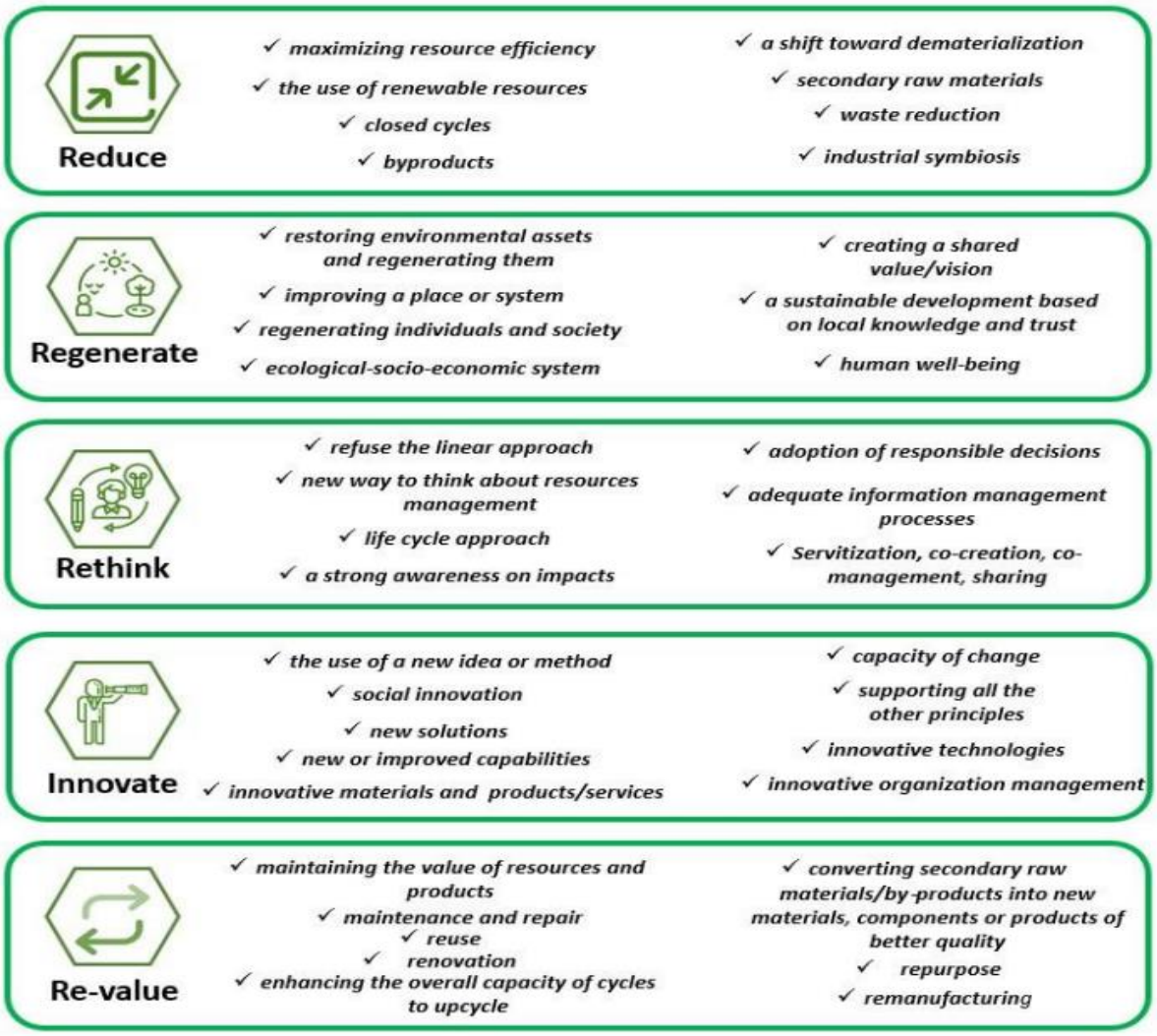
The section about **water management system and water consumption** investigates the main water resources of the area (groundwaters, rivers, lakes, sea water after desalinization process, rainwater), the water consumption per capita in the last year, the average consumption per month in the last year, the trend over the last five years and the price for water consumption according to main categories of users, namely private households, agriculture, industry, public sector, accommodation facilities, tourist facilities. Moreover, the description of the water supply system, the wastewater management, the qualitative and quantitative status of water bodies and main problems affecting the water resources and initiatives of prevention have required.

The section related to **actual and potential risks** explores the risk of subsidence in the area, as well as the impact of climate change on a series of physical phenomena, namely drought, floods, intensity of storms, wind speeds, rising sea level, and average temperature.

The section about **energy resources management** explores the main energy resources of the area (coal, natural gas, oil, solar energy, wind power, geothermal, wave and tidal power, hydropower, biomass), the electricity and natural gas consumption per capita in the last year, the average consumption per month in the last year, the trend over the last five years and the price for electricity and natural gas consumption according to main categories of users, namely private households, agriculture, industry, public sector, accommodation facilities, tourist facilities. Furthermore, the electricity and natural gas delivery system of the area and the diffusion of renewable energy technologies have been investigated.

The section concerning **protected areas and land uses** aims at mapping the protected areas of the area according to IUCN protected area category system and the main land uses of the area according to CORINE program. The last section related to Circular Economy initiatives intends to identify any issued laws or adopted solutions focused on such issue, following the recent EU Circular Economy directives.

Figure: Five principles of the Circular Economy model (Reduce, Regenerate, Rethink, Innovate, Re-value



INCIRCLE CE Principles Source: authors' elaboration: https://www.incircle-kp.eu/media/1232/circular-assessment-report-template-tourism-destination-version-incircle-replication-package.pdf

Further on, a specific document has also been produced, as the guidelines aiming to provide a comprehensive overview about the set of Circular Tourism Tools, developed by the Institute of Management of School of Advanced Studies – Pisa (Sustainability Management Laboratory, https://www.santannapisa.it/en/institute/management/sustainability-management-sum-SSSUP in the text) with the main goal to support the circular assessment of tourism sector and to provide useful information for their transition toward a more sustainable and circular tourism offer. The Circular Tourism Tools are a management and monitoring tools to assess tourism impact both on a destination level (Circular Tourism Destination Tool) and on a tourism industry level (Circular Tourism Industry Tool) from a circular economy (CE) perspective. As part of INCIRCLE replication

package (Deliverable 4.4.1) it is available on https://www.incircle-kp.eu/media/1228/circular-tourism-tools-guidelines-incircle-replication-package_eng.pdf

According to the above templates, a thorough analysis has been made of the territories included in the project with an overview of their situation.

1.4.3 STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES OF THE APPROACH IN APPLICATION TO THE RESULTS

An assessment of the approach's effectiveness reveals several strengths and weaknesses in application to the results achieved.

Strengths:

Comprehensiveness: The set of Circular Tourism Indicators provides a comprehensive framework for assessing sustainability and circularity in tourism. By covering multiple dimensions of performance, the indicators offer a holistic view of tourism's environmental, social, and economic impacts.

Flexibility: The indicators are designed to be flexible and adaptable to different tourism contexts and destinations. This allows stakeholders to customize the indicators to suit their specific needs and priorities, ensuring relevance and usability across diverse settings.

Actionable Insights: The indicators generate actionable insights that can inform policy decisions, strategic planning, and investment priorities in tourism development. By identifying areas of strength and weakness, the indicators help stakeholders prioritize interventions and allocate resources effectively.

Benchmarking: Benchmarking against peer destinations or industry standards enables stakeholders to track progress over time and compare performance relative to peers. This facilitates peer learning, knowledge exchange, and continuous improvement in sustainable tourism practices.

