CASTWATER A4.6
EVALUATION REPORT ON USABILITY, EFFECTIVENESS AND TRANSFERABILITY OF THE ONLINE MONITORNG TOOL

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THE ONLINE MONITORNG TOOL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1   INTRODUCTION

The CASTWATER project aims to improve and support sustainable tourism policies and practices for water efficiency in coastal areas. The project contributes to the transnational efforts in fostering sustainable tourism water management, seeking to decrease the adverse impact of tourism activities on the natural environment, and promoting resource efficiency.

The development of online monitoring tool is one of the activities under the project that is aiming to contribute to the achievement of the project's overall objective for support of the sustainable tourism water management in the Mediterranean coastal areas. The tool provides data for future opportunities for two types of stakeholders, the business and the public administration, to proactively initiate measures for improvement of the sustainable water management in the region.

1.1   The CASTWATER online monitoring tool

The online monitoring tool is developed under the project with two main objectives:

1. To enable small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the tourism sector to self-evaluate their performance in water efficiency and management, and to understand what they can do further to promote water efficiency in their establishment and

2. To allow the public authorities to measure the degree of good governance and the effectiveness of water-tourism policies and to improve sustainable water management, especially at regional and local level.

The tool is designed to be available for use and to be field-tested by SMEs operating in 7 Mediterranean countries, as depicted in the following figure.

The tool consists of 2 sections.

1) **Self-assessment**

The section is designed for the SMEs from the Mediterranean region. The SMEs are facilitated to assess their water efficiency performance and to compare their results with the other users' results and as well as to be provided with recommendations for necessary improvements such as actions and investments. The users are directly self-assessed when they complete the uploading of data in the tool.

2) **Monitoring**

The section is designed for the public authorities from the Mediterranean region. Public authorities are able to measure the effectiveness of the existing policies for water management systems proper functioning in terms of policy framework, territorial context and water availability, quality and environmental health. The assessment is based on generated indicators using data from the SMEs answers received under the self-assessment section.

1.2 Development, field-testing and evaluation of the CASTWATER online monitoring tool

The evaluation process is the final stage of a series of activities (pilot activities) that led to the successful deployment of a fully functional tool that can essentially address users' expectations and needs in assessing and monitoring their performance in sustainable water management. The evaluation of the tool provides more accredited assessment and conclusions based on the users' feedback when they have interacted with maturely developed product. In addition, this approach enables the tool to be better accustomed, securing their applicability to other Mediterranean countries that are not part of the project.

The pilot activities included the development of a beta version, testing, validation, adjustments and final field-testing by end-users (SMEs). These activities were combined in three stages during the project implementation.

The final fourth stage is the evaluation of the online tool, based on SMEs' opinions gathered through a purpose made evaluation form (questionnaire). This stage is beneficial for scaling-up the feasibility of the online tool by providing recommendations for its improvement and its wider usage following the project implementation. The stages and the respective activities are presented below:

STAGE 1: DEVELOPMENT OF THE BETA VERSION OF THE TOOL

- Elaboration of the beta version of the tool;
- Translation of the tool into six languages: English, Spanish, French, Greek, Croatian, and Italian.

STAGE 2: VALIDATION AND FINE-TUNING

- Creation of a (online) form to streamline data collection during the validation stage;
- Promotion of the beta version of the online tool (including the validation form) to industry and policy stakeholders;
- Try out the beta version of the tool and filling in the validation form;
- Analysis of the data collected through validation forms and drafting the validation report;
- Fine-tuning of the online tool based on the results of the validation report.

STAFE 3: FIELD-TESTING OF THE VALIDATED VERSION OF THE TOOL

- Invitation to tourism sector SMEs to try out the validated version of the online tool – by e-mail;
- Field-testing of the tool by SMEs between September 2018 and May 2019;
- Monitoring and facilitating the field-testing process;
- Reporting the observations and conclusions and analysis of the raw data from the tool's database in a testing report that presents the profile of participants, aggregated statistics and measurements related to water management in each partner territory, self-assessment trends, scores and ratings.

