Indicators of Sustainable Development for Tourism Destinations

A Guidebook
This section contains a recommended framework for use in indicators development processes. Indicators development will occur at several scales, but the primary focus of this Guidebook is at the destination level— with destinations being defined generally in terms of the marketable destination, which may range in size from a small nation to a region, or to a specific resort or site. This section will be used by those who are interested in creating indicators for their destination. All destinations may not need to use all of the steps (particularly if they have some planning system or monitoring program in place on which they can build). This process need not be onerous, and should be adapted to the specific needs and conditions of the destination.

The indicators development process has twelve steps:

### Research and Organization
- **Step 1.** Definition/delineation of the destination.
- **Step 2.** Use of participatory processes.
- **Step 3.** Identification of tourism assets and risks.
- **Step 4.** Long-term vision for a destination.

### Indicators Development
- **Step 5.** Selection of priority issues.
- **Step 6.** Identification of desired indicators.
- **Step 7.** Inventory of data sources.
- **Step 8.** Selection procedures.

### Implementation
- **Step 9.** Evaluation of feasibility/implementation.
- **Step 10.** Data collection and analysis.
- **Step 11.** Accountability, communication and reporting.
- **Step 12.** Monitoring and evaluation of indicators application.

These steps are outlined below. While they may be followed in order, at any point it may be useful to return to an earlier step for additional clarification or information.
2.1 Key Steps to Indicators Development and Use

The recommended methodology for indicators development is a phased approach that results in operational indicators for a destination. The methodology features a participatory process which, in itself, produces benefits for the destination and for the participants, and is used as a training tool. The suggested procedure for indicators development includes various steps that form part of normal tourism planning processes (e.g. the identification of tourism assets and initial assessment of risks and opportunities). As noted in Part 1, wherever there is already an established tourism development strategy and planning process, the focus on indicators can help improve the provision of accurate information, and lead to productive monitoring processes. Where a plan already exists, it can be the point of departure for indicators development, and information may already be regularly collected, and it will be available to support some indicators. In Box 2.1 the relationship between indicators development steps and traditional approaches to planning is outlined, showing the links and uses indicators may have at any stage in the planning process. Where there is no formal tourism planning process in place, this approach stresses the importance of starting with the basic steps to be as clear as possible on what it is intended to sustain; the indicators development process can help to clarify this, and can trigger policy formation and tourism planning. Even where there is a strategy or plan in place, it is useful to review all of the steps: the focus on indicators can improve data sources and processing capacities, as well as reporting mechanisms that support monitoring and management processes. (See also Box 2.5 which shows the process applied in Kukljica, Croatia, and Part 5 which addresses means to use and portray indicators).
### Box 2.1 Indicators and planning procedures - links and relations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning process</th>
<th>Steps in indicators work</th>
<th>Role of indicators</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Definition/delineation of the destination /development area.</td>
<td>Research and organization 1. Definition/delineation of the destination (to identify scope of information needs for indicators).</td>
<td>The definition of area reflects data boundaries (management or political units for access and utility).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Establishment of participatory planning process.</td>
<td>2. Use of participatory processes for indicators development.</td>
<td>Indicators are part of participatory planning process and catalyst to stimulate it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. Formulation of vision and/or mission statement.</td>
<td>3. Identification of tourism assets and risks. 4. Long-term vision for a destination – clearly defined.</td>
<td>Key step in indicators work is to identify existing vision, and clearly define key elements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Initial assessment and analysis of assets, risks, impacts (situation analysis).</td>
<td>Indicators development 5. Selection of priority issues and policy questions. 6. Identification of Desired Indicators. 7. Inventory of data sources. 8. Selection of indicators.</td>
<td>Indicators are essential to clarify key issues, assets, risks and provide accurate information on them. Indicators are used to report on the results of the initial assessment to the stakeholders involved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Setting up development objectives (for the short, medium and long term according to priority needs).</td>
<td>Ideally indicators are built into the action phases of planning and implementation. Data gathering and analysis occur on an ongoing basis. Policy objectives can also target development of data sources and processing capacities that supports indicators application.</td>
<td>Indicators help to provide clarity to development objectives – can be used to set targets and performance measures. Essential for definition of clear targets and time-frames, and communicate them to stakeholders.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F. Formulation and evaluation of strategies targeting development objectives.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Indicators can be used to define or analyze fit between issues and strategies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>G. Formulation of action plans and specific projects based on the optimal strategy.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Indicators become performance measures for projects and activities and assist in definition of specific targets.</td>
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<tr>
<td>H. Implementation of action plans and projects.</td>
<td>11. Accountability, reporting and communication Monitoring and evaluation of implementation should be conducted on an ongoing basis, with periodic reporting of results, using indicators. 12. Monitoring of indicators application Priority issues, information sources and processing capacities can change, so it is also necessary to verify the appropriateness of indicators periodically.</td>
<td>Indicators are what is monitored and evaluated about: - management processes, direct program and project outputs; - progress in achieving defined objectives; - changes in environmental and socio-economic conditions as a result of actions. Indicators form key part of public accountability for implementation and results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Monitoring and evaluation of plan and project implementation.</td>
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</table>
Initial Phase: Research and Organization

The initial phase involves the collection of key information on the destination, tourism conditions, stakeholders, past concerns, and previous studies that can be used to support the development and implementation of indicators. Initial contacts are made at this stage with key local experts at the destination. The objective is to obtain clarity in the identification of the current state of the destination and its tourism, determine trends and potential risks to the industry, and make clear the roles of key stakeholders before focusing on issues and indicators.

Step 1. Definition / Delineation of the Destination

Establishment of destination boundaries

Definition of the destination is a necessary first step. For a successful indicator program, it is important to be completely clear, at the beginning, on the geographic boundaries and political jurisdictions that circumscribe the area to which the program is to apply. While there is a generally accepted definition of “destination” (See Box 1.2: What is a destination?), in practice the delineation of boundaries can be a challenge. When indicators are to be applied to a defined destination (e.g., a national park or a resort community) the existing jurisdictional boundaries can be a point of departure. Even in these types of destinations, tourism often affects adjacent areas or communities. For example, park peripheries typically contain many of the services used by tourists visiting the park. Visitors to a resort normally will also visit nearby mountains, islands, communities or other attractions which may be outside the property or jurisdictional boundaries of the primary site of the visit. As a consequence, the selection of boundaries is usually a compromise – an attempt to encompass the main assets and activities and to reflect the political, ecological or other boundaries to the maximum extent possible. Adjustments (and selection or delineation of sub-destinations, critical sites or hot spots) may occur during subsequent phases of indicators development as key data are found, based on other boundaries, or as new information is acquired regarding relationships with adjacent areas.

Even in island destinations, which may appear initially to be the easiest to demarcate, it has proven necessary to respond to the fact that many visitors use the adjacent sea for much of their vacation activities, and typically visit adjacent mainland sites or other nearby islands as part of their vacation, drawing as well upon services from the areas outside the island. (e.g., in the case of the WTO study of Cozumel, Mexico, it was found that most visitors also spent some time in Cancun or the Costa Maya. In the case of the islands of Ugljan and Pasman, Croatia, most visited the city of Zadar, which was easily accessible by ferry). In these two destinations, the political organization was such that for many planning decisions and programs the islands were combined with mainland areas, with some potentially useful data currently available only for the combined areas.
The following rules of thumb may assist in the choice of destination boundaries:

a) *Include key sites and assets.* The boundaries should wherever possible surround all of the key assets of the destination. Does the defined destination contain all the areas affected by tourism activity? (e.g., where the tourist sector workers live);

b) *Try to match existing boundaries.* Where feasible, political boundaries should be followed. Can the destination boundaries be matched to the boundaries of existing data units such as census areas, municipal boundaries, or management districts for which data is likely to exist? Where different agencies have different boundaries, the boundaries used by the principal potential user of the indicators (likely the planning authority) should be favoured;

c) *Reflect natural or ecological areas.* Wherever possible, boundaries should be selected reflecting physical or ecological boundaries. The ideal is sometimes attainable by selecting political boundaries which best emulate biophysical ones. (e.g., combining political sub-areas to best match the limits of the valley, the island, or the mountain range);

d) *Consider subdividing the destination.* In some cases it may be useful to subdivide the destination into parts for separate analysis, particularly where there are significant differences between parts of the destination such as a core area where most of the activity occurs and a peripheral area which is also clearly impacted or involved. (e.g., the study of Prince Edward Island National Park in Canada divided the “destination” into the Park itself and the peripheral resort municipality and, where necessary, defined indicators for each separately);

e) *Consider specific sub-areas for special consideration.* Within each destination there may be areas of concentrated activity or “hot spots” (e.g., the beach, a specific ecological asset), which will not be adequately addressed by indicators that refer to the overall destination. Such areas should receive special treatment as a subset of the overall destination (where measurements, for example, of density of use are calculated just for that area and will be much different than density measures for the entire destination). The WTO studies of Keszthely on Lake Balaton, Hungary and Villa Gesell, Argentina found it useful to establish a small separate set of indicators for the intensively used managed beach areas, focusing on localized impacts. The Cozumel study recommended specific indicators to be developed for the reef area and the Chankanaab ecological park.