Weaknesses:

Data Availability: A key challenge is the availability and quality of data required to measure the indicators accurately. In some cases, data may be incomplete, outdated, or unreliable, making it difficult to assess tourism sustainability and circularity comprehensively.

Capacity Constraints: Limited capacity and resources for data collection, analysis, and monitoring pose challenges to implementing the indicators effectively. Capacity-building initiatives are needed to enhance data literacy, analytical skills, and institutional capabilities among stakeholders.

Interdisciplinary Complexity: The interdisciplinary nature of sustainable tourism presents challenges in harmonizing diverse perspectives, methodologies, and measurement techniques. Integrating environmental, social, and economic dimensions of sustainability requires interdisciplinary collaboration and coordination.

Indicator Interpretation: Interpreting indicator results and translating them into actionable recommendations can be challenging for stakeholders. Effective communication and stakeholder engagement are essential for ensuring that indicator findings are understood and acted upon appropriately.

1.4.4 SUCCESFUL PRACTICES AND APPLICATIONS

Several successful practices and applications of the Circular Tourism Indicators have been observed in diverse tourism destinations worldwide. These examples demonstrate the effectiveness of the indicators in driving positive environmental, social, and economic outcomes.

Destination Management: Tourism destinations were made aware of sustainability initiatives, stimulated to use the self-assessment tool https://www.incircle-kp.eu/self-assessment/, their results analysed and they started monitoring progress towards sustainability goals. By integrating the indicators into destination management plans, destinations can enhance their competitiveness, attractiveness, and resilience.

Certification Programs: An overview of existing certification programs and eco-labels has been made, including newly adopted indicators to assess and certify the sustainability performance of tourism businesses and destinations. These programs were recognized as incentives for businesses to adopt sustainable practices, differentiate themselves in the market, and attract environmentally conscious tourists.

Mapping of sustainable and circular indicators developed for Tourism sector highlights the benefits of the INCIRCLE CET-KPIs dashboard, developed with around 1500 sustainable and circular tourism indicators, categorized into MACRO, MESO, and MICRO levels. For example key paths at the MESO level include circular education, infrastructure, and collaboration. Human, Social, and Built Capital contribute to these paths within Natural Capital. The dashboard allows users to customize indicator sets relevant to their circumstances, particularly for coastal areas. An interactive tool helps users develop their own CET-KPIs sets. The research activity provided a comprehensive Excel database of indicators, facilitating a systematic approach to sustainable tourism. Networking action indicators are emphasized as important.

Policy Development: By aligning policies and incentives with indicator findings, governments can promote sustainable tourism development, mitigate negative impacts, and maximize benefits for communities

1.4.5 KEY LESSONS LEARNT

Through the implementation of the Circular Tourism Indicators, several key lessons have been learned that can inform future initiatives and guide decision-making processes.

Integrated Approach: Adopting an integrated approach to sustainable tourism measurement is essential for capturing the multidimensional nature of sustainability and circularity especially **on eco-**

itineraries of cultural routes. By considering environmental, social, and economic dimensions holistically, stakeholders can develop more effective strategies and interventions.

Stakeholder Engagement: Effective stakeholder engagement **on eco-itineraries** is critical for ensuring the relevance, legitimacy, and ownership of the indicators. Engaging diverse stakeholders throughout the indicator development process fosters trust and collaboration, enhancing the credibility and utility of the indicators.

Data Quality: Ensuring the availability and quality of data is paramount for the successful implementation of the indicators **within the system of eco-itineraries**. Investing in data collection infrastructure, capacity building, and data sharing mechanisms improves data reliability, timeliness, and accessibility, enhancing the accuracy and usefulness of the indicators.

Continuous Improvement: The development and refinement of the Circular Tourism Indicators are ongoing processes that require continuous learning, feedback, and adaptation. **Stakeholders of eco-itineraries** should embrace a culture of learning and innovation, iterate on the indicators based on lessons learned, and strive for continuous improvement over time.

In conclusion, Deliverable D 3.3.1 of the INCIRCLE replication package offers a robust framework for measuring tourism as a sustainable and circular economic sector.

SOURCES:

- Circular Tourism Tools Guidelines - Deliverable 4.4.1 INCIRCLE replication package **/48/** https://www.incircle-kp.eu/media/1228/circular-tourism-tools-guidelines-incircle-replication-package_eng.pdf
- Circular Assessment Report Template -Tourism Destination version (for each partner) **/18/** https://www.incircle-kp.eu/media/1232/circular-assessment-report-template-tourism-destination-version-incircle-replication-package.pdf
- INCIRCLE D 3.3.1 Set of circular tourism indicators - Measuring Tourism as a Sustainable and Circular Economic Sector. The INCIRCLE model **/189/** https://www.incircle-kp.eu/media/1336/d331_incircle-set-of-circular-tourism-indicators-replication-toolkit.pdf
- https://www.incircle-kp.eu/self-assessment/

1.4.6 ANNEX

TRANSFERABLES FROM THE CIRCULAR TOURISM TOOLS GUIDELINES

The template of preliminary partners' information aims at gathering an in-depth overview of the partners' territories and can be used for areas covered by eco-itineraries.

As indicated in the material, this information should help to identify the main characteristics of such areas and accordingly develop customized circular tourism indicators. The document is of a crucial importance because:

- It offers a comprehensive overview about partners' territories
- It highlights specific needs to be considered in identifying circular Tourism indicators
- It allows the customization of circular Tourism indicators based on partners' specificities
- Represents a challenging opportunity to collect detailed data on actual issues for partners

The template is composed to contain preliminary information related to partners' territories, subdivided in ten main sections investigating specific environmental-socio-economic aspects, as follows:

- Section A: general characteristics of the area
- Section B: Tourism impacts
- Section C: economic characteristics of the area
- Section D: mobility of the area
- Section E: municipal solid waste management and initiative of waste prevention
- Section F: water management system and water consumption
- Section G: actual and potential risks
- Section H: energy resources management
- Section I: protected areas and land uses
- Section L: Circular Economy initiatives

The section related to general characteristics should cover questions related to partners' name, number of inhabitants, population growth rate and presence of sea, rivers or mountains in the area covered by eco-itineraries. The section concerning Tourism impacts should include a broad set of questions investigating the number of incoming tourists per month during the last year, the incoming tourists' trend in the last 5 years, the contribution of international and domestic Tourism to the whole economic value of the destinations on itineraries and to national GDP of countries involved, the presence of specific categories of Tourism (recreational, cultural, sports/adventure, health, convention and incentive Tourism) and the main accommodation facilities present in the areas.

1.5. POLICY BRIEF FICHE

1.5.1 MAIN FIELDS OF INTERVENTION

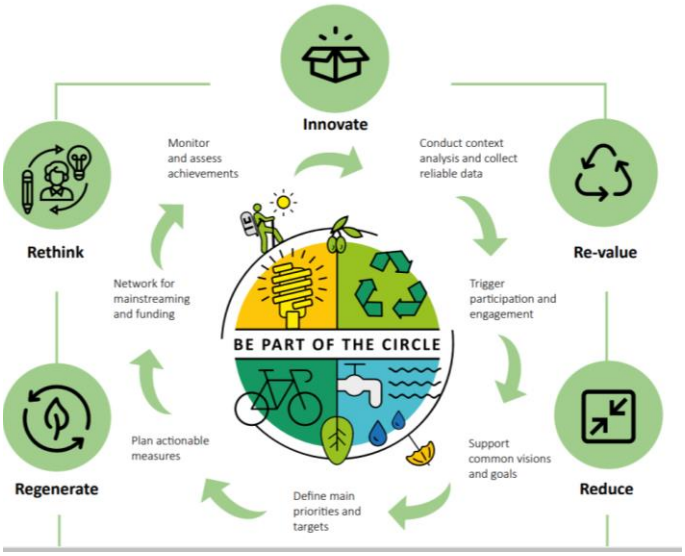
Based on the experience of the Incircle project, this Policy Brief (D.3.I.I) presents the lesson learned in terms of the application of circular principles in the tourism sector to support and guide Mediterranean policymakers in the transition towards a circular tourism. In addition, an insight into the 242 measures foreseen in the 11 strategies is made available.