STAGE 4: EVALUATION OF THE ONLINE TOOL

- Development of an evaluation form;
- Distribution of the evaluation form (questionnaire) to SME;
- Filling in the questionnaire;
- Data gathering and compilation;
- Analysis and development of report with evaluation of the online tool.

The field-testing environment in Stage 3 is regarded as intrinsically linked with Stage 4 and as a precondition that could influence emotionally the SMEs objectivity when evaluating the online tool in Stage 4.

The field-testing was done in a remote and un-moderated process, i.e. the participants tried out the online tool in their natural environment, i.e. their business setting. In this setting, the participants experienced the daily factors of the working environment, naturally affecting their experience and behaviour, such as work-space size, work-load, background noise, interruptions from customers and colleagues, technological capacity and the equipment used. Thus the field-testing provided more realistic insights than lab or context-specific testing. The participants were not supported in real time by the project team. However, they were given detailed guidelines on how to use the tool, with tips for troubleshooting. The partnership also set a helpdesk to provide support and assist participants in using the tool and resolving technical issues.

2 OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY FOR THE EVALUATION OF THE CASTWATER ONLINE MONITORING TOOL

This section presents the methodology that was used in order to implement the activities within Stage 4: Evaluation of the on-line tool. The evaluation of the CASTWATER online monitoring tool was mostly focused on measuring the tool's performance and functionality. The performance measurement can be defined as the process of collecting, analysing and interpreting information on the usability, practicality and effectiveness of a product or service. This process estimates the parameters under which the system or application under examination is working as intended and reaches the targeted results. These parameters refer to the parts or elements of the system that need to be measured for assessing its performance, status and usability.

Hence, in order to build an effective testing methodology, it is necessary to specify the technical and functional parameters that determine the performance of the CASTWATER online tool and select the variables to estimate them. The selection of performance metrics (measurement parameters) reflected the following:

- Testing objectives and goals
- The intended functions of the tool
- Users' profile and expectations
- Testing environment and conditions

The questionnaire elaborated within the project is the tool by which those parameters were evaluated.

2.1 Development of an evaluation form

An online questionnaire was employed to gather participants' views on the performance and usability of the online monitoring tool. The online evaluation form was hosted on the EU Survey platform. The survey remained open for more than 5 months, from December 2018 to mid-May 2019. The questionnaire is provided in Annex 1. The questionnaire was designed to address the following measurement parameters:

- Relevance
- Usability
- Design
- Functionality

- Transferability

The questionnaire consisted of both close- and open-ended questions, in order to provide the necessary statistical evaluation of the features of the online tool as well as to record users' insights, emotions and recommendations:

- **The close-ended questions** – with 5 point scale (Likert Scale multiple choice questions) where the respondents were required to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree – strongly agree; agree; undecided; disagree and strongly disagree. The advantage of those questions is that they are easy to understand and the respondents don't need to spend much time on reading. Since the response to close-ended questions is straightforward it is much likely that the respondents will answer on sensitive and critical questions, otherwise that would be left with vague or no answered in the open-ended option. Likert scale multiple choice questions (statements) are used in the relevance, usability and design and functionality sections of the survey. The questionnaire also includes close-ended dichotomous questions – with 'yes' and 'no' answers as part of the transferability and recommendations section.

- **The open-ended questions** encourage a full, meaningful free-form answer using the respondents' own experience and manner of expression. These questions provide possibility to share motivations and concerns that are not expected and not have been thought about by the researchers in the design of the tool. Open ended questions were mostly used in the design and transferability sections of the survey.

2.2 Distribution of the questionnaire to SMEs

The evaluation questionnaire was distributed via personal emails to all individuals (i.e. representatives of tourism SMEs), who participated in the field-testing process. This approach was qualified, as partners had already established a personal contact with tourism SMEs and it would be easier to invite them to fill in the evaluation form. It is also a way to display that each of the companies is highly valued, and regarded as facilitators and contributors to project's efforts.

2.3. Filling in the questionnaire

The time for completion of the questionnaire is between 10 and 15 minutes. The questionnaire contained an introductory part (before questions) intended to present the purpose and the general setting of the survey, in a user-friendly manner. Special emphasis was placed on stressing the importance of users' participation in the survey, towards making available a practical and fully functional tool for measuring sustainable water management.