**Documentation of tourism and broader sustainable development issues at the destination**

One of the initial steps is to obtain information on the current state of the destination and its tourism. This is done in order to help understand the scope of the initiative, and to recognize that much information may already exist, which can help in better understanding the destination, its tourism, and where potential issues may exist or emerge. Basic information that can be collected early in the process includes identification of who comes to the destination, when, where and for what purposes? What is the typical experience? What are the trends in tourism for the destination? Have there been any tourism planning or regulation processes put in place and are results evident? Are there existing problems which are likely to drive any planning or management process, and are there proposals currently on the table (from the tourism sector or from others) which may affect the future of the destination? This is basic background information for any indicators initiative. For example, in a case application to the tiny island of Mexcaltitan (Mexico), the fact that the destination had virtually no tourism now, but had just been “discovered” by Conde Nast and could anticipate a rapid massive growth in day tourism (mainly by bus from Puerto Vallarta and Mazatlan) became both the impetus for the project and a key factor in the identification of potential issues and indicators. It is important at this stage to also obtain information about the other development issues affecting the destination; often the plans and actions of other sectors can be very important factors in any approach to overall sustainability. How does tourism relate to the overall situation in the destination?
How is tourism managed?

Who has the mandate to deal with tourism issues and with the planning and management of the destination? It is important to identify the key client(s) for the use of indicators and to understand their needs to the extent possible. In the 1996 publication from WTO on this subject the sub-title was “What Tourism Managers Need to Know”. A key initial step is to identify the current and potential managers and to obtain from them information on their current and predicted needs. Ideally, any indicators initiative (whether driven by government, academics, community, or the industry itself) will need to serve the key destination managers – and ideally have them as full partners from the outset. This is also true of the other stakeholders whose participation and agreement will be critical to the implementation and use of the information created.

Step 2. Use of Participatory Processes

The development of indicators is necessarily a participatory process. While the impetus may come from a local authority, from the community itself, the tourism operators or as a response to a specific proposal, early involvement of other government departments, the industry, its key allies, local stakeholders and community organizations, those who plan the assets and infrastructure critical to tourism, and those who will help define issues and sources of information for indicators is considered essential. The complexity of stakeholder groups, their interests and relationships, at the local level cannot be underestimated. Box 2.2 identifies some of the key participants who should be considered for any consultative process.

Gaining local participation

Those who know the destination most intimately tend to be those who live within or in close proximity to it. Local knowledge can be a key source of unique information on such factors as local use of resources, key traditions, and the values they hold most important regarding the destination. Local residents often will have clear ideas regarding the current situation and strong opinions on what is likely to be acceptable in the future. Their support and participation in providing information to assist in key issues identification and indicators selection is invaluable.

Key factors in obtaining constructive local participation include:

- Early contact with local groups, active individuals and those most likely to be affected by any changes;
- Provision of forums, meetings, discussion opportunities where all interested stakeholders can identify their interests and concerns;
- Provision of feedback in a clear form – showing participants that their input has been taken into consideration;
- Ongoing involvement of key players throughout the process (openness and transparency are essential).
Box 2.2 Potential stakeholders in tourism at local destinations

This is an indicative list – each destination will have its own unique groups or individuals with an interest in tourism or related aspects of the destination.

**Communities**

- Local community groups;
- Native and cultural groups;
- Traditional leaders;
- Private sector employees;
- Property and building owners (might live in the community or might be outsiders);
- Tenants.

**Public sector**

- Municipal authorities;
- Regional authorities (e.g., planning areas, conservation authorities, coastal zone, regional parks, authorities);
- National (and State, Province, County, Departments or equivalent) ministries responsible for tourism and its key assets;
- Other ministries and agencies in areas affecting tourism (e.g. transport, natural resources, environment, culture, infrastructure, planning, heath, etc);
- Agencies with an interest in the planning or maintenance of specific attractions (e.g., parks, protected areas, museums, marketplaces, cultural sites and events).

**Private sector**

- Tour operators and travel agents;
- Accommodation, restaurants and attractions, and their associations;
- Transportation and other service providers;
- Guides, interpreters and outfitters;
- Suppliers to the industry;
- Tourism and trade organizations;
- Business development organizations.

**NGOs**

- Environmental groups (in the destination and outside but with an interest);
- Conservation groups (e.g., wetlands, native species, parks, cultural heritage);
- Other interest groups (e.g., hunters, fishers, sports and adventure associations).

**Tourists**

- Organizations representing tourists’ interests at the point(s) of origin;
- International tourism bodies.

*Note: local knowledge is necessary to identify all stakeholders; anyone or any group who believe that they are involved or affected should be considered a stakeholder.*
An important point to keep in mind in any participatory process is that expectations may exceed the capacity of any organization to respond, and care needs to be taken to help participants understand that it may not be possible to completely satisfy everyone all the time. For instance, after all has been considered, your favourite indicator reflecting your concern for a specific environmental or social issue may not necessarily be included in the short list. A further caution is that indicators themselves do not solve problems, only help in greater understanding and provision of accurate information, which may lead to more effective solutions.

In seasonal destinations, like Norway’s Lofoten islands, it may be difficult to get all the stakeholders together for a consultation process, particularly off season, yet in season local operators may be too busy to participate.

**Institutional mechanisms for participatory processes**

In most tourism destinations there are many different governmental, semi-governmental and private bodies involved in the planning and management of the resources and programs affecting tourism and conditions at the destination. A challenge lies in bringing these agencies, organizations and firms together to participate in indicators development and use. In particular, local authorities, planners, and the tourism industry are key players.

In most destinations there are utilities, economic planning groups, hotel associations, transport organizations, unions or labour boards and organizations charged with the development or maintenance of key assets such as parks, beaches, or cultural sites. Any participatory process should recognize both the interest of such bodies, and also the constraints associated with their participation in public processes.

**Logistics**

In the past decade, much work has occurred using participatory processes in the development of tourism indicators and indicators for related environmental and social purposes. Experience has shown that there is probably an optimal level of consultation and participation, and that this is often difficult to predict in any one community or destination. Key factors are:

- **Timing**: Consultation processes that begin too early, before at least some direction or proposal is on the table, can cause participants to ask why they are there and why they are not told what is proposed; in contrast, timing that brings in participants late in the process risks the accusation that all has already been decided and that the opportunity to really influence what takes place has been missed. Optimal timing may also vary from culture to culture, or from community to community based on their varying interests and past history of interaction with authorities. A key consideration is the positioning of the indicators initiative relative to other initiatives, such as new developments, creation or review of regional, local or destination plans. Coordination with such events can be of direct benefit, showing both relevance and links to direct users.
### Box 2.3 Managing participatory processes

It is often presumed that tourism stakeholders are eager to become involved in destination monitoring. In reality, convincing people to participate, attend meetings or join committees is not always easy, nor is gaining their confidence and maintaining their interest. Key areas to consider include stakeholder analysis, stakeholder planning and stakeholder management.

The aim of stakeholder analysis is to establish the extent to which a particular group needs or wants to become involved in the project. This will depend on the degree to which tourism affects their professional and personal lives, their interests or those of their organisation, their understanding of monitoring and their available time to participate. A much broader group of stakeholders tends to be involved at the start of the indicator development process, to identify key issues, and a smaller, more specialised group is required for the collection of data, analysis of results and decisions regarding appropriate action. It may also be useful to establish an indicator committee or working group, made up of representatives from all the key stakeholder groups, to oversee the entire indicator development process and monitoring (see Samoa case p. 413). This gives the project greater continuity, cross-sectoral expertise and adds significant value to the work.

In stakeholder planning it is important to recognise that not all forms of participation are of equal worth. Collecting information from various sources is not the same as seeking advice; informing people is not the same as giving them decision-making powers. Individual responses given in privacy provide different information from those collected in a group setting. The appropriate level and type of participation will depend on factors such as scope of the project, phase of the work, cultural norms, experience of stakeholders, existing institutional frameworks and consultation processes, and logistical factors such as geography and communication technology. Decisions on these areas will need to be taken by the user-group or the advisory committee early on in the planning stages.

Different tools exist for managing stakeholders such as participatory rural appraisal, participatory action research, adaptive management and co-management. These processes encourage activities such as participant observation, workshops, seminars, focus groups, structured and semi-structured interviews, committees, advisory panels, community surveys and questionnaires. Because indicator development involves a number of different stages, it is likely that the whole suite of tools, rather than just one will be used during the process.

Participatory processes are complex, time-consuming and inherently unpredictable. They depend on good communication, transparency and patience, and some would argue that the technical nature of monitoring is better suited to a top down management style. However, importing indicators unconditionally will never result in the same awareness and understanding of the issues or the commitment required for long-term monitoring to be successful. The bottom line is that people are much more likely to value, use and react to indicators if they can relate to and have had a part in developing them.

- **Frequency**: Meetings or events are best tied to key decision points. If meetings are too seldom, participants may feel left out of the process. Too frequent meetings may cause participants to drop out due to excessive demands on their time or lack of visible progress between meetings or events;
- **Duration**: The participation process ideally has a long time span, from the first steps in defining the project or the need for planning through the plan development, and into implementation. Some of the most successful destination planning and management processes have incorporated consultation or participation into an ongoing process - where there is a form of advisory body or even co-management;
• **Size considerations:** Large groups can be very inclusive but the larger the group the less the capacity to involve all who wish to participate or to achieve consensus or even good discussion. One method can be to have large information meetings but smaller breakout groups, working groups or task groups to split off and work on specific issues. (See Box 2.3);

• **Consultation techniques:** The most traditional approach that has been used for indicators development has been through organized meetings with selected stakeholders. This is the most direct approach but also can be very time consuming and a significant user of resources, and may not be sufficiently inclusive and accessible to all stakeholders. Use the approach most likely to generate acceptance and engender a sense of ownership and/or group loyalty if at all possible.