Main areas of intervention are summarized in brief as:

Transition to Circular Economy (CE): Transforming mass tourism into sustainable and circular tourism is essential for the survival of Mediterranean destinations.

Systemic Approach: Requires cooperation among all stakeholders, including local authorities, business operators, tourists, and communities.

Shared Values: Building trust and awareness to promote CE principles and practices across the tourism value chain.



Reduction of Ecological Footprint: Revision of tourism products and services to reduce resource consumption and waste.

Innovation and Rethinking: Adoption of new technologies and sustainable practices to create a more responsible tourism model.

https://incircle.interreg-med.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/Sites/Sustainable_Tourism/Projects/INCIRCLE/Incircle_Policy_brief-web_file_ENG.pdf

For Mediterranean destinations to maintain their attractiveness and sustainability, a shift towards circular tourism is recognized as essential. This involves systemic changes, stakeholder cooperation, and innovative approaches to minimize the environmental impact of tourism while enhancing economic and social benefits.

1.5.2 ADOPTED METHODOLOGY

The INCIRCLE project adopted a comprehensive methodology to integrate critical sustainability and circular economy (CE) principles into the management of Mediterranean tourist destinations, particularly focusing on vulnerable areas like islands and scarcely inhabited territories. The methodology comprises seven main steps:

Conduct Context Analysis and Collect Reliable Data: This involves understanding the local environmental, social, and economic conditions to tailor the interventions accordingly.

Trigger Participation and Engagement: Engaging local stakeholders, including public authorities, businesses, and communities, to ensure their involvement and support.

Support Common Visions and Goals: Facilitating the development of a shared vision and common goals among stakeholders to align their efforts.

Define Main Priorities and Targets: Establishing clear priorities and setting achievable targets for sustainability and circularity.

Plan Actionable Measures: Developing specific, actionable plans and measures to address the identified priorities and targets.

Network for Mainstreaming and Funding: Creating networks to mainstream the initiatives and secure necessary funding for their implementation.

Monitor and Assess Achievements: Continuously monitoring the progress of implemented measures and assessing their effectiveness to make necessary adjustments.

1.5.3 STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE APPROACH IN APPLICATION TO THE RESULTS

Next detected weaknesses were the roadmap to main fields of intervention:

Negative Tourism Impact: The Mediterranean region sees a massive influx of tourists, causing stress on local environments and resources.

Environmental Degradation: Overdevelopment and high tourist numbers lead to negative externalities like noise, air pollution, water and energy shortages, and ecosystem degradation.

Economic Dependence: The region’s economy is heavily dependent on tourism, making sustainability crucial for long-term viability.

COVID-19 Effects: The pandemic highlighted the fragility of the tourism-dependent economy and underslined the need for sustainable practices.

Weaknesses of the INCIRCLE Approach

Initial Implementation Costs: Transitioning to a circular economy in tourism involves significant upfront costs for infrastructure development, renewable energy systems, and sustainable transport solutions. These costs can be a barrier for many regions, especially those already struggling with limited resources.

Stakeholder Engagement Challenges: While the methodology emphasizes participation and engagement, getting all stakeholders—local authorities, businesses, tourists, and communities—on board can be difficult. Differences in priorities, lack of awareness, or resistance to change can hinder collaboration efforts.

Complexity of Integration: Integrating circular economy principles into existing tourism infrastructures and practices is complex and time-consuming. It requires a thorough rethinking of current systems and processes, which can be challenging for regions with deeply entrenched tourism practices.

Dependence on Technology and Innovation: The approach relies heavily on new technologies and innovative practices. This dependence can be problematic in areas with limited access to advanced technology or where technological adoption is slow.

Monitoring and Assessment Difficulties: Effective monitoring and assessment of sustainability and circularity measures require robust data collection and analysis systems. Many regions may lack the necessary tools and expertise to perform these tasks efficiently.

Economic Trade-offs: The approach requires balancing economic gains from tourism with environmental sustainability. This compromise can be challenging for destinations that heavily depend on tourism revenue and may resist measures that could initially reduce tourist numbers or spending.

Variability in Regional Capabilities: The success of the approach depends on the specific capabilities and conditions of each region. Variability in resources, governance, infrastructure, and economic conditions can lead to uneven implementation and outcomes.

Risk of Greenwashing: There is a risk that some stakeholders may adopt superficial or symbolic sustainability measures for the sake of appearances without making substantive changes. Ensuring genuine commitment to circular economy principles can be challenging

1.5.4 SUCCESFUL PRACTICES, APPLICATIONS AND TRANSFERABILITY

Knowledge Sharing: The INCIRCLE Knowledge Platform supports MED destinations and tourism stakeholders in planning and implementing CE tourism measures and solutions. This platform is crucial for transferring knowledge and best practices.

Replication Toolkit: The INCIRCLE replication toolkit, available in all MED languages, assists in transforming the tourism sector according to CE principles. This toolkit provides practical guidance for other regions to adopt similar strategies.

Engagement Strategies: The methodologies and strategies for engaging local stakeholders can be adapted and applied to other regions, fostering participatory and collaborative approaches.

Integrated Strategies: The elaborated strategies and designed measures for circular tourism can serve as models for other states and regions to develop their policies, emphasizing the protection and valorization of natural resources.

Monitoring and Adaptation: The emphasis on continuous monitoring and assessment ensures that interventions remain effective and can be adjusted as needed, making the approach adaptable to different contexts.

By leveraging these methodologies and lessons learned, other regions can adopt and adapt INCIRCLE's successful practices to enhance sustainability and circularity in their tourism sectors.

1.5.5 KEY LESSONS LEARNT AND TRANSFERABLES

Key Lessons Learnt

Collaboration is Essential: Successful development and ownership of circular tourism strategies depend heavily on the readiness of territories and stakeholders to hold shared values and collaborate closely. The level of established collaboration networks is crucial for achieving integrated and sustainable management of resources.

Early Stages of Circular Economy Integration: The partner and replicating MED destinations are categorized as "beginning-pro activist," indicating that while CE principles are being integrated into destination management, there is still a long way to go. The awareness and initial steps towards circularity are in place, but substantial efforts are needed for full integration.

Need for Structured Collaboration Networks: The destinations fall within the "basic collaboration category," meaning they are in the initial stages of building collaborative networks among tourism stakeholders. This includes industries, communities, service providers, and tourists. Effective waste management, shared circular/sustainable knowledge, and proper physical infrastructure are fundamental to advancing these networks.

Infrastructure and Know-How are Crucial: Proper infrastructure to manage energy, water, waste, and raw materials is essential. Without adequate infrastructure, achieving structured and effective collaboration is challenging.

Continuous Efforts Required: Significant efforts have been made, but continuous and additional actions are required to support the smooth transition to a circular economy in tourism. Future strategies should build on the existing efforts and continue to enhance stakeholder engagement and collaboration.

Barriers and Drivers: The INCIRCLE experience highlights the main barriers and drivers of the circular tourism shift, providing a basis for recommendations that decision-makers need to endorse to facilitate change.