The questionnaire is compatible with the following (versions) operating systems and web browsers:

- **Operating systems (minimum requirements)**
  - Desktop: Windows, Mac and Linux
  - Mobile devices: Android 4.0 and above & iOS 7 and above
- **Web browsers**
  - Google Chrome
  - Firefox
  - Safari
  - Internet Explorer

2.4. Data processing and analysis

This stage includes the collection of the questionnaires filled in by testing participants, and data compilation in a single file format for easier processing and analysis. Participants' replies were analysed as follows:

1. **Relevance and initial expectations.** This parameter includes variables that allow to evaluate the relevance and conceptual design of the online tool. The objective is to determine whether the tool concept meets real users' needs and expectations. The aim is also to review the performance of the tool, in addition to competitive offerings, to see if the concept provides a practical solution to a real challenge. Areas of investigation include the structure of sections/content, the coverage of topics, and relevance of the tool's questions. Participants' feedback on these variables helps to comprehend whether they adequately understand the tool's concept and main functions (e.g. grading system and ranking), if it addresses their needs/expectations in measuring water management performance and if they were provided with useful recommendations and feedback on how to improve water efficiency in their establishment.

- o **Relevance of questions**: The tool contains questions that meet users' needs and expectations to estimate their water management performance and get feedback on how to decrease their consumption during high touristic seasons.
- o **Grading system**: The tool allows to rate and compare performance with those of similar establishments in the same region or across the MED area; the grading system is easy to understand; users feel confident to plan their future actions based on the score and feedback received.

2. **Usability** refers to evaluating the usability (or easiness of use) of a product or service with representative users in a specific context of use and under specific conditions (i.e. users' workplace). It is a measurement of the usefulness of a system from the users' point of view, as drawn from actual experience. This includes participants trying to complete typical tasks that are connected with (specified) desired outcomes, and recording/writing down their comments and remarks. Feedback on the usability of the tool will be analysed and measures for its improvement would be proposed. The usability can be measured/evaluated via the following metrics:
   - o **Efficiency:** The amount of effort required to perform specific tasks.
   - o **Effectiveness:** The capability of the system to allow users completing all sections and achieving the desired outcomes.
   - o **Clarity, Simplicity & Familiarity:** It is a measure of how complicated is to operate the tool and how much the tool resembles other systems with similar functions. Also it measures whether the questions embedded in the tool are fit to the purpose, are clearly stated and free of spelling and grammar mistakes.

3. **Design** is the most critical component in creating an attractive and successful application. Online tools need to be combined with design excellence to attract users' attention and increase application's value and usability. A system with a well-designed user interface, supported by eye-catching visual elements, has the potential to create positive impressions to users and increase their retention and engagement. In the same context, the strategic use of experience-centric details and emotional elements (animation, notifications, etc.) will assist in developing a connection with users, evoking sentiments and improving user experience. Users were asked to evaluate the following design variables:

- o **User interface design.** It refers to the application's visual environment (i.e. interface) that incorporates elements that are easy to access, understand and use, so as to facilitate users' navigation within the system and tasks accomplishment. An attractive, friendly and practical user interface design can essentially enhance user experience, efficiency and satisfaction. These elements include input controls (e.g. text field, checkboxes), navigation components (e.g. breadcrumb, slider and tags), and informational elements (e.g. instructions, notifications and progress bar).

- o **Emotional design.** This refers to the process of designing the tool, both functionally and aesthetically so that it will have a major impact on how users feel about the final outcome. A well-designed and visually appealing application produces a series of positive emotions and sentiments, increasing users' engagement and willingness to use it again.

4. **Functionality –** a component to verify that the access to the tool is not complicated and allows for simple usage. A functional system enables its users to reach and use connectivity, namely the capacity of a system (the online tool) to function at satisfactory speed for its users.

5. **Transferability and recommendations -** the results in this section related to the online tool transferability could be used as evidence that its features could be applicable to other contexts, situations, times, and populations, e.g. other types of tourism facilities. The results are not to prove that the application will be certainly applicable in the new environment. The survey employed open-ended answers for the recommendations raised by the SMEs. The investigation of the variables steps on the identification of key themes around which the answers are grouped in order to provide concentrated information on those aspects of the online tool that could need improvements and/or additional preliminary work with the respondents to assist them before usage of the tool.