Broad consultation processes like those cited above can also be very expensive and time consuming both for officials and participants. As a result, a number of new models for consultation have been developed, including increased use of mail consultation to complement meetings and open access to the process.

The use of modern technology, such as Internet and email, gives opportunity for a broader consultation, an easier process of inputs, enhanced dissemination and visibility of contributions and results. (See Box 2.4) As part of the preparatory conferences for the International Year of Ecotourism 2002, WTO organized an international web-conference, conducted through emails in order to facilitate access to stakeholders that could not attend the regional meetings. At the destination level, the WTO has been experimenting with an abbreviated workshop approach (See Box 2.5), which can be of considerable use to destinations and as a training tool - to help achieve significant progress towards indicators in a short time.

In contrast to nationwide consultation procedures, consultation can be simpler at the destination level, as the identity of most stakeholders may be well known, and access by the stakeholders to a small number of public or face-to-face meetings may be easier than for wider policy exercises. Even so, some use of mail or electronic input may make contact easier for those who are unable or unwilling to participate in public meetings or more formal procedures.

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**Box 2.4 Online consultation in Australia**

In Australia, through on-line consultation, a large number of stakeholders provided comments and position papers for the medium to long term strategy for the Tourism Industry in 2003 (Tourism White Paper). The list of organizations that participated in the consultation and their inputs are also made public in the website of the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources, together with the advanced strategy draft incorporating the different views. [www.tourism.gov.au](http://www.tourism.gov.au/)

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**Box 2.5 A participatory workshop approach for indicators development and training**

The WTO has adopted a participatory approach to indicators development and for the training workshops it organized between 1999 and 2001 for officials of its Member States. Access to local knowledge and the consideration by experts of the full range of values and risks to them, has become a cornerstone of the WTO approach to creating indicators of sustainable tourism. In this approach, a study is done employing a workshop approach to both assist in the consideration of indicators, and as a vehicle to expose participants to the indicators development process; encountering all of the issues, obstacles, and different opinions which make the development of indicators both interesting and at times difficult. This is a quick means to catalyze the identification of key issues and potential indicators, and to mobilize stakeholders. It also serves as a training ground for experts in indicators development.

**Workshop logistics**

A) *Site visits and presentations* by local officials and experts in order to familiarize participants with the study area. At the WTO workshops the participants (including both local and foreign
experts) were presented by facilitators and experts with key materials on the destination, its issues, and on the indicators development process. A field trip took the participants to the key areas of concern in the destination and showed them both the assets and potential changes envisioned. In most cases, presentations by local experts and some key stakeholders were made to workshop participants;

B) Participation in the definition of key risks and opportunities. After an initial introduction to the process, the attendees were divided into small working groups, each having both local and foreign representatives. Each group was first set the task of creating a long-list of issues (risks of opportunities) for the destination (e.g., loss of jobs, crowding of villages, impact on sensitive sites, short season, lack of funding for infrastructure, foreign control of industry etc.);

C) Participatory identification of priority issues. In small groups the long list of issues was deliberated and priorities established where information was useful and needed to respond to the risks and opportunities. The prior analytical work of the workshop consultants was added, where useful, to assist in these deliberations. A form of nominal group technique was used to select the key issue areas of concern for the active development of indicators by the working groups;

D) Indicator development. Each group was given a set of priority issue areas as a focus for the selection of potential indicators. The updated WTO criteria for indicator selection were used (see Step 8 Selection Procedures p.40). Each small group was tasked with assessing and fleshing out a set of potential indicators responding to the key issue areas - and doing an initial ranking using the evaluation worksheets. The presence of a wide range of knowledgeable local and other specialists assisted in the identification of potential information sources to power the indicators. The results from each group were then presented to the plenary for discussion;

E) Participation in the development of recommendations for next steps. The workshops use open participatory sessions to develop recommendations for follow up activities and the application of sustainability indicators at the study area, as well as at other similar destinations where appropriate. (For example the Kukljica sessions also suggested use of the process for other Croatian islands besides Ugljan and Pasman). Each of the participants was guided through the actual process of identification of indicators, faced with the problems of prioritization, and able to work through the practical process of choosing which indicators are most important to implement for the improved planning and management of the destination.

The process is as important as the result, both as a procedure for identifying concerns, and as a means to develop responses. Participants discuss the logistics of indicators for a specific destination, including the problems associated with data, participation, leadership, analysis etc - helping in the understanding of the compromises needed to make an indicators program work. While the relatively brief workshops are not intended as a substitute for the more thorough analysis of risks and areas of decision which the indicators are designed to serve, the workshops are an essential part of the indicators development process, and both a learning and decision-support tool. The broad range of participants in the case applications has provided a rich source of information and stimulated lively debate on both the issues and the indicators to be used. In several cases, it has been a catalyst for the partnerships necessary to carry the indicators process further in the destination, as well as for other building blocks towards sustainability for the destination. It has also stimulated interest in indicators use in other destinations in the host nation and the region.

(Based on WTO Workshop Report, Kukljica, Croatia 2001)
Participatory processes will vary in form and procedures from culture to culture. Use of open public participatory processes may not be appropriate in some cultures where there is a strong history of centralization of control or a tradition of decisions taken by elder groups or similar. Even so, some appropriate means to access the local and/or traditional knowledge in the identification of important issues and indicators and in other elements of the destination planning process is necessary.

The process of indicators development, from obtaining the information through to indicators development and agreement on implementation, can normally take several weeks to months, especially if it is integrated into a broader tourism planning and policy-making process. A focussed project, such as the destination workshops conducted by WTO, can concentrate much of the core work on issue identification, and identification of candidate indicators into a shorter period (typically from ten days to two weeks) involving several days of participatory workshops. The result of such short concentrated work can serve to accelerate the indicators development process, get enthusiastic local support, and provide a sound basis for subsequent work on implementation.

It can be very helpful to the process to create an ongoing indicator advisory group or working group that meets on a regular basis. This means that additional institutional memory is created, opportunities for exchange of information and learning are maintained throughout the project or program, and the group can act as a continuing impetus once the indicators have been developed.

Step 3. Identification of Tourism Assets and Risks

Where a formal planning process or strategy exists, the work already in place can be the point of departure for an issue scan regarding the destination. Where no plan or strategy exists, or where a strategy is partial or does not involve all key players, the early involvement of stakeholders is essential to help identify what is important. This step is central to the identification of the assets on which tourism is based, and the values which are associated with them by different stakeholders. The objective of this step is to have as clear an understanding as possible of what the key assets are in a destination, and which elements of them are valued by both the residents and the current or potential tourists.

Identifying the destination’s assets

What are the priority tourist use areas and current/potential attractions, such as beaches, historical sites, marketplaces, waterfalls, viewpoints, areas of natural interest, landscapes, wildlife, festivals, food, cultural experiences? This is a baseline inventory of the assets upon which tourism in the area is currently or potentially based. This can be an initial step: experience has shown that the participatory process can frequently reveal other assets or potentials for the destination. It should also cover the key assets that support the local community (e.g., forests, fish, game) whether or not these are currently seen as assets by the tourism industry. It should be noted that the definition of assets can differ among stakeholders and therefore the review should include all perspectives to the greatest extent possible.
Identification of key values

Exploration of the key values of all stakeholders is essential to determine which tourism assets are critical to the needs and expectations of both tourists and local residents. How sensitive are these to changing demands by the tourism industry and to the impacts of other changes that may alter their attractiveness to tourists or utility to the community? As well, how sensitive are the values of local residents to the changes which tourism can bring? This step can be accomplished through interviews as well as by reference to past studies or planning documents. It should be noted that the research in this phase may involve contacting a number of different agencies or non-governmental bodies, both local and in regional or national administrative centres, who may have published or unpublished material relevant to the site, plans relating to the destination or to particular assets, or new regulations, policies etc., which will address certain values. For example, a transportation agency may be planning to open a new route or restrict traffic on an existing route; a forestry department may be contemplating limits on use of the forest in peak season, etc. Such plans and actions show the values of the sector associated with use of the shared resources. They also help to identify plans that impinge upon current uses by others and upon their values.

Obtaining information on thresholds and system sensitivity

Integral to sustaining the economic, social and environmental assets of a destination is a recognition of the potential limits to use (or carrying capacity) of the destination. Past or current studies are often a good source. Hence, any information that can be obtained which documents the biophysical and social dimensions of sustainability for the destination is useful. Work done in these areas can assist in identifying the nature and extent of potential impacts of new developments or changes and can assist in identifying thresholds beyond which tourism may no longer be sustainable at that particular destination. Where there is no plan that has considered such stresses and possible responses, the indicators development process may itself be a form of initial survey which can help to identify these sensitivities. The objective of this step is to look at the potential impacts of changes or trends on the key assets and their associated values.

Fishermen's nets in Kerala, India: Traditional activities provide tourists with an experience, but values of small communities can be very sensitive to impacts of tourism.
Box 2.6 SWOT analysis

Before starting to select indicators, it is useful to assess a destination’s Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT). A SWOT analysis assesses tourism potential and helps managers to decide what type of indicators will be useful in monitoring trends and progress towards achieving the tourism goals of the destination. In other words, “What have we got, what do we want to do with it and how do we measure success?” A SWOT analysis should give a succinct picture of the destination’s assets and shortcomings and reveal the opportunities and challenges it faces. It will help clarify issues (see detailed discussion of issues in Part 3), and the types of indicators that will be valuable. It is important information which may help to generate consensus on which issues and risks are of greatest importance and to whom.