Policy brief is concluded with recommendations transferable for the future destinations:

Improve data collection and monitoring for more efficient decision making with key actions:

1. Assess the existing level of tourism circularity performance in your territory
2. Check and use the INCIRCLE Circular Tourism Destination Tool
3. Introduce sustainability and circularity criteria in the internal tools for monitoring of tourism sector performance and its environmental impacts in the longer term
4. Check and use the INCIRCLE Circular Tourism Industry Tool
5. Support and engage citizens, tourists, private actors and research institutions in the collection of monitoring data (use open data and citizen science in a quadruple helix perspective)
6. Increase vertical collaboration within MED destinations and support exchange and benchmarking between them, by means of adopting and sharing common indicators for circular tourism
7. Check the INCIRCLE circularity indicators

Set up a circular tourism governance structure in targeted territories:

1. Apply co-development methodologies to the governance of the destination, clearly explaining the scope and limits of the participatory approach and sticking to the agreements you'll conclude during the process
2. Check the INCIRCLE capacity building report
3. Implement and foster a participatory approach with a long-term perspective, creating permanent stakeholders' boards and adapting the format to your local context.
4. Integrate the participatory approach in the planning of the destination as well as in the regular evaluation and revision of existing strategies.

Develop a 360-degrees intervention to drive the transition:

1. Regulatory and legal instruments: (co)design and implement the rules and norms aiming at driving changes in production and consumption behavior. These tools may address stricter control on the use of resources, territorial planning, promotion of circular solutions, and/or restrictions
2. Economic and fiscal instruments: develop incentive and disincentive tools which make certain behaviors or practices more or less financially attractive by rewarding or penalizing both economic activities and public demand
3. Educative and voluntary instruments: apply tools that enable informed choices and actions through societal self-regulation as well as the transfer of knowledge, information and awareness-raising.

Commit to lead by example:

1. Implement pilot actions and projects to support the optimization of public tourism infrastructure and services in a CE perspective.
2. Develop and abide by green public procurement rules and criteria. Public procurement is a central lever for change as it can finance transformation while serving the consolidation of virtuous trends.

3. Implement circular strategies in the functioning of the institution, the management of its facilities and services.
4. Reduce bureaucracy and revise regulations to support the valorization of resources as well as their reuse, starting from within the institution itself.
5. Support the revision of European regulations, particularly those concerning public procurement, which prohibit favoring local supply in the name of free competition, having the pernicious effect of inhibiting the design of calls for tenders favoring local and circular models. Advocacy for changing these constraints should be developed and supported, in particular by regional and national authorities at EU level.

SOURCES:

- INCIRCLE_POLICY_BRIEF-WEB_FILE_ENG.PDF - ENGLISH|

2. INCIRCLE BOOKLETS' FICHE

2.1 MAIN FIELDS OF INTERVENTION

INCIRCLE BOOKLETS are presenting the touristic circular activities in identified local territories The text of booklets, meant for both: businesses and visitors, highlights the importance of implementing a circular economy approach in the tourism sector in the area and among the visitors.

It discusses the economic significance of tourism, the implications of tourism growth, the shift towards sustainable solutions in transportation, and the challenges related to water resource management.

The focus is on promoting sustainability, resource efficiency, and environmental conservation within the tourism industry.

TRANSFERABILITY possible through:

Identifying the core actions and initiatives (i.e. taken by INCIRCLE Gozo) to engage local businesses in sustainable practices and community development on the eco-itinerary.

Recognizing how the actions align with the goals of the project, such as promoting responsible tourism, cultural preservation, and environmental conservation on eco-itineraries.

Highlighting specific examples or projects mentioned in the booklets that demonstrate the content of actions undertaken.

2.2 ADOPTED METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted involves:

Context analyses - recognizing the impacts of tourism on the region and heritage, such as construction demand, environmental pollution, and cultural site pressure.

Analyses of the possible impact of circular economy and the need for sustainable practices in transportation, including carpooling, electric vehicles, and bike/scooter sharing services.

Analyses of the possible actions -applications of the principles of circular tourism

Analyses of the issues of harmonization CE with the regional and national strategy

The importance of educating the visitors.

The approach aims to integrate sustainability into various sectors to mitigate negative impacts and enhance overall resilience.

TRANSFERABILITY possible through:

Exploring the methodology and approach used by INCIRCLE booklets to involve and support local businesses in sustainable tourism practices.

Consideration of the strategies that could be employed to engage stakeholders on eco-itineraries, build partnerships, and implement sustainable initiatives.

Analyzing how the methodology approach reflects a holistic and participatory process on eco-itineraries that considers the needs and perspectives of local businesses.

2.3 STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES OF THE APPROACH IN APPLICATION TO THE RESULTS

The strengths lie in the emphasis on sustainability, resource efficiency, and environmental conservation. By promoting sustainable transportation solutions and addressing water resource challenges, the approach aims to reduce environmental impact and enhance the region's resilience.

However, potential weaknesses may include the need for widespread adoption of sustainable practices, addressing infrastructure gaps, and ensuring community engagement.

TRANSFERABILITY:

Evaluating the strengths of the approach in achieving community empowerment, cultural heritage preservation, and economic benefits for local businesses.

Identifying weaknesses or challenges faced during the implementation of the initiatives and how they impacted the results.

Applying the approach that can contribute to measurable results and positive impacts on the local community and environment.

2.4 SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES AND APPLICATIONS

Successful practices include the shift towards sustainable urban mobility solutions, increased use of carpooling, electric vehicles, and bike/scooter sharing services.

Additionally, the exploration of unconventional water resources to supplement natural freshwater sources demonstrates proactive resource management.

These practices contribute to reducing carbon emissions, alleviating traffic congestion, and promoting environmental sustainability in the tourism sector.

TRANSFERABILITY through:

Highlighting successful practices and applications that have led to tangible benefits for local businesses, tourists, and the community.

Providing specific examples of initiatives or projects that have been particularly effective in achieving the project's objectives.

Analyzing the key factors contributing to the success of these practices and how they can be replicated or scaled up in other contexts.

2.5 KEY LESSONS LEARNT AND TRANSFERABILITY TO ECO-ITINERARIES

Key lessons include

- the importance of integrating sustainable practices across industries,

- addressing environmental challenges, and
- promoting resource efficiency in tourism management.

These lessons can be transferred to eco-itineraries by emphasizing sustainable transportation options, water resource management, and community engagement in eco-friendly tourism activities. By applying these principles, eco-itineraries can enhance sustainability, promote environmental conservation, and offer enriching experiences for travelers.

TRANSFERABILITY:

- Take into account the key lessons learned in working with local businesses to promote sustainability and responsible tourism.
- Explore how these lessons can be applied to the development of eco-itineraries in your other destinations.
- Apply the transferability of the INCIRCLE project's approach, practices, and lessons to inspire similar initiatives aimed at creating eco-friendly travel experiences.

SOURCES:

  - Gozo_ENG_Incircle_Booklet-for-Tourists.pdf - English|
  - Himara_ENG_Incircle_Booklet-for-Tourists.pdf - English|
  - Larnaka_ENG_Incircle_Booklet-for-Tourists.pdf - English|
  - Palma_ENG_Incircle_Booklet-for-Tourists.pdf - English|
  - Rethymno_ENG_Incircle_Booklet-for-Tourists.pdf - English|
- InCircle-Gozo_ENG_Booklet_for_Local_Businesses.pdf - English
- InCircle-Himara_ALB_Booklet_for_Local_Businesses__1_.pdf - English|
- InCircle-Larnaka_GR_Booklet_for_Local_Businesses.pdf - English| PDF
- InCircle-Palma_ESP_Booklet_for_Local_Businesses.pdf - English
- InCircle-Rethymno_GR_Booklet_for_Local_Businesses.pdf - English|
- https://incircle.interreg-med.eu/

2.6 ANNEX

TRANSFERABLES: *INCIRCLE BOOKLETS CONCEPT*

Ten booklets produced focused on tourists & local businesses of 5 territories (Rethymno, Larnaka, Gozo, Palma & Himara) They were produced to present the circular activities of each territory & raise awareness in sustainable tourism.