3. EVALUATION RESULTS

3.1. Demographics

The questionnaire was completed by 154 SMEs from 7 different MED countries; namely Croatia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta and Spain. The figure below presents sample distribution per country.
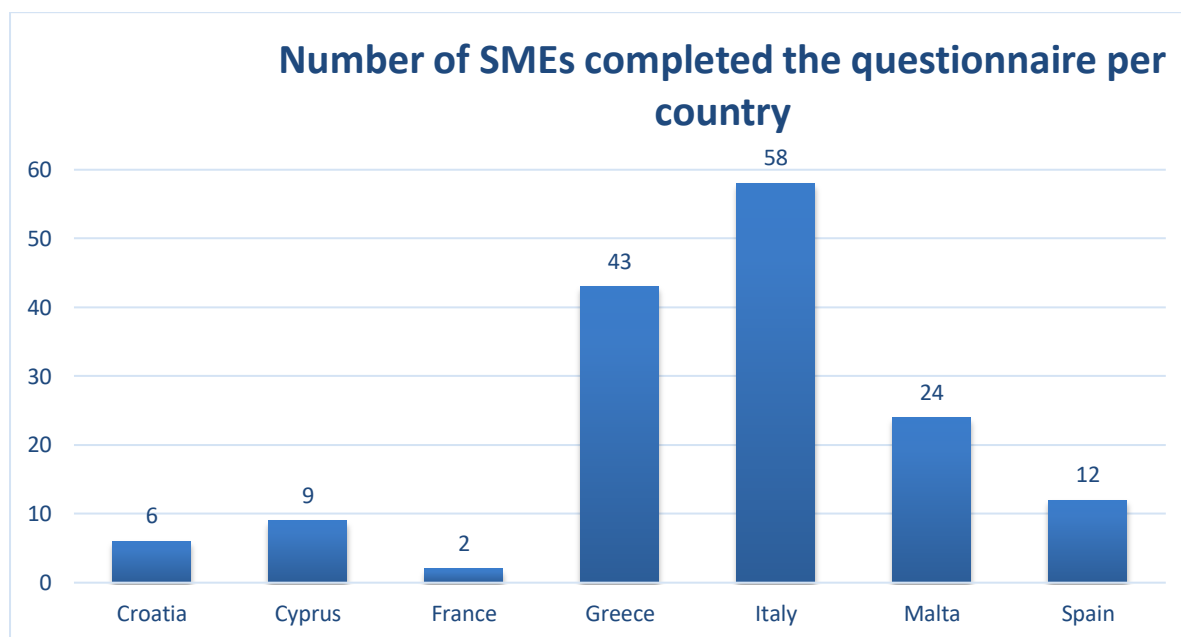

Figure 1. Sample distribution per country

The majority of SMEs that have participated in the survey on the online tool are from Italy and Greece, 37,6% and 27,9% out of the all SMEs. The countries with lowest number of companies, below 10, that have submitted filled in questionnaires are Cyprus, Croatia and France, respectively 5,8%, 3,9% and 1,3%. The results cannot be related directly with any particular cause and it is not the intention of the report to analyse and speculate on the outcomes of this parameter.

Some respondents failed to provide further optional information regarding the region they are operating in and the exact municipality. Therefore, the gathered data is incomplete. The aggregated information in the table below presents the background of the respondents in terms of territorial units – regions and municipalities.