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<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Destination assets: local, complementary attractions, natural and cultural assets, infrastructure and support services;</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community support: active participation, common objectives;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Workforce: availability, skill levels;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Management capacity: skill levels, funding available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities</td>
<td>Economic opportunities: for businesses, employment;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Product and market opportunities: unique, authentic products, product-market match, niche markets;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community enhancement: socio-cultural benefits;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conservation: tourism's contribution to natural and cultural heritage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weaknesses</td>
<td>Lack of tourist appeal: few significant or unique tourism attractions, poor accessibility, lack of infrastructure;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No vision: uncertainties in direction, lack of understanding or cohesion in the destination community;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preparedness: lack of plans, training needs, funds, alternative priorities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats (and constraints)</td>
<td>Environmental impacts: disturbance of loss of habitat, increased use of resources, waste;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural degradation: daily lives, customs and practices disrupted;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poor quality: tourist dissatisfaction, lack of standards;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>External threats: regulations, travel security, environmental impacts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A SWOT analysis helps to clarify the risks and opportunities and can assist in discussion of which indicators are most likely to be of use to address the sustainability of the destination and its desired tourism.
Step 4. Long-Term Vision for a Destination

In workshops dealing with indicators development, it has become increasingly clear that knowing what the stakeholders wish to accomplish with respect to the tourism sector helps greatly in determining what is most important for a destination. This is central to determining which issues are considered most critical and therefore may require indicators. While a focus on indicators can contribute to discussions on destination futures, where a vision has already been developed, indicators ideally respond to key elements of the vision. These indicators may also be used as performance measures on the path to achieving this vision. Where there is no current agreed vision, plan or consensus on a desired future, the process of defining indicators can become the catalyst for a visioning process. The indicators development process, through its emphasis on broad participation, and definition of key issues, can lead to better definition of a long term vision, or at least to the clarification of stakeholders’ shared objectives. In practice, participatory sessions which focus on future visions for a destination can be helped by reference to key indicators. The pragmatic need to quantify and clarify, which is central to indicators definition, can be a significant aid to consensus on long and shorter term goals – forcing clarity on what is really desired (e.g., not just “more tourism”, but how much, when, of what type, and at what cost to other values important to the stakeholders?) This is very similar to and complementary to the setting of objectives, using the indicators to define target values. (See case of La Ronge Box 2.8).

Indicator Development Phase

This phase focuses on the definition of which indicators are important and can respond to the issues of greatest importance to the destination.

Step 5. Selection of Priority Issues and Policy Questions

The selection of indicators is directly related to the issues that are important in a destination. Therefore, a key step is the identification of the most important issues from the perspective of all stakeholders. The work done in Phase 1 provides the background needed for an informed selection of issues currently or potentially of importance to a destination and to its tourism. Using a participatory group approach if possible (or alternatively through a series of interviews with key players) priority issues and policy questions can be identified. The objective is to obtain consensus on a list of issues which are likely to be of greatest importance. This list of important issues becomes the checklist against which candidate indicators can be developed. (What is needed to respond to these issues?) If stakeholders are able to agree on the priority issues, they are likely to be more willing to use the indicators that address them and to assist in supporting the indicators implementation. The issues addressed later in this Guidebook (See Part 3) can be used as a reference point for the types of issues typically encountered; over 50 issues ranging from health to seasonality, water use, climate change, tourist satisfaction and competitiveness.
are examined and indicators suggested for each. While this menu can suggest issues each destination has its own unique mix of issues related to its own environmental, economic, social and administrative conditions. Reference to issues and indicators from other destinations with similar characteristics (for example the Coastal destinations, Mountains, and Small and Traditional Communities sections in Part 4) can also be of assistance as a catalyst for discussion.

**Achieving consensus on key issues**

A valuable tool to help destinations obtain agreement on which issues are important can be a participatory workshop, with a broad range of participants. In WTO workshops on indicator development, agreement is initially sought concerning the principal social, economic, cultural and ecological risks to the destination and to the tourism which it supports. It has been found in many cases that an initial focus on risks (and opportunities) is a good icebreaker, and helps get most issues and concerns on the table quickly. Where there is already an agreed vision (for example, where there has been a planning exercise that has defined desired future scenarios and a set of objectives for the destination) risks may be defined in terms of achievement of that vision. In practice, discussion focuses on the values and expectations that both tourists and local residents hold concerning the destination, and may reaffirm the vision, or add dimensions that may have been missed. Where there is no such plan or vision in place, the discussion becomes a de facto visioning exercise, identifying risks or opportunities related to the futures which all stakeholders (or some stakeholders) desire.

Issues may be both within the management purview of the tourism industry (e.g., control of waste from the industry), or beyond its ability to affect (e.g., climate change). The desired result of this step is an agreed list of key issues for which indicators would be useful for tourism managers to respond effectively to the most important risks. In practice, where there is no agreement on whether an issue should be on the list, it is recommended to keep it there for the next step, as discussion on how it can be measured often aids in clarification and may create understanding of why it should be considered a key issue, or not.

**Box 2.7 Prioritization of issues**

Nearly every attempt to create lists of indicators begins with a very long list. Often dozens of potential indicators will be suggested for each issue, and the process typically at some point may reach a list including hundreds of potentially interesting indicators. The challenge to organizers is to shorten the list. In the Samoa case, 270 possible indicators were identified in initial brainstorming, 57 made the cut for further investigation, and only 20 were eventually selected for initial monitoring. In the Beruwala workshops (WTO 2000), over 200 were suggested to respond to the key issues, and more than 50 were identified for further work, aimed at selection of about a dozen for initial monitoring. Similar experiences are reported from many other case applications. Most jurisdictions, despite creating long initial lists, end up with from 10 to 25 for practical implementation. (See also Box 2.10 How Many Indicators?)
One challenge in identifying key issues is to maintain a focus on the tourism sector and its interests. Consultations regarding indicators development show that sometimes issues or specific indicators of interest to a single stakeholder may be raised, and may be of great importance to the proponent but outside the realm of influence of the tourism sector or the destination. (e.g., opposing tax policies, keeping a school open in the destination, preventing urban sprawl, opposing genetically altered species etc.) While such issues may be raised, and could in some cases result in cooperation to address them, few will make the priority list for tourism indicators. The focus for indicators exercises is on what is important overall to the tourism sector and what it is likely to be able to manage or influence; and this is important to which issues (and indicators) are chosen for implementation. At the same time, a too narrow interpretation will also be insufficient because the future of the tourism industry is so closely linked to what else is happening in and to the destination.

Box 2.8 Clarifying issues through indicators

The definition of indicators demands precision. This precision can often help clarify issues, or even show that they are not real. In a workshop in northern Saskatchewan (Canada), hunting guides and ecotourism operators appeared to be in conflict over access to lakes in the region, each fearing that new rules would remove rights of access for them. The issue was access to desired lakes. Discussion on what they really wanted showed that neither wanted exclusive rights, that each would be satisfied with shared access as long as they were not on the same lakes at the same time, as those who want to view live animals and those who wish to shoot them do not share the same images. The discussion resulted in an accommodation where each has some access and both are accommodated. The discussion on issues and specific indicators (not just access, but how much, when, where, under what conditions?) helped not only to clarify but also to identify workable community level solutions.

(Tourism Conference: La Ronge Saskatchewan. 1999)

Step 6. Identification of Desired Indicators

This procedure normally involves the generation of a wish list of possible or candidate indicators developed to address each of the main issues and policy questions. Based on the risks and issues identified, a consultative procedure, or a designated group of experts can be used to define a list of possible indicators that might be of use in understanding the issues/risks, and in helping to manage or influence them. What are the sets of information that will allow managers at the destination and at the site specific level to understand the changes that may affect the key assets and the industry as a whole? Some of the suggested indicators may not be practical, but at this stage all potential indicators are noted. In practice, this list can initially be quite long, but provides a menu from which the best indicators can be selected. Subsequent steps are designed to help the indicators developers and the stakeholders sort or prioritize from this list through discussion.

Research and Organization
1. Definition/delineation of the destination.
2. Use of participatory processes.
3. Identification of tourism assets and risks.
4. Long-term vision for a destination.

Indicators Development
5. Selection of priority issues.
6. Identification of desired indicators
7. Inventory of data sources.
8. Selection procedures.

Implementation
10. Data collection and analysis.
11. Accountability, communication and reporting.
12. Monitoring and evaluation of indicators application.
Some of the most potentially useful indicators may be found not to be feasible due to technical, financial, staff or other constraints that impede the gathering or processing of data. Such indicators can be set aside for future development, as the indicators process is not fixed in time and constant improvement is always desirable. This step is one for which it is most important to use some form of consultative procedure.

In the workshops run by WTO, (see Box 2.5 on the WTO workshop approach) a small group process has been used, ideally with from 8 to 10 participants in each working group, led by a facilitator. It has been found most productive to have a mix of expertise in each discussion group, ranging from local officials and politicians, industry participants, academics, consultants with studies in the region, national-level officials, and experts from other countries.