Concept of B*ooklets for tourists* for eco-itineraries

Concept of these booklets can easily be transferred to eco itineraries using content template and providing answers to key questions:

1. What is Circular Economy? -unified explanation in all booklets
2. What is Circular Tourism? - unified explanation in all booklets
3. Municipalities on (Eco-Itinerary) description (The benefits and impacts of tourism for the area) - individually specified
4. Actions – Circular Tourism Applications - individually specified
5. Pilot Programme and Local Action Plan in harmonization with the regional/national strategy for the circular economy - individually specified
6. Info on the project (INCIRCLE Pilot Programme) - unified explanation in all booklets
7. Sustainable tourist habits (HOW I CAN BECOME PART OF THE CIRCLE) - unified explanation in all booklets

Also, in each booklet for tourists **key unified instructions were prepared** for tourists covering desirable sustainable behaviour related to sustainable mobility, waste management, water efficiency, energy efficiency, and giving some general advice.

GOZO BOOKLET

Key lessons transferable from the Gozo Booklet for Tourists - are also closely connected to sustainable mobility (electromobility) that can be applied on the eco itineraries:

BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLE

Actions – Circular Tourism Applications: Projects were detected in the area that cover water and waste management, energy efficiency and sustainable mobility

HIMARA BOOKLET

Key lessons transferable from the Himara Booklet for Tourists - are also closely connected to sustainable mobility (electromobility) that can be applied on the eco itineraries:

BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLE

Actions – Circular Tourism Applications

Pilot Action : Supporting alternative mobility patterns such as cycling

Himara Municipality elaborates a Local Action Plan which guarantees a sustainable development.

LARNAKA BOOKLET

Key lessons transferable from the Larnaka Booklet for Tourists - are also closely connected to sustainable mobility (electromobility) that can be applied on the eco itineraries:

BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLE

Actions – Circular Tourism Applications

Artists' district - improvements for walking tours

- Larnaka Thematic Beekeeping Trails;
- Honey Bee Route - Odou
- Life of Bees Route - Vavla

• The Humming Bee Path - Vavatsinia
• Larnaka 360◦ Cultural Walk
• Hiking & nature trails

Electromobility:

Walking and food tours – private initiative
• Electric Bicycles / Scooters: Private initiative
• Network of electric vehicle charging stations: dual chargers installed

Bicycle lanes

• 'Neolithic Route - Europe's most ancient route', centred around the antiquities.
• 'Wine and Gastronomy Route', covering the picturesque villages of the mountainous Larnaka District
• 'Multi-religious Route', includes visits to various places of worship of different religions in the city.
• 'Venetian Watchtowers Route-East Coastal Region' through the communities
• 'Camels and Donkeys Route'
• 'Wheat Fields and Bread-making Route', centred around the Museum and the traditional flour mill.
• 'Birdwatching Route', which covers the route from Voroklini Lake to Larnaka Salt Lake.

PALMA BOOKLET

Key lessons transferable from the Palma Booklet for Tourists - are also closely connected to sustainable mobility (electromobility) that can be applied on the eco itineraries:

BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLE

Actions – Circular Tourism Applications

Numerous actions have been listed, taken since 2016, in line with sustainable mobility, waste management, water efficiency, energy efficiency

Pilot Action was taken with an aim to reduce single use plastic bottles from mineral water consumption.

This was done by: Installation of a network of street drinking fountains along the city with main focus on tourist areas (15 fountains in the most tourist places in the city), together with the distribution of reusable water bottles (10.000 units) through local touristic businesses. This was promoted by and app and videos.

RETHYMNO BOOKLET

Key lessons transferable from the Rethymno Booklet for Tourists - are also closely connected to sustainable mobility (electromobility) that can be applied on the eco itineraries:

BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLES

Smart mobility actions applied

- System for collecting traffic data using thermal sensors.
- Smart controlled parking system with real-time information about available spaces, navigating and electronic payment.

- Accessible pedestrian signal system with countdown indicator to support accessibility for people with disabilities and with an audible signal to enhance accessibility for blind people or with impaired vision.
- Installation of telematics to provide real-time information on public transport schedules.
- Smart pedestrian radar sensor.
- Radar speed signs at the entrances to the city.
- New bicycle lanes network
- New trans-regional bicycle paths

Concept of B*ooklets for local businesses* for eco-itineraries

Concept of these booklets can easily be transferred to eco itineraries using content template.

Booklets are divided in 3 parts.

First part, common for all areas, provides answers to key questions: What is the main Challenge to face; What is Circular Economy?; What is Circular Tourism?; What is INCIRCLE project? And What is INCIRCLE impact.

Second part is dedicated to the specifics of the area/ municipality, explains the local action plan and transition to circular tourism through the joint approach.

Third part common for all areas, covers the call for action, explanation who is this call about and how they can BE PART OF THE CIRCLE and finally what will they gain?

3. INCIRCLE SCHOOL FICHE

3.1 MAIN FIELDS OF INTERVENTION

The INCIRCLE School described in the INCIRCLE Final Technical Report (D. 5.2.1) was aimed at training the replicating institutions on the replication package. It is transferable in the process of training the eco-itineraries stakeholders and territories about the tools and methodologies that can promote circular tourism strategies on eco-itineraries.

The document includes a Concept Note that outlines the objectives, scope, and key ideas of the INCIRCLE SCHOOL deliverable. This section provides an insight into the actions and strategies planned or implemented as part of the INCIRCLE project.

Main fields of intervention focus on:

Environmental Sustainability: The INCIRCLE SCHOOL deliverable focuses on promoting environmental sustainability by integrating concepts such as biodiversity, climate change, renewable energy, and waste management into the training. This field of intervention aims to educate stakeholders about environmental issues and encourage eco-conscious behaviours through practical initiatives like recycling programs and community gardens.

Participatory Processes: The project emphasizes participatory processes by involving stakeholders in decision-making and planning. This inclusive approach fosters collaboration, engagement, and a sense of ownership among community members, ultimately creating a more democratic and empowering learning environment

3.2 ADOPTED METHODOLOGY

The methodology of the INCIRCLE School, has been adapted to an online format using the Zoom platform. The sessions involve short presentations followed by active participation from attendees through interventions in the chat, quizzes, feedback using Jamboard notes, and group work to summarize key points. Each session is moderated with technical support. The methodology is structured into four main components: Inspiration, Reaction, Lesson Learned, and Book of Ideas. The goal is to facilitate knowledge exchange and practical implementation of the Toolkit, with participants expected to engage actively and come prepared for each session.

The sessions combine short presentations from speakers with permanent involvement of participants through: Interventions in the chat; Quiz / questions; Active individual feed-back through Jamboard notes; Group work to summarize key takeaways.

A moderator on each session was supported by technical assistance.

The methodology was structured under the following sequences:

1. **INSPIRATION**: Technical INCIRCLE partners present briefly the specific toolkit followed by Q&A. Participants are invited to make general comments in the chat. Facilitator brings up to 2 questions related to the practical implementation of the Toolkit as common challenges replicating actors might face.
2. **REACTION**: Participants are organized in groups to work individually in the answer to those questions through Jamboard notes. A group work follows to select the main answers to the challenges presented.
3. **LESSON LEARNED**: Practical implementers (pilot demonstrators and regional strategies developed) present their experience from the lessons learned. Interaction with the participants will bring out a summary of dos & don'ts.
4. **BOOK OF IDEAS**, to summarize the knowledge exchange in the School will be developed as a final output.