*Table. 1 Territorial allocation of the SMEs with completed questionnaires.*

Country	No of the regions	Name of the regions	Name of the municipalities
Croatia	1	Istria Country	Fažana, Funtana, Kastelir, Pula *(two out of the six respondents didn't fill in the box)*
Cyprus	1	Cyprus	Lemesos, Limassol
France	1	Languedoc-Roussillon	Portiragnes *** one of the two respondents didn't fill in the box*
Greece	2	Crete	Chania, Heraklion, Lasithi, Rethimno
		West Greece	**** none of the four respondents didn't fill in the box*
Italy	2	Emilia Romagna	Bellaria, Bologna, Cervia, Cesenatico, Ferrara, Gatteo, Misamo Adriatico, Ravenna, Riccione, Rimini, San Mauro Pascoli
		Veneto	San Vito al Tagliamento ***** 18 out of 19 respondents didn't fill in the box*
Malta	1	Malta	Cirkewwa/Mellieha, Ghajn Tuffieha, Gzira, Marfa Mellieha, Mellieha, Qawra San Pawl il-Bahar, St Julian's, San Pawl il-Bahar Bugibba, Silema, Valleta
Spain	2	Murcia	Archena, Mazarrón, Murcia, San Javier
		Valencia	Valencia ******three out of seven respondents didn't fill in the box*

3.2. Participants profile

The tourism sector is a broad category of fields within the service industry that includes accommodation, leisure activities and theme parks, food and beverage services, transportation, event planning, and attractions. The online tool is addressed to tourism sector SMEs that fall into the following categories:

- Hotel
- Guesthouse / Apartments
- Hostel
- Restaurant
- Bar or Pub
- Kiosk / Snack Bar

- Coffee shop / Take away
- Leisure centre
- Spa
- Tourism attraction
- Event centre
- Bathing facilities/establishment

The figure below (Figure 2) displays the type of the tourism sector SMEs that have participated in the survey. The highest share of SMEs that filled in the questionnaire is contributed to the hotels – 60%, followed by restaurants, guesthouses/apartments and other types of facilities with shares between 9 and 11%.
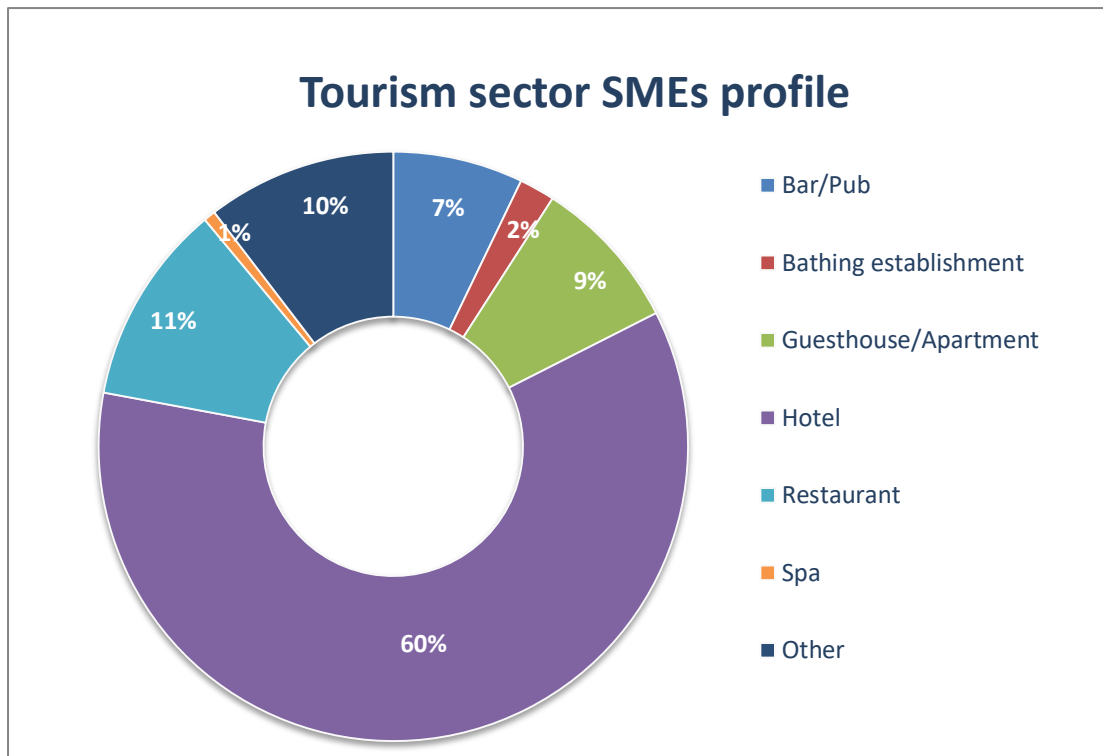
Figure 2. Participation in the evaluation process per type of establishment

The target participants in the field-testing, have been consequently and logically approached to complete the questionnaire for the evaluation of the online tool. These are the people who have been involved in the process of implementing or in the decision-making upon the adoption/integration of water management practices, within their organisation. Thus, the participants possessed significant experience in the implementation of water efficiency and saving measures, and knowledge about company's water consumption and environmental performance.