In applied workshops, at least half a day has been needed for this step, with small groups reporting back to a larger plenary where the results are shared. Where there is an opportunity for a number of meetings, an alternative approach can be to have small working groups focusing on different issues, bringing their suggestions for indicators back to a larger more open group for deliberation.

There can be a range of processes employed in indicators identification. In some cases, a technical group is needed to deal with highly technical issues and to recommend appropriate measures which may support key indicators. In the case of Calvia, Spain for example (Calvia Local Agenda 21 see www.calvia.com ) the issues and objectives were developed through wide consultation with the local population, but for the indicators definition and evaluation steps a technical committee of experts was designated to come up with the specifications for each indicator. Processes that involve specialized working groups or technical subcommittees who will take issues away from the table and advance them can be very rewarding, and avoid burdening the non-technical stakeholders with excessive detail. The results of such work should, however, be brought back to the broader consultative process for their review and response.

**Step 7. Inventory of Data Sources**

Information is necessary to produce and maintain indicators. Indicator selection requires information on current and potential data sources. Two distinct but related basic approaches are in widespread use:

a) *A data-driven approach* which asks the question - what can we do with the data we have, or for what issues do we have data? (E.g. the France Aggregated Reporting case p. 382 can be characterized as largely data driven, building on a strong existing data presence and working to enlist destinations to follow a data template);

b) *An issue (and /or policy-driven) approach*, which asks the question - what issue or policy questions are most important, and can we obtain the data to address them? (The Kangaroo Island case, p. 391, Kukljica case p. 412 and Samoa case, p. 413 can be characterized as policy-driven).

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**Research and Organization**

1. Definition/delineation of the destination.
2. Use of participatory processes.
3. Identification of tourism assets and risks.
4. Long-term vision for a destination.

**Indicators Development**

5. Selection of priority issues.
6. Identification of desired indicators.

**7. Inventory of data sources**

8. Selection procedures.

**Implementation**

10. Data collection and analysis.
11. Accountability, communication and reporting.
12. Monitoring and evaluation of indicators application.
In practice, the process of indicator development addresses both questions, and is at best a pragmatic process - form of negotiation between what information is needed and what can be created or obtained now, and how can information sources be improved in the future. The table in Box 2.9 provides a comparison of these two approaches. In this Guidebook, examples of both types of procedures are shown.

### Box 2.9 Comparison of data-driven and issue/policy-driven indicators approaches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Data driven approach</th>
<th>Policy or issue driven approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Departure point</strong></td>
<td>Begin with data inventory.</td>
<td>Begin with needs analysis, identification of key goals and issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key question</strong></td>
<td>What can we do with the information we have?</td>
<td>What information do we need to respond to the issues?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indicators selection</strong></td>
<td>Based first on availability, then on application to needs and policy questions.</td>
<td>Based first on needs, then on what can be done to satisfy the needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strengths</strong></td>
<td>Uses existing information, can yield quick responses based on data in stock.</td>
<td>Focuses on what policy issues are most important. Can identify needs for new data or means to extract what is needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weaknesses</strong></td>
<td>May miss key issues because data is not available.</td>
<td>May identify needs which cannot realistically be served at the present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How to make it work</strong></td>
<td>Make sure that perspective is not limited by what is now available. Identify new needs for future data.</td>
<td>Make sure that a prioritization process is done – with practical considerations regarding data. Identify long term needs for data, set objectives and plans for developing data sources and capacity for processing them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Practical indicator development will involve trade-offs regarding both needs and capabilities; ideally an indicators exercise will contain elements of both approaches. The indicators development procedure suggested in this guidebook applies a combined approach, considering both policy priorities (issues) and feasibility of indicators (practical considerations of data collection and analysis). It therefore recommends:

- **Departure point:** Identification of priority policy issues;
- **When defining indicators,** analyses data sources in order to:
  - Build strongly on available data sources;
  - Identify data gaps;
  - Using alternative measurement methodologies for immediate needs, when data gathering exceeds current capacities. (e.g. approximate measures, see Box 2.11);
  - Set objectives for improving or developing data sources and processing capacities.
- **Monitor the application of indicators** and develop new indicators with improved measurement techniques if needed.
The identification of potential data sources, at least initially, can occur early in the procedure and act as a building block for the discussions. This is particularly useful where there is already an extensive data source – such as mature destinations that already have an extensive tourism data base and operating planning process. The discussion can then be framed in terms of how the existing data can best be used to address key issues.

For destinations where there may not be an existing data and monitoring program it may be most effective to defer identification of data sources until the identification of key issues is in place and a wish list of potential indicators has been created. Then the search for data can be focused on that which is needed to support the desired indicators. This stage is designed to create an initial list of potential sources of data which may be suitable to support indicators. This information is then brought to the table to help in the next step - the reduction of the long list to a shorter set of indicators for the destination. A further elaboration of the data occurs for those priority indicators selected in the next step.

**Step 8. Selection Procedures**

Which indicators are the ones that the destination will actually try to implement? The following selection procedure is suggested:

**Indicators rating criteria**

Five criteria are used in the evaluation of each indicator. It is recommended that this initial screening be done wherever possible in a participatory forum (or at least in small groups) to both obtain a range of knowledge to be applied to the selection, and to maintain transparency. This initial review can assist in reducing the wish list to a manageable scale, using the collective knowledge of participants. The subsequent process focuses on further refinement and elaboration of the indicators that initially appear to meet these criteria.

The criteria to be used are:

1. **Relevance** of the indicator to the selected issue. Does the indicator respond to the specific issue and provide information that will aid in its management? The ideal indicator will provide useful information when needed, which will make a difference to a decision affecting the sustainability of tourism and of the destination. It should also be noted that there can be many issues directly related to tourism that are not managed by the tourism sector directly: (e.g. issues of the management of energy, water, waste, communication and other infrastructure, which are responsibilities of other government departments and private companies). These may be very relevant to the tourism sector and require cooperation between the different sectors for resolution. Indicators may be needed to help guide joint response;

2. **Feasibility** of obtaining and analysing the needed information. How can the information be obtained? Is there an organization identified as data source? Is it already available or will it require special collection or extraction? To what extent is the data processed, how systematically and in what form is the data collected (e.g. is there an electronic database)? What are the staff and cost implications of data collecting and processing. What level of effort is likely to be needed to create...
and maintain the indicator? This criterion may be used in concert with relevance to address the question – is it worth the cost to obtain the benefit? At this stage, the assessment is in the form of a pre-scan (although as noted above, compilation of some knowledge of key sources and providers prior to this assessment is recommended as one of the initial steps in preparation). For more details see Evaluation of feasibility/implementation procedures under Phase 3, where the feasibility of practical implementation of those indicators chosen for potential implementation is done in detail;

3. **Credibility** of the information and reliability for users of the data. Is the information from a reputable and scientifically sound source? Is it considered objective? Will it be believed by users? Data, for example, on seawater cleanliness will have greater credibility if it is collected and analyzed by an independent institute than if it is collected and presented by the beach hotel association;

4. **Clarity** and understandability to users. If users receive the information, will they be able to understand it/act on it? Some good technical information may be very difficult to understand (e.g., parts per million of a toxic substance) unless the user has specialized knowledge. A more understandable indicator addressing this same issue may be percentage of days when the toxicity exceeds the legal limit. Note that it is frequently useful to portray information differently for different users. The same information may be needed in a technical form for a manager of a response program (when to close the beach) but may be better portrayed publicly in a more simple form (e.g., pollution exceeds tolerable standards);

5. **Comparability** over time and across jurisdictions or regions. Can the indicator be used reliably to show changes over time, relative to standards or benchmarks at the same destination, or relative to other destinations? This Guidebook provides examples of indicators in use in other destinations and addressing specific issues that may assist in applying this criterion. In some cases the data that supports the indicator has been never produced before, and the information generation might start with the newly defined indicator. In this case the continuity of the data generation should be ensured (e.g., if tourists’ satisfaction survey is gathered for the first time, it is important to allocate resources for periodic surveys in the future that would generate trends over time). In many cases, because all destinations are unique, the best benchmarks are changes over time in the same locality.

**A template is provided for use at this stage in the indicators evaluation.** See the Indicators Selection Worksheet (Annex D); this will be useful in the initial evaluation process.

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**Box 2.10 How many indicators?**

There is clearly no ideal number of indicators. While any attempt to cover all aspects of sustainable tourism with only a few indicators would be unrealistic, a list of more than 100 indicators would both be impractical and mean that individual indicators could be buried. The challenge is to respond to all significant issues facing the destination with the minimum number of indicators possible. If only economic indicators are chosen, social or environmental issues may receive scant attention.