Participants were expected to come to the sessions with a previous reading of the INCIRCLE School Session Factsheet and the corresponding toolkit.

The methodology adopted also includes the following components:

The Sessions sections that explain in detail the methodology approach employed in the project. This session has covered the operational model, participatory process toolkits, agenda, speakers, and methodologies used in the project.

Operational Model & Participatory Process Toolkits: The project utilizes an operational model that involves efficient strategic approach to destinations, resource management, budgeting, and communication to ensure the effective implementation of sustainability initiatives. Additionally, the use of participatory process toolkits suggests that interactive tools and methods are employed to engage stakeholders in decision-making, problem-solving, and idea generation.

Speakers & Methodology: The project incorporates speakers and specific methodologies to enhance the learning experience. By inviting experts to share their knowledge and utilizing structured methodologies, INCIRCLE SCHOOL enriches the educational process, providing diverse perspectives and innovative approaches to address sustainability challenges.

Book of Ideas & Main Takeaways: The inclusion of a "Book of Ideas" suggests a documentation process capturing innovative concepts, strategies, and solutions generated during sessions. This practice fosters creativity, collaboration, and knowledge sharing among participants. Additionally, highlighting main takeaways indicates a focus on distilling key learnings and insights to drive continuous improvement and inform future actions within the project.

3.3 STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES OF THE APPROACH IN APPLICATION TO THE RESULTS

The document outlines strengths such as effective operational model, or participatory processes. It also pinpoints weaknesses such as challenges faced, areas for improvement of

the approach adopted in the project. This section provides insights into the outcomes achieved and the effectiveness of the methodologies used.

3.4 SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES AND APPLICATIONS

The Sessions section, specifically the discussions on operational models, participatory processes, and main takeaways, highlights successful practices and applications within the project. This section presents best practices, successful strategies, and their applications in the context of the INCIRCLE SCHOOL initiative.

3.5 KEY LESSONS LEARNT AND TRANSFERABILITY TO ECO-ITINERARIES

The document concludes with key lessons learned from the project, such as effective tools, methodologies, and approaches. These lessons could be transferable to eco-itineraries, emphasizing the potential applicability of the project's outcomes to other contexts or projects.

Methodology is transferable to eco-itineraries creation, if supported by additional segment on social and cultural sustainability.

SOURCE

INCIRCLE - Deliverable 5.2.1. VJAN26th2022 rev FS.pdf - English|

INCIRCLE SCHOOL Concept Note: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1U03PAJjNEUHL2XVDDY-2Qa9MlpsS6ImV/view

4. INCIRCLE REGIONAL & LOCAL ACTION PLANS REPORT FICHE

4.1 MAIN FIELDS OF INTERVENTION

Regional and local action plans within the tourism sector were developed and evaluated.

This report's aim was to develop and evaluate the proposed regional and local action plans within the tourism sector, as part of the INCIRCLE project.

A total of 5 regional or national action plans and 5 local action plans, created by the INCIRCLE partners to aid the transition towards a circular tourism sector, were analysed in terms of their stakeholder involvement, and plan for implementation of the proposed measures and actions.

A gap analysis was carried out to compare and contrast between the regional action plan and the coinciding local actions and current action plans, or whenever these were not available regional policies as identified by the regional INCIRCLE strategies.

The report then used the outcomes of this analysis to provide recommendations to ensure the action plans' feasibility based on the actions, responsibilities, resources, and deadlines set in the action plans.

4.2 ADOPTED METHODOLOGY

Document provides an overview of the methodological approach adopted for the analysis of the regional and local action plans.

A total of 5 regional or national action plans and 5 local action plans, created by the INCIRCLE partners to aid the transition towards a circular tourism sector, were produced and analyzed in terms of their stakeholder involvement, and plan for implementation of the proposed measures and actions.

A summary of each Regional and Local Action plan is first provided by presenting the context and the vision for each action plan.

Subsequently, **evaluation** provides an **overview of the methodology** used in the action plans, including governance with stakeholder involvement, and monitoring and reporting.

Document then **identifies the high-level objectives**, and for each of these the **associated measures and actions** are briefly summarized all focusing on the water, energy, waste and mobility management, and the horizontal aspects. Relevant areas (addressed by the action plans) for each of these pillars are summarized in a matrix.

A Gap Analysis was carried out to compare between the regional action plan with relevant current policies and action plans in the partner territory, and the correspondence of the measures and actions between the regional action plan and the coinciding local action plan.

A **Financial Assessment** of the Action plan was carried out for each regional and local action plan, and according to the actions set out in plan and which are broken down in terms of the five INCIRLCE pillars.

Recommendations were designed for each territory, and regional and local action plans. The gaps were identified for each local plan and used to elaborate on the opportunities for improvement and long-term feasibility of the plan.

General conclusions were presented with the aim of providing an overview of the main findings of this analysis and presenting general recommendations relevant to the main objective of circularity in the tourism sector of the INCIRCLE project.

4.3 STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES OF THE APPROACH IN APPLICATION TO THE RESULTS

The report has used the outcomes of this analysis to provide recommendations to ensure the action plans' feasibility based on the actions, responsibilities, resources, and deadlines set in the action plans. The analyzed national/regional and local action **plans provide a wide range of measures**, which encompass the water, energy, waste, mobility and the horizontal INCIRCLE pillars, and which are expected to positively contribute towards the circularity and sustainability tourism sector. Actions have focused on legislation and policy development, enhancing the infrastructure and technological capacities of the receiving territories through investment, and launching financial schemes, incentives, and promotional, educational and awareness raising campaigns to foster sustainability within the tourism sector.

Actions were adapted to the regional and local context and addressed the policy and sectoral context for each territory, leading to substantial variation between the plans.

WEAKNESSES

In some cases, the plans did not include enough information about the measures and actions implemented to meet the conditions set by the high-level objectives of the regional or local action plan. In these cases, the need for further development of the action plan would be indicated in order to ensure appropriate action towards the goal of circularity in the tourism sector.

In some cases, measures and actions do not specifically address circularity within the tourism sector but are applicable to all sectors in the economy and would only indirectly be expected to contribute towards the goal of the INCIRCLE project. Therefore, the costs of the implementation of the measures and actions may have also been overestimated when costs

are directed towards actions that benefit different sectors within the territory and are not specific to the tourism sector. On the other hand, costs associated with different measures and actions may be underestimated when costs are not available in the analysed action plan. In addition to recommendations for a better focus of measures and actions on tourism operators, recommendations are also given for better linking initiatives with research and innovation projects, as they offer the opportunity to collect new data and carry out experimentation, ensure capacity building for stakeholders, develop a cooperation network, and spread and communicate key results and experiences with this network.

Sustainability and circularity in the context of culture or heritage and heritage institutions is barely mentioned although this component presents important motivation for tourists and visitors in most of analyzed areas.[1]

4.4 SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES AND APPLICATIONS

The analysed national/regional and local action plans provide a wide range of measures, which encompass the water, energy, waste, mobility and the horizontal INCIRCLE pillars, and which are expected to positively contribute towards the circularity and sustainability tourism sector.