Figure 3 presents the distribution between the people working in the SMEs that have completed the questionnaire (owners, managers, knowledgeable staff, or other). The objective for gathering this particular data was to ascertain who exactly of the SMEs team is and could be the driving power in the organisation for triggering, eagerness to learn about and implement sustainable water management practices. Once the SMEs have filed-tested the tool, the additional step to assess it is another action taking time and efforts of the respondents and the analyses below shows that the owners of the SMEs are those willing to continue in sustainable water management direction with 65% of the total persons that have filled the questionnaire. The result confirmed the project team's expectations, because, unlikely the large enterprises where more often there could be a CSR expert specially

appointed in the company, within the SMEs the engines for sustainability are the owners themselves and the managers. Additionally, in favour of the above, it is worth mentioning that the owners could have opted for the managers or the other personnel in their companies to engage further with the project without having to allocate more of their time.
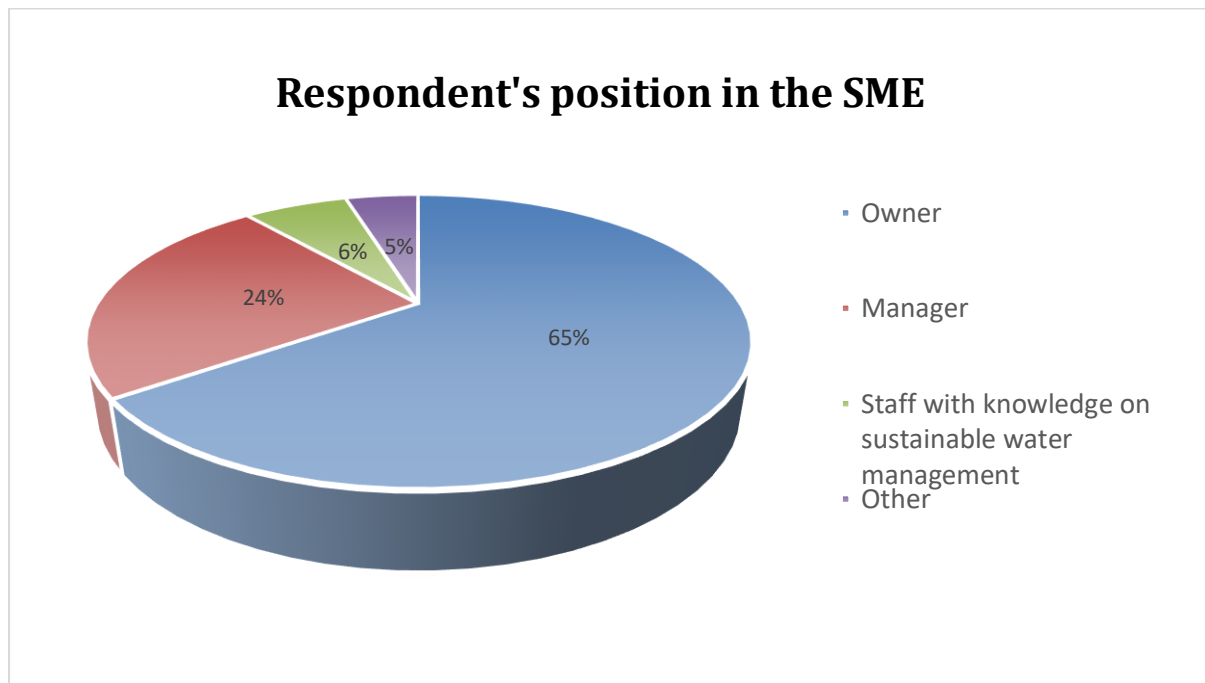

Figure 3. Respondents' position/role in their organisation.