Too many indicators can overwhelm users with too much information and can also overextend resources to support them. In initial working lists, the potential numbers of indicators which have been put forward by stakeholders can be in the hundreds (e.g., See case studies of Samoa, p. 413 and the Balearics p. 345). Most practitioners agree that it is essential to prioritize issues and the indicators that correspond to them to help create a shorter list. A central challenge is to get to an agreed shorter list without important gaps.
The number of indicators will depend on the size of the destination, the number of critical issues, the interests of the user group, the information and the resources available to track and report on the indicators. In the UK, the Department of Culture, Media Sport were commissioned to produce the smallest set of indicators possible to measure sustainable tourism, and ended up with 21. The British Resorts Association suggests 12 to be about the right number of indicators for measuring tourism’s impacts and good management practice amongst local authorities. In the case of Samoa, 20 indicators were developed for destination monitoring from an initial list of 270, in Kangaroo Island, South Australia 17 indicators were selected to monitor and manage tourism on the island. In short, most practitioners agree 12-24 indicators are optimal, and a central challenge in the indicators development process is to end up with consensus on a short list without important gaps. Following this approach, in this book Baseline issues and the responding Baseline indicators (p. 244) were selected from the complete list of over 50 issues and some several hundred possible indicators which are a menu of potential measures. The baseline list of issues and indicators provided in Part 3 of this book is one point of departure. It suggests a range of indicators that cover social, economic and environmental issues likely to be found in most destinations. The addition of a few others central to the characteristics of a particular destination is also important. For example, in Peninsula Valdes, Argentina, it was critical to measure the numbers of whales in the bay - the main tourism asset, along with the water supply and usage - a critical resource issue facing tourism in this semi-desert environment.

It should also be noted that different user groups will have different needs with regards to the number of indicators they require. Those who manage a destination, or who are responsible for its planning for example, may need a more extensive or detailed set than potential visitors making holiday plans. Individual stakeholders may use their own specific indicators for their own purposes (e.g., management of a particular property or resource). The more detailed indicators which they use may not be adopted for a destination level tourism indicators list, but are nonetheless useful. During discussions of ‘how many indicators’ it is therefore important that decision-makers do not sacrifice key issues for the sake of the target number of indicators.

The answer to how many indicators are required is therefore “enough” to respond to the agreed priority issues.

In a significant percentage of cases the desired indicators will not be easy to produce. This can occur because the sources of information are widely dispersed (e.g., every guide or outfitter providing services in a region), because there is no jurisdiction with authority to gather the information, or where the cost of data collection may be prohibitive. This selection procedure forces active and participatory comparison of what is desired with what is practical, often causing discussion of substitutes that may be easier to support, given the current availability of information. (See Box 2.11 on approximate data p. 45) This process also has the benefit of stimulating a discussion of what is not practical (at least right now) with the potential to stimulate future implementation. The use of a participatory process for this stage can be productive, particularly with participation from the key stakeholders and potential data providers.

It is suggested that the identification of priority indicators be done in discussion groups charged with assessing each candidate indicator relative to the five criteria. A template for this step, Indicator Selection and Development Worksheet are provided in Annex C, (p. 485), which are useful to focus discussion at this point; the same template, will act as worksheet for elaboration of those indicators that are chosen for implementation. Evaluators working in discussion groups are also advised to raise the question of the long and short term utility of the indicators. “Who will use it and for what purpose?” In addition, as it is unlikely that all indicators recommended will be amenable to immediate implementation, indicators can also be screened relative to urgency of need. “Is it needed now, or can it wait until the next census or season?” This can assist in the establishment of priorities for action on
implementation. In some of the WTO workshop applications, a “five star” rating system has been used to identify those indicators that are most urgently needed to address important issues. While this approach is necessarily subjective, it has served as a means to highlight which of the issues and related indicators are seen by the evaluators (or public consultation procedures) as having the highest priority for immediate implementation. This approach can be of use where choices need to be made of which indicators to implement first.

How many pilot whales are there? How likely is a tourist to see a whale on a tour? Who will count them and how will the information be reported? For Pleasant Bay Nova Scotia Canada, these may be the most important indicators of sustainability for its most important tourist product.

**Implementation Phase**

The goal of this phase is to take the indicators defined in the first two phases and put them into operation in the destination. Ideally this occurs as part of a continuing monitoring program supporting sustainable development for the destination and its tourism.

**Step 9. Evaluation of Feasibility / Implementation procedures**

In this step, each of the selected indicators is further elaborated and re-evaluated using a procedure that will clearly identify:

- Specific source(s) of the data to be used to construct the indicator;
- Specific characteristics of the data - level of detail (data fields, number of integers, means of provision (paper, digital etc), tabular formats;
- Frequency of collection of the data, (will it be needed/ available every five years, annually, quarterly, monthly, weekly, on line in real time?);
- Time lags between gathering and availability. Data is sometimes held for some time until an official publication is released containing those data and other data sets which may have different periodicity of production. (e.g. while energy data may be collected in real time by metering, the output of that data may only be done monthly and may be produced for individual sectors or regions annually);
• **Considerations of access and confidentiality.** Will the data be made directly available in raw form so that any analysis can be done by the indicators group, or is it protected so that only aggregated outputs can be obtained? Will early access be given to the indicators production group to data which is new, or will any analysis have to wait until data is officially published?

• **Reporting units, validity and accuracy concerns** at different scales. Is data available for the desired scale (e.g., each hotel, or specific communities) or is it available only for fixed reporting units (e.g., counties, towns, districts)? If so, are these suitable for use? What would it cost to have data gathered or output on different criteria? Is data complete or done on a sampling basis? If so, is the data sufficiently representative to allow valid use at a local scale? (e.g., a 10% sample of all hotel workers);

• **Responsibility for provision of data,** data analysis, and any additional manipulation. Who will extract the data, who will create tables, and who will validate or verify the data?

• **Costs and technical requirements** of data gathering and analysis. Are the needed data readily available, can data be derived from existing measuring processes, or does it have to be collected specifically? Is there technology, trained staff to compile and process existing data or to gather new data, or new techniques and technology which needs to be introduced, staff needing training, or experts who need to be hired for it?

Completion of the above review procedure should result in agreement on the process for creation and support for each selected indicator. A worksheet template is provided to assist in this process (See Annex C 2, p. 485).

**Data availability**

Both primary data sources (direct collection of data through measurement, surveys) and secondary sources (data derived from existing information) need to be considered. See the following data collection section for greater detail on collection procedures. Direct data collection tends to be costly, so existing sources should normally be considered first. Data assessment can be done through a data mapping process, which matches needs to available sources, followed by an assessment of gaps. (See for example the process used in the EEA case p. 377).
Box 2.11 Approximate measures

In some cases a measurement that does not provide precise data but indicates approximately the seriousness of an issue can be useful, especially if there are no other viable options. These are sometimes also called proxy measures.

For example, the most precise method to monitor seawater quality at beaches is through periodic laboratory tests that cover such elements as heavy metal content, coliforms, turbidity, biological oxygen demand (BOD) or chemical oxygen demand (COD), etc. However, if at certain destinations lab analysis is impossible due to lack or high cost of skilled personnel or equipment, or long distances to the nearest laboratory, there are alternative indicators that can be used as surrogates to give an idea of the existence and level of problems:

- Number and type of skin irritations or other cases caused by seawater, reported or treated;
- Complaints about seawater quality registered at local authorities or beach facilities;
- Incidents of algae growth or excessive turbidity reported to local officials;
- Depletion of fish stocks, or changes in success rates for fishermen.

These measures are approximate because not all cases are reported or registered; furthermore tourists’ reactions are individual and subjective. Nevertheless significant changes in these measures can be signals of emerging problems with water quality - and may be the stimulus for the initiation of the scientific tests noted above.

Experience with the development of indicators for the tourism sector has shown that the data needed to calculate many indicators may be obtained from existing data sources; this information is often collected by agencies such as utilities, resource or sectoral departments of government for their own purposes. Frequently data can be used directly, because the agency (e.g., an energy utility measuring electricity use by sector for its own reporting or billing purposes) has already done some simple analysis that can be used to separate out parts of the tourism industry. In other cases, discussions may be needed with the potential data provider to obtain data which breaks out the factors of interest to the tourism sector (how many of the park users are local and how many are tourists?) or to provide data re-aggregated for the desired use (e.g., water use calculated for the peak tourist season). It may also be necessary to make arrangements with the data provider to collect new variables that may allow analysis relative to tourist sector needs (e.g., can we have the information collected on amount of seashore developed collected in a way which separates residential properties from those built for tourist use?)

It should be noted that this is done essentially as a negotiation or coordination process with the potential data provider. In practice, it may be strategic to try to create a data alliance, where the supplier obtains some advantage from their provision of data (such as access to other data, use of analyzed results, and integration of their data with other data) as compensation.

Refinement of key indicators

Based on the detailed evaluation of each candidate indicator and the findings regarding actual acquisition of the needed data, it can prove necessary to revisit the indicator and make changes to facilitate implementation. This may entail compromise, to accommodate the logistics of data collection and availability. The questions asked at this step address the
possibility of working with existing data (e.g., data available on a three year cycle can be sufficient to create a useful indicator) as a substitute for more expensive data gathering (e.g., the desired annual collection and reporting). Can we work with the existing data grouped by sector, or is it necessary to undertake re-aggregation of the original data to break out specific places or types of enterprise?

This is the point of decision regarding the actual form and delivery of the indicator and indicators program and will necessarily involve those who will lead implementation of the program.

**Step 10. Data Collection and Analysis**

**Data collection procedures**

This section provides advice and considerations to be addressed in the actual data collection and management associated with production of indicators. The form in which the indicator will be used and how it will be calculated can greatly affect the collection procedure. This step builds on the initial assessment process, where some consideration of the potential form of the indicator has occurred. It may already have been decided that the most suitable indicator is not wholly quantitative, but rather a data-based classification. (e.g., not arithmetic mean of average price of room sales but % of rooms sold at within 10% of rack rate). In some cases, it will be clear that new data must be collected and that this may have to involve some form of sampling process as it would not be feasible to cover all tourists or all restaurants to collect comprehensive data. It should be noted as well, that not all indicators will necessarily be quantitative - and that qualitative (e.g., rates four on a 1-5 scale) semi-quantitative information (e.g., % of beaches meeting the Blue Flag standard), ordinal data (e.g., rank of destination on exit survey relative to other destinations) or even simple yes/no information (does the destination have a formal plan?) can be of use in some circumstances.