Creating an environmentally conscious destination that at the same time improves the quality of life of the local population was identified as a High-Level Objective of the Horizontal Pillar. Three actions were identified, namely the: 1. **Creation of sustainability requirements** for tourism development projects 2. Elaboration of the **WISE Tourism Index** 3. Running of a **visual pollution initiative**. These actions are focused on setting requirements, monitoring and rewarding positive implementation, and educating and creating awareness which, along with the interdisciplinarity focus of the initiatives, is considered as being commendable. On a positive note, it is also noted that a wide range of stakeholders are involved in these actions, but the action plan provides limited information on the implementation of such collaborations and actions.
Some of the action plans identify the need for **promotion of natural and cultural heritage**; development of sustainable transport infrastructure; transition to circular economy-utilization of resources, and smart transportation.

BALEARIC ISLANDS EXAMPLE: The Horizon Pillar has identified making the Balearic Islands a circular tourism destination as its High Level Objective. Five actions are identified, namely to:
1. Elaborate a “Circular Economy Law” and revision of the current tourism legislation;
2. Elaborate of a Tourism Carrying Capacity Assessment (TCCA);
3. Promote the attainment a Sustainable-Green-Circular Tourism Destination certification of Balearic Islands

[1] „Europe is top of the list of the world’s most popular tourist destinations, to a great extent, due to the combined attraction of its natural and cultural heritage,… A listed opportunity is the development of family tourism based on cultural heritage and local produce while a listed threat is the irregular development consuming natural and cultural resources. Citation from: https://incircle.interreg-med.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/Sites/Sustainable_Tourism/Projects/INCIRCLE/INCIRCLE_EWA_D4.2.1__D4.3.1_Report.pdf

4. Certification of Balearic Islands as “Carbon Neutral”
5. Adopt recognized sustainable and/or circular criteria for planning public events.

4.5 KEY LESSONS LEARNT

Recommendations have been also made to ensure that sectoral targets are also achieved through a diverse range of actions that include activities aimed to raise awareness, capacity-build organisations and offer incentives for the adoption of initiatives that increase circularity within the tourism sector. However, such recommendations vary according to the context, and the high-level objectives set by the territory and the current mix of measures and actions already included in the region and local action plans.

SOURCE: INCIRCLE_EWA_D4.2.1__D4.3.1_Report.pdf - English|

4.6 ANNEX

TRANSFERABLES OF INCIRCLE REGIONAL & LOCAL ACTION PLAN TOOLS TO ECO-ITINERARIES

As part of the INCIRCLE project, with the assistance of the external contract provider, 5 regional or national action plans and 5 local action plans, were created by the INCIRCLE partners to aid the transition towards a circular tourism sector. These plans were analysed taking into account the involvement of stakeholders, and the implementation plan of the proposed measures and actions.

Tools used by INCIRCLE, for composing action plans, are transferable to eco- itineraries, such as i.e. the one defining the areas to be addressed by the action plans for each pillar as below.

Source: INCIRCLE D.4.1.2 - Collection of assessment reports of regional/national strategies

Pillar	Relevant areas addressed by the action plans
Water	Water demand management, optimization of water use, conservation and regeneration of water supply sources, wastewater reclamation and alternative water production systems – *to be observed along the eco-itinerary*
Energy	Energy demand management and optimization of energy use, diversification of energy supply sources and the development of renewable energy systems to address energy use particularly in buildings, for lighting, air cooling and heating, water heating and cooking purposes – *to be observed along the eco-itinerary*

Waste	Reduction of waste generation at source, optimisation of waste separation, reduction of landfilling and recovery of material and energy - *to be observed along the eco-itinerary*
Mobility	Development of sustainable transport solutions and the supporting infrastructure, and development of modes of collective transportations systems - *to be observed along the eco-itinerary*
Horizontal	Management of the critical interlinkages between pillars and ecosystem services through integrated solutions for cross-cutting issues, including climate mitigation and adaptation, development of integrated policy and protection of natural habitats, amongst others - *to be observed along the eco-itinerary*

Further on, INCIRCLE Template for the GAP analysis of the regional action plans might be useful for analysing data *in destinations along the eco-itinerary*:

Source: INCIRCLE D.4.1.2 Author's methodology

Pillar	High Level Objectives	Action Plan Measures	Comparison of the Actional Plan Actions with current plans for the partner's regions		GAPS
			Current Action Plan and Policies	Regional Action Plan	
Water					
Energy					
Waste					
Mobility					

5. EMBLEMATIC PROJECT HANDBOOK FICHE

5.1 MAIN FIELDS OF INTERVENTION

This document is addressed to any Destination Management Organisation (DMO) or similar local public or private entities willing to implement the scheme of the EMbleMatiC project and its product, the Ecojourneys, to their territory. Consequently, this guide provides its reader with that information necessary to understand the project, its origins, the partners involved in it, the process followed and all the relevant information that can be useful for a potential new member of the EMM Network. And what is of utmost importance, the results come from the on-site experience of the partners and not only from a theoretical approach. In this Guide you will find a detailed explanation of the process of creation of the Ecojourneys, together with a final chapter referring to the lessons learnt and some recommendations and points of vigilance to be taken into account.

It covers next fields of intervention:

Purpose – it is meant for DMOs and similar entities to implement the Ecojourneys scheme from the EMbleMatiC project. Provides comprehensive information on project origins, processes, partners, and practical insights.
Usage – it provides instructions and user-oriented design for easy access to practical tips and information.
Highlights challenges and solutions with specific markers.
Experiential tourism routes – that are addressing unbalanced tourist flows, seasonality, and economic benefits for hinterland areas. Focus on route features, local services, sustainability, management, governance, and marketing.

5.2 ADOPTED METHODOLOGY

Emblematic Handbook provides the methodology for implementing Eco-journeys in 5 steps:

Step 1: Involvement of Local Stakeholders The co-creation approach is central, involving local stakeholders (persons, companies, associations, public administrations) from the start to ensure feasibility. Stakeholders are identified from both private (e.g., accommodation services, restaurants, local producers, travel agencies) and public sectors (e.g., municipalities, protected area authorities, DMOs). Effective engagement involves using various communication channels like newsletters, personal calls, and emails. Regular meetings foster collaboration despite differing worldviews and potential

reluctance. Challenges include time consumption, legal issues, and managing diverse stakeholder interests.

Step 2: Design of the Itinerary The concept of "Ecojourney" involves creating a common baseline across nine mountain areas with shared sustainable tourism goals. Thirty attributes were agreed upon, covering basics, services, ethics & sustainability, management & governance, and marketing. Stakeholder reactions influenced the modification of some attributes. Ensuring compliance with these attributes was challenging, especially regarding evidence submission deadlines.

Step 3: Implementation on the Ground With attributes defined and stakeholders engaged, the next step involves translating the itinerary from concept to reality. Suggested tasks provide orientation but allow flexibility in the implementation process.

Step 4: Creation of a Tourism Product Turning implemented routes into marketable tourism products involves packaging and promoting the Ecojourneys. Effective marketing strategies are essential to attract visitors.

Step 5: Continuous Improvement and Monitoring Maintaining the quality and spirit of Ecojourneys involves continuous monitoring and improvement. Indicators for measuring territorial and societal impacts are crucial, though challenging due to limited consortium capacities. Addressing these issues at the Network level is necessary for long-term sustainability.

5.3 STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES OF THE APPROACH IN APPLICATION TO THE RESULTS

This approach recognizes further strengths:

It is inclusive and participatory -Involving local stakeholders from the outset ensures that the final product meets local needs and has local buy-in, increasing the likelihood of long-term success and sustainability.

It relies on Local Expertise and Knowledge - Engaging local stakeholders leverages their knowledge and expertise, leading to more accurate and relevant itinerary design and implementation that highlights the unique characteristics of the region.

It offers Tailored Solutions - The approach allows for the creation of tailored solutions that are specific to the needs and characteristics of each mountain area, enhancing the overall quality and authenticity of the Ecojourneys.