3.3.   Relevance and initial expectations

The SMEs were asked about their opinions on the following statements:

-   **Statement 1: I was able to assess my company's performance in water management.**
-   **Statement 2: I was able to identify my company's specific weaknesses related to water management.**
-   **Statement 3: I was able to compare my company's performance with other touristic SMEs.**
-   **Statement 4: The tool provides useful recommendations on how to improve my company's water performance.**

All respondents expressed their agreement/disagreement with the four statements in regards to the relevance of the online tool. The summarized information from SMEs reactions to these statements is presented in Figure 4.

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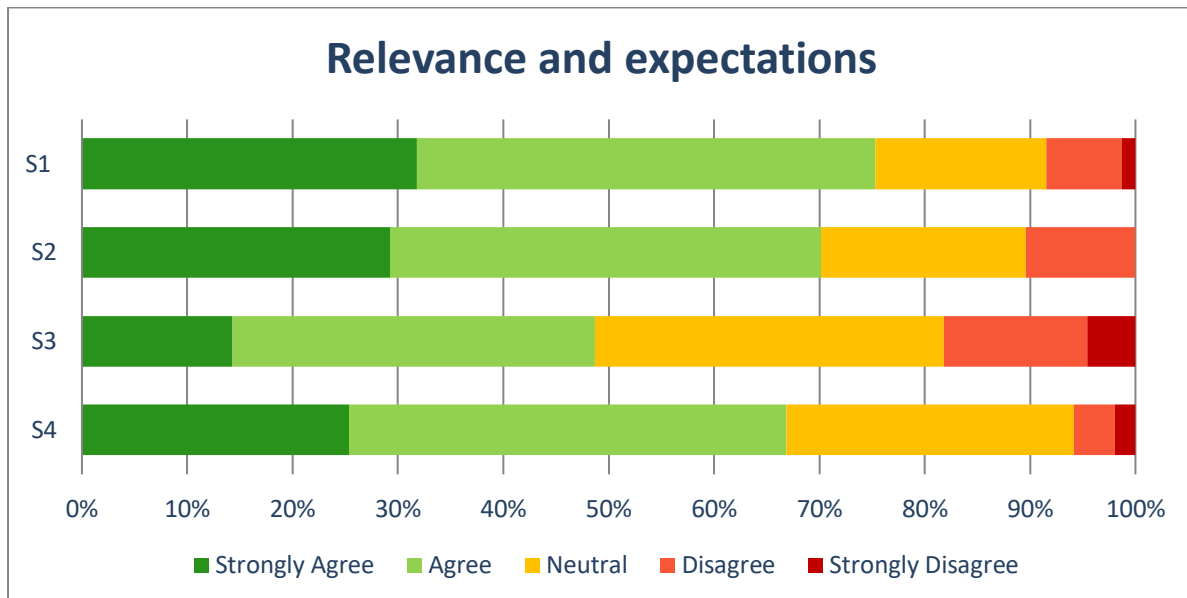
Figure 4. SMEs opinions on the relevance of the online tool.

Tourism SMEs consider that the online tool corresponds to their expectations and needs on assessing and monitoring their performance in sustainable water management. The tool has reflected and provided support to the respondents' willingness and conscious deliberation in improving their sustainable water management performance, and fostering resource efficiency. More than 75% of the SMEs confirm that the online tool enabled them to assess the overall company's performance in water management, either by affirming with "agree" or "strongly agree". Hence, the designated structure and content of the online tool adequately assisted the SMEs in the overall evaluation of their water management performance.

The online tool coverage and design were regarded as beneficial by the companies and thus responded to their intention to determine - first, weaknesses in company's water management and second, proposing useful recommendations for improvement of company's water performance. The majority of the SMEs expressed positive attitude to the first feature of the online tool with 70% share of the total answers. The second feature of the online tool was positively assessed by 67% of the respondents. About 30% of the SMEs couldn't decide whether the tool was helpful in improving company's water performance. Some of them asked for improvements in this particular feature.