For each indicator it is essential to clearly document the specific means to be used to obtain information. Typical procedures include:

- Use of existing data being collected by the tourism sector or by others (e.g., direct use of data from the census, industry statistics, traffic counts or utility records);
- Extraction and manipulation of data from existing sources (often similar sources to above but which require additional effort to extract, integrate or re-assemble);

**Box 2.12 What do decision-makers really need?**

While it may be desirable to have good, detailed scientific data, it may not always be necessary. A recent indicators study of a beach, which was apparently eroding rapidly away and imperilling hotel foundations as well as transport infrastructure, found that traditional air photo, satellite or even historical survey data was not available for reasons of national security. While an independent survey might provide detailed data on beach erosion at considerable cost, the practical solution was simply to set up measuring posts at a dozen key coastal points, and have the distance to the sea measured each month by a local college science class. For the purposes (and detail) needed to support decisions on remedial action, these data were sufficient, and nearly without cost.

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• Creation of new comprehensive data (e.g., beginning a new process to monitor tourist stays and expenditures by tourist enterprises on a monthly basis by direct contact with each enterprise in the destination);

• Creation of sample data (e.g., establishing an exit survey of a percentage of tourists from the region to query their behaviours or attitudes). This may include methods such as sampling, use of questionnaire instruments, and extraction of data from existing statistical sources. Note: model questionnaires appropriate for exit surveys and resident surveys are provided to assist – see Annex C.

For an applied example of new data collection on physical impacts of tourism see the Yacutinga, Argentina case (p. 453).

It is often useful to consider the involvement of other administrations or organizations in the collection or provision of data, particularly where there are shared or complementary goals (e.g., the transportation ministry may also want data on tourist travel behaviour or use of access roads). The limits and cautions associated with the use of such data sets (e.g. comprehensiveness, validity, definition of survey frame, confidence limits, and representativeness) should be formally evaluated at this point, in conjunction with the potential data providers. (A template is provided to assist in these evaluations Annex C p. 485) Indicators developers using survey data are encouraged to use a good statistical or sampling manual to help identify the limits of data and its use.

A good practical website on this subject is that from Statistics Canada (http://www.statcan.ca/english/edu/power/ch13/first13.htm) which provides support and examples of use of various data sets including that obtained through sampling procedures.

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**Box 2.13 Iguazu Forest Natural Reserve: Participation in data collection**

The active participation of stakeholders in data collection is an effective way to obtain information, particularly where financial resources are an issue. The participation of tourism guides who operate on the routes inside the Iguazu Natural Forest Reserve, situated in the international tourist destination of Iguazu Falls, is an example of participation in data collection. Iguazu Forest is a private reserve, created in 1999, inside the Port Peninsula forest reserve in the northeast of Misiones province. It is administered by the Argentine Government, where 16,000 hectares of paranaense forest adjacent to Iguazu National Park are protected.

The opening of the forest reserve to different economic activities, in addition to traditional sustainable forest extraction, favoured the creation of an ecotourism project, based on sustainability. It started as a result of growing awareness of sustainable tourism in the local private sector (see Yacutinga Lodge case p. 453) Among the routes and products that were organized, the interpretive circuits through the forest have been the most important. Supporting the main attraction of the reserve: the observation of wild fauna and flora. Identifying the best places for observation of fauna in the reserve was the first step. To satisfy this need, and with the complementary objective of obtaining information that provided data of interest for the Ecological Center for Subtropical Research (CIES), a registration system for the fauna observed was established, to be supported by all those using the reserve. A registration form was provided for any single observation of wild fauna designed to be simple and easy to complete.

The data collection procedure was organized in the following way:

• All tourism vehicles circulating inside the reserve would have to complete a registration form;

• Training was provided to all those involved in filling in the forms;

• As a way to expand participation and to generate added value for the tour, tourists were encouraged to participate in completing the forms;
Everyday, at the end of a tour, all completed forms would be delivered to the operations head office that entered the data in data files;

Monthly calculation of fauna observation results;

Location of these results on a map of the reserve, and identification of sites with better conditions for fauna observation.

The information contained in the registration form was the following:

• Popular name and scientific name (this was completed in office) of the sighted animal;
• Day and hour of observation;
• Place of observation by path/trail (points of reference had been established by circuit);
• Number of individuals observed, by sex and by approximate age (where easily identifiable);
• Number of the persons that carried out the observation (visitors, employees and tour guides of the reserve);
• Type of animal activity at the moment of observation;
• Climatic conditions at the moment of observation: intensity of the sun, (sun exposure) general temperature (observed without use of thermometer) etc.

This way of data collection helped identify places of greater concentration of attractive or interesting fauna for the visits. The information collected on the activity, information on the sex and the possible age of the animal observed, contributed useful information for subsequent management of the species observed in each habitat. Also the number of observations per day, per single circuit or as a whole, according to seasonality and climatic conditions (season of the year and time of day) and trends could be calculated with the data collected. Though the system is not necessarily fully scientific in application, the simple fact of its implementation generated indicators with multiple benefits.

Besides being a constant source of information supporting sustainable management providing monitoring of key indicators on every circuit (attractiveness of the sites/circuits for photographic safaris; number of observations by species; number of babies or young individuals observed; number of individuals in the group etc), the collecting activity caused an increase of awareness in the local community involved in the project, on the value and the importance of fauna both from economic and ecological perspectives.

In spite of the obvious benefits, there was a problem with regularity of the data collection, and this affected the utility of the indicators. Despite this, the program is considered a success.

Further information: Charles Irala, Director Aguas Grandes, Iguazú Forest Natural Reserve. www.aguasgrandes.com

Where data from other organizations is used, the same questions regarding data quality and applicability should be asked. (e.g., Is this data on all hotels, or just a sample? If it is a sample, how many were sampled, and how many of these were located in the defined destination? How were respondents selected? Did all reply? If any respondents did not reply, was substitution done, and on what basis?)

The methodology to be used to calculate each indicator should be specified. This becomes the formula to be used consistently to calculate the indicator and to allow changes to be measured over time. As noted in the introductory section of this report, there are many forms of indicators, and not all indicators will be numeric, although each will be designed in a way to show when changes have occurred.
Remember that indicators will not all be fully quantitative; they can be any of:

- **Quantitative**: (e.g., litres of water consumed per tourist – allowing actual calculation of changes in volume consumed – 2 litres per tourist more this year than last);
- **Qualitative**: (e.g.: percentage of tourists who agree that the destination is clean – but which can also yield the ability to show change numerically – six percent increase in the percentage who consider the destination clean relative to five years ago);
- **Normative**: (e.g.: Number of beaches meeting Blue Flag Standard – allowing measurement of change in % which meet the standard);
- **Descriptive**: (e.g.: Site has environmental plan – Yes/No. (This answer can change over time and can also allow aggregation to show % of sites with such plans).

**Box 2.14 Calculation of tourist density**

The density of tourist activity has been used as an indicator applied to intensively used sites from Thailand to the Balearics to Argentina. Density has been described per square metre, per linear metre of coastline, relative to actual use numbers and to potential numbers who could use the site. The most frequently used indicator when applied to beaches has been number of actual tourists per square metre of beach at peak use.

Use of this definition requires:

- Calculation of the site (beach) area – considering how much is open to use as in many littorals significant parts may be privately managed. (solution: calculate both, including and excluding this area – resulting in two different indicators - overall density and density in public areas);
- Measuring number of tourists on the beach. (Note: this is easiest for beaches with controlled entry. Otherwise do counts from photos to calculate density – for large beaches, a sampling process may be sufficient);
- For controlled sites, dividing numbers by beach area. For non-controlled sites extrapolating counts to entire area.

Issues to be considered: do we include the adjacent service area, the water out to a defined depth? All these need to be clearly stated.

(Note: most applications have not included the water but consider the services which are on the beach to be part of the beach area for calculation).
Step 11. Accountability, and Communication and Reporting

Because the purpose of indicators is to be of use in decision making and communication, attention is needed regarding the specific means to be used for regular reporting to stakeholders, the public, and to specific decision-makers whom the indicators are designed to influence. Ideally, the intended use, user, format(s) and presentation have been discussed in the decision on which indicators are likely to be most useful.

Note: if the actual use of the indicator is still questionable at this point, the deliberations may result in returning to the earlier analytical procedures or may even cause reconsideration of whether this is still a useful indicator.

The key to implementation is commitment. Ideally the indicators become part of a planning process for the destination - helping to define visitors going to the beach relative to % of all other groups), it can sometimes be useful to employ more sophisticated analytical techniques such as derived indicators or composite indices to address issues. Nevertheless, it is usually better to portray the results as simply as possible. For example, the formula used to determine whether a beach deserves a Blue Flag is relatively complex, involving several different tests which must be passed. (See Box 4.2 p. 253) But the key indicator for most users is whether or not a beach has a Blue Flag, or what percentage of the beaches in the destination has Blue Flags.