It promotes Enhanced Collaboration - Regular meetings and continuous communication foster collaboration and a sense of ownership among stakeholders, leading to stronger partnerships and community support.

It relies on Flexibility and Adaptability - The methodology's flexibility allows for adjustments based on stakeholder feedback and local conditions, improving the project's responsiveness to emerging challenges and opportunities.

Sustainable Tourism Promotion - The focus on sustainability and responsible tourism helps address issues like unbalanced tourist flows and economic benefits for hinterland areas, promoting a more equitable distribution of tourism benefits.

Also next weaknesses can be detected:

Time-Consuming Process -The co-creation approach is labor-intensive and time-consuming, requiring significant effort in contacting, engaging, and maintaining relationships with a diverse group of stakeholders.

Stakeholder Reluctance -Some stakeholders may be initially reluctant to participate due to fears of financial or time commitments, or due to differing priorities, leading to potential delays and additional efforts to ensure engagement.

Diverse Worldviews - Managing differing worldviews and interests among stakeholders can lead to conflicts and require careful negotiation and mediation, complicating the decision-making process.

Compliance Challenges - Ensuring compliance with the 30 agreed attributes and managing evidence submission deadlines can be difficult, leading to misunderstandings and delays in project implementation.

Limited Resources - Monitoring and continuous improvement activities may surpass the capacities of the consortium, necessitating additional resources and support from the Network level to ensure effective long-term management.

Communication Barriers - Effective communication with all stakeholders can be challenging, particularly in overcoming initial reluctance and ensuring consistent and clear information dissemination.

5.4 SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES AND APPLICATIONS

Successes:

The co-creation approach likely led to the development of high-quality, locally relevant Ecojourneys that are more sustainable and well-received by the community.

Enhanced stakeholder collaboration and participation may have contributed to more innovative and tailored tourism solutions.

Best practice examples:

https://emblematic.interreg-med.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/Sites/Sustainable_Tourism/Projects/EMbleMatiC/Library/EMbleMatiC_PLUS/DELIVERABLES/A2-D213-PP3-Fact-sheet.pdf

Challenges:

The time-consuming nature and compliance challenges may have resulted in delays and required more resources than initially anticipated.
Stakeholder reluctance and communication barriers might have hindered full participation and smooth implementation, potentially impacting the overall effectiveness and scope of the Ecojourneys.

Overall, the co-creation approach's strengths lie in its inclusivity, sustainability focus, and ability to create tailored, high-quality tourism products, while its weaknesses involve the complexities and resource demands of managing diverse stakeholder engagement and ensuring compliance with project standards

Also selection of 10 monitoring indicators from ETIS has been provided:

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
B.1 Tourism flow (volume and value) at destination	B.1.4	Daily spending per overnight tourist
B.2 Tourism enterprise(s) performance	B.2.1	Average length of stay of tourists (nights)
C.5 Protecting and enhancing cultural heritage, local identify and assets	C.5.2	Percentage of the destination’s events that are focused on traditional/local culture and heritage
D.1 Reducing transport impact	D.1.2	Percentage of tourists and same-day visitors using local/soft mobility/ public transport services to get around the destination

D.3 Solid waste management	D.3.1	Waste production per tourist night compared to general population waste production per person (kg)
D.5 Water management	D.5.1	Water consumption per tourist night compared to general population water consumption per resident night
D.6 Energy use	D.6.1	Energy consumption per tourist night compared to general population energy consumption per resident night
D.7 Landscape and biodiversity protection	D.7.1	Percentage of local entreprises in the tourism sector actively supporting protection, conservation and management of local biodiversity and landscapes

5.5 KEY LESSONS LEARNT

The co-creation approach adopted for the EMbleMatiC project's Ecojourneys demonstrates significant strengths, including inclusivity, leveraging local expertise, and fostering sustainable tourism. These strengths contributed to the development of high-quality, locally-relevant tourism products that resonate with the community. However, the approach also presents challenges, such as being time-consuming, managing diverse stakeholder interests, and ensuring compliance with established attributes. Despite these challenges, the benefits of a participatory and flexible methodology outweigh the drawbacks, resulting in more authentic and sustainable tourism experiences.

Recommendations:

- Don’t underestimate the power of human relationships
- The long and tortuous path towards sustainability
- Working in a network requires an extra effort
- The larger the partnership is, the more difficult is to reach agreement in critical issues.
- It is important to discuss those critical issues (e.g. what kind of visitors am I interested in?) as earlier in the project’s lifetime as possible.
- Each partner has to be able to estimate how much room they have for taking action in terms of legality and political landscape.

5.6 ANNEX

TRANSFERABLES TO ECO-ITINERARIES

To enhance the implementation of this methodology in the future eco-itineraries, the following strategies should be considered:

Enhanced Communication - Develop clear communication strategies and tools to facilitate better information dissemination and engagement with stakeholders from the start.

Stakeholder Incentives - Provide incentives for stakeholder participation, such as highlighting potential economic benefits or offering training and capacity-building opportunities.

Streamlined Processes - Simplify the stakeholder engagement process where possible, perhaps by creating templates and guidelines that can be easily followed to reduce time and resource burdens.

Dedicated Resources - Allocate specific resources for continuous monitoring and improvement activities to ensure long-term sustainability and adherence to quality standards.

Conflict Resolution Mechanisms -Establish clear mechanisms for resolving conflicts and managing diverse viewpoints among stakeholders to ensure smoother collaboration.

Incremental Implementation - Consider a phased approach to implementation, allowing for initial pilot projects that can be scaled up based on initial successes and learnings.

Provide a list of recommendations **about best environmental practices for stakeholders**

As local stakeholders involved in Emblematic Eco-Journey project, you should be aware of the importance of:

1. MANAGING WATER CONSUMPTION: in the Mediterranean area, water is a scarce resource, we should avoid wasting it, so any measure to save or to collect and reuse it will be convenient and advisable.
2. MANAGING ELECTRIC CONSUMPTION: the generation of energy has an impact on the environment, any progressive reduction of consumption should be our goal.
3. MANAGING WASTE: probably we have all heard about the three R's (re-use, recovery and recycling), avoiding waste generation should be a must for us.

4.CONSUMING LOCAL PRODUCTS: doing it in our business means helping local economy, promoting traditional gastronomy and avoiding transport of products and its negative environmental consequences.

5. USING CLEAN ENERGIES: whenever possible by using hydropower, wind or solar energy, will reduce the impact of our activity and show our commitment to care for the planet.
6. OBTAINING AN ECOLABEL: there are many national or international certifications that companies can obtain to ensure a good environmental performance.

7. AVOIDING THE USE OF HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES OR PRODUCTs: they can endanger people and the environment and generate hazardous waste, so this must be in our “to-do” list.

8. SHOWING OR DELIVERING INFORMATION about our eco-journey to the public and to visitors: it is a good way to communicate our engagement and to raise awareness among them with our example.

9. JUST TAKE ACTION! Click on this document and discover guidance and practical examples on how you can improve your environmental performance.

By addressing the identified weaknesses and leveraging the strengths of the co-creation approach, future eco-itineraries can be developed more efficiently and effectively, fostering sustainable tourism that benefits local communities and preserves natural and cultural heritage.

SOURCE:

https://emblematic.interreg-med.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/Sites/Sustainable_Tourism/Projects/EMbleMatiC/Library/DELIVERABLES/D.5.3.2-Transfer_Guide/D532-V3-TRANSFER_GUIDE-PP8-CETT-191009.pdf

https://emblematic.interreg-med.eu/what-we-achieve/deliverable-library/