Wherever possible, developers of indicators should consider the needs of the potential user (in this case potential tourists or operators) and portray the indicator in terms most accessible to them. Similarly, use of a simple indicator such as percentage of seacoast which is protected as parkland is in itself a meaningful indicator to potential visitors, but the percentage change in this in the last decade may be a more useful indicator to the planning or environmentalist community. It is also useful to consider graphic presentation of indicators (trend lines, pie charts etc.) for some uses. The industry is very familiar with the use of such symbolic indicators as “five stars”, “three knives and forks” or “first class” to portray to the public the results of complex classification procedures.

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what is important and ultimately used to develop performance measures for the planning and management of the destination. They also enter the public domain, and become a source of knowledge for the residents, tourists and managers regarding what is being done to sustain what is most important to the future of the destination. See the section 5.5 on Reporting and Accountability (p. 312).

Examples exist of effective communication of indicators in ways which reinforce the public accountability of authorities for the sustainability of communities and regions. To date, most of these have come from other social, economic, and environmental constituencies and authorities who have begun to report regularly on such varied issues as air quality, health sector performance, employment, crime, or state of the currency (these are all critical to the sustainability of tourism).

Box 2.16: Indicators make a difference - When actually used

Indicators can make a real difference to the decision process particularly when the results of indicators are used publicly; they become part of the understanding of what is important, and can be a catalyst for action. When environmental data was first publicized in North America and Europe, it became the impetus for environmental movements, political action, and much of the legislation and regulation now in place. Now, countries from China to Mexico, from India to South Africa have regular data on key indicators which are important to tourism – such as air quality, noise, crimes against tourists, and tourist arrivals frequently in the press. China publishes air quality regularly for most major cities. These data both show concern, and ultimately portray progress on such issues.

Indicators can make a difference in three main ways: through the information they generate; the partnerships they create; and the action they produce. Indicators start to make a difference even before they are fully developed as new concepts are explored and lessons learned. During the indicator development process, information is generated through discussion, consultation and appropriate use of publicity, web sites, regular progress reports, and press releases. By participating in indicator development, stakeholders have the opportunity to consider what is important to them and to re-evaluate the impact of tourism on their lives and their community. This often results in issues such as the need for greater composting of biodegradable wastes and the need to provide tourists with information about village protocol, being brought to the closer attention of hoteliers, tour operators, NGOs, tourists and the general public.

During the monitoring process partnerships are developed and many non-tourism bodies will necessarily become involved and learn about how tourism impacts on their area of work. Involving a wide spectrum of government, non-government and private sector groups will improve linkages and cooperation between agencies, allowing partnerships to develop and generating greater cross-sectoral understanding of sustainable tourism. The partnerships can then assist tourism authorities to implement cross-sectoral projects such as the upgrading of airport or waterfront facilities or to control impacts through planning legislation.

Action taken as a result of monitoring is perhaps the most obvious difference indicators can make. What has changed or occurred as a result of the indicator monitoring? What actions have been taken in pursuit of more sustainable tourism? Projects might include new planning legislation, training workshops for hoteliers, the preparation of a new visitor survey, a green award for sustainable tourism operations or a manual for tour guides.

In short, indicators make a difference not only through the information they provide but also through the partnerships and actions that result from their development. The question then becomes not so much ‘do indicators make a difference’ but how can the information, partnerships and action that indicators generate be used most effectively to guide destinations towards a more sustainable future.
Despite the growing work on indicators at all levels, there are few examples of indicators developed by or pertaining expressly to the sustainability of the tourism industry that have received similar public acceptance and use as those in use by other sectors. The publicity given to the negative effects of some world events (e.g., SARS effects on tourism in Beijing, Hong Kong or Toronto, the impact of terrorism on global tourism or 9/11 on behaviour of outbound US tourists) has begun to change this, and to highlight the importance and linkage of tourism to what occurs elsewhere and to other sectors.

The WTO issues statistics on international tourist arrivals and revenues globally and regionally, which are widely used as an indicator of both importance of tourism as an economic sector and a monitor of changes related to tourism at a global scale.

It is important to clearly identify who is responsible for the management of an indicators program and accountable for its completion and continuation. While the local planning authority is the most frequent responsible agency, the role can also be carried out by stakeholders of the tourism industry, by a non-governmental organization or academic institute, although the cooperation and support of the local authority is critical, and participation by all of these organizations is desirable.

It should be noted that indicators that are collected for specific destinations can be aggregated for regional and national reports (See the France Aggregated Reporting case p. 382) and the EU case (p. 377) for examples). Often tabular reports are used to show the relative values of different destinations, urban centres or districts relative to certain indicators. Another effective means of reporting and portrayal is by maps, showing in different colours the value of selected indicators (e.g., total tourist numbers, or ratio of tourists to residents in the geographic unit) for all of the different jurisdictions or tourist areas. For this to be most useful, the same approach must be followed in collection and interpretation of the data for each of the mapped areas. It should be noted that for some jurisdictions this can be difficult as spatial data units may vary greatly in size, providing a challenge in interpreting the information. Despite these issues, colourful mapped data can be a real aid in displaying important trends, regional anomalies and hot spots. Users will normally refer immediately to the status of their own destination relative to others, to competitors, or to the national mean. (See Box 6.26 Tourist Density in French Municipalities (p. 385) for an example that visually portrays tourism data for all of France).

**Box 2.17 Aggregate national reports**

Indicators can be used at many scales. Some indicators are used primarily at the national scale (e.g. contribution of tourism to GNP, total arrivals, total jobs in tourism). Other indicators are gathered at specific destinations or for local jurisdictions. When aggregated, such indicators can be very revealing of national trends, anomalies (area where the most is spent by tourists, area where the least is spent), highlighting the location of specific issues (the data unit where the average occupancy of hotel rooms is the lowest, or the wages received by tourism sector employees is lower than the national average). The example of how regional indicators have been developed and used by France is elaborated in the case study: Aggregated national reports: the case of France which delineates how regional indicators are used to show issues and to measure sustainability at the national level. (See France case p. 382).

**Step 12. Monitoring and Evaluation of Indicators Application**

Indicators are not meant to be a one-time exercise. Regular review is required both to see whether the information is indeed making a difference to users and helping solve key problems and also to determine whether the issues have changed. Periodic review of indicator applications can lead to redesign and redirection of elements of an indicators program. As was noted in Part 1, indicators are intended to be a central component of a planning and management process. As the issues which
destination managers must address change, so do their needs for indicators. With use, it will become clear which indicators are serving the purpose well, and which will need to be updated or even replaced. While there is certainly a strong reason to retain indicators, as they are likely to become more useful over time as the record becomes longer, it is still worthwhile to revisit indicators every few years seeking improvement.

The indicators development process is the first step in providing ongoing information that will improve decisions, and build collaboration to deal with the principal issues of the destination. Once identified and implemented, a monitoring regime must be kept in place to gauge success or failure in managing tourism at a destination in ways that continue to be sustainable. In particular, it is useful to set defined targets as part of a planning process. Indicators can then be the vehicle by which changes can be compared to the targets.

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WTO consultative group visit castle site as part of field trip in Ugljan Island, Croatia. The field visits to key assets and problem areas and on-site meetings with local stakeholders are part of the participatory approach to workshops on indicators.
Box 2.18 Indicators re-evaluation checklist

1. Are the indicators being used - by whom and how?
2. Which indicators are not being used?
3. Do the users find the current set useful?
4. Do users now have other needs?
5. Are there new potential users?
6. Are the indicators in the right form, or are other output forms now needed?
7. Are there new means to collect or analyze data for the indicators which might make production easier or more efficient?
8. Are there new issues which have arisen and which require indicators?
9. Is information now available which could permit indicators which were too difficult to produce, but which were seen as important, to be added?
10. Is there evidence of outcomes which have been influenced by indicators use?
11. What are the barriers, if any, which have prevented optimal use of the indicators?

This is a simple checklist - a more formal evaluation framework can be used, likely in conjunction with a broader plan or policy review exercise. (See template for re-evaluation Annex C 4 p. 490).

This process is critical to sustainable tourism management, but because it requires an ongoing commitment of resources, it can be difficult to maintain over the long-term. Establishment of the ongoing commitment and operational process needs to be both acknowledged and ideally clearly addressed during the indicators development process. Monitoring systems need to be put in place to repeatedly gather and disseminate the priority indicators to those who need to know the information. Similarly, it is useful to monitor the overall process itself, to ascertain whether the right information is getting to the right people, and ultimately whether tourism at the destination is more sustainable as a result. Ultimately, indicators become performance measures of progress towards the sustainable development of the destination. The review of indicators is ideally done as part of the periodic review of plans and strategies as a key building block for continuous improvement of the overall destination planning and management process.

2.2 Use of Other Sections of the Guidebook within this Process

This part of the Guidebook has provided a twelve step process that can guide destinations towards definition of their own issues, and identification of which indicators are likely to be of greatest use in addressing these issues. The other sections of this book supplement this process, and are designed to provide examples of how indicators have been used to address a number of issues most likely to be encountered by destination managers. The issues and indicators in these sections should not dictate which are to be chosen for any single destination, but should serve as a menu for destinations and with ideas to create their own indicators. In Part 4 a selection of destinations is examined in detail to illustrate how specific indicators can be applied. The several case studies Part 6 help clarify which issues have proven important in different types of tourism destinations and what procedures and techniques have been used in indicators applications. This may help a destination to choose which issues to consider and provide examples of which indicators have proven useful to others. Ultimately, the indicators chosen by each destination will be its own, and will be the most useful to respond to the real issues it faces on the path to sustainability.