Next, the online tool was deemed insufficient in assisting tourism SMEs to compare their performance with those of other companies within the tourism industry. The positive answers are below 50%, namely 49%, whereas the neutral ones account for 33%, and the negative opinions are 19% out of the total. In this regards, the tool is not efficient enough in a situation

when a company would like to outcompete his rivals by being more sustainable. This feature of the online tool is of considerable importance as the success of tourism companies success is more and more driven in the recent years by consumers' preferences and trends. Therefore, being aware of your own position on the market, is an opportunity for the SMEs to maintain or increase their market share. Surprisingly, SMEs didn't provide recommendations for improvements on the benchmarking function of the tool.

3.4. Usability

The representatives of tourism SMEs were asked to state their agreement or disagreement with the following statements:

- **Statement 5: The intended functions of the online tool were clear to me.**
- **Statement 6: The tool is easy to use.**
- **Statement 7: It was easy for me to find and provide the data/information required by the online tool.**
- **Statement 8: Questions (embedded in the tool) were easy to understand.**

The summarized information from participants' reactions to these statements is presented in Figure 5.
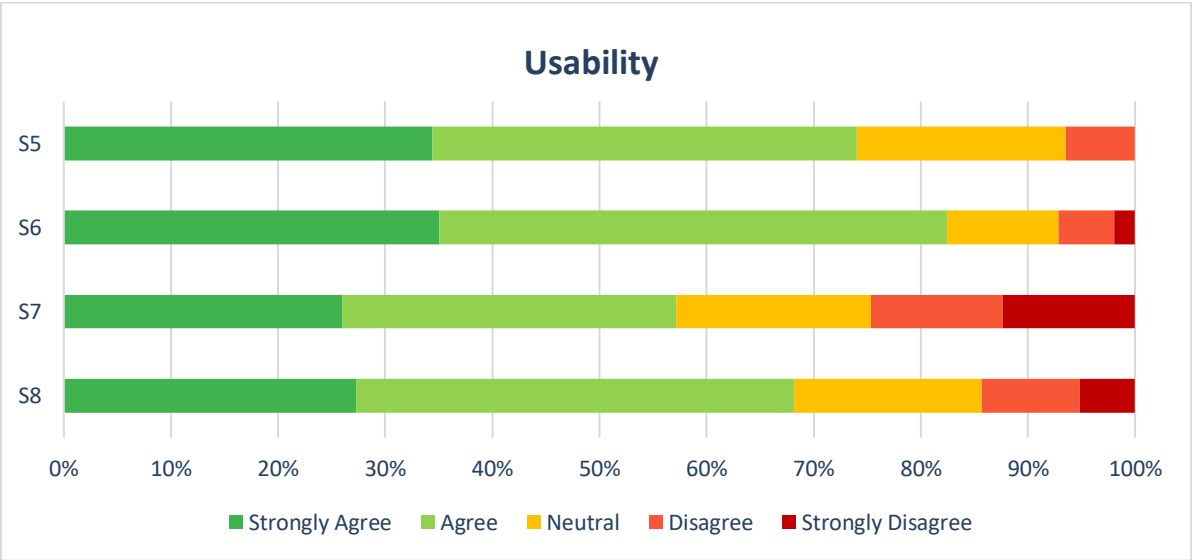

Figure 5. SMEs opinions on the usability of the online tool.

When it comes to the tool's usability (which can be translated as the amount of time and efforts that the users have put in their interaction with the tool), participants' replies were highly positive. The tourism SMEs' reaction on the demanded efforts to use the online

application shows that in overall the tool is easy to use - 82% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed.

When asked about how easy is to provide water related data/information, the majority of tourism SMEs (57%) didn't find it difficult to feed data/information into the online tool. Nevertheless, negative replies account for almost 25% out of the total sample. Some of them stated that the identifiction of relevant data was not that easy and asked for guidance and instructions on how to obtain information prior to the use of the tool.

The usability of the online tool was measured not only by its efficiency, i.e. the efforts needed to navigate the tool and the easiness of gathering the necessary data, but also by its effectiveness. In order the tool to be effective, it should be capable to allow the SMEs to complete all of its sections by asking clear, simple and familiar for the users questions and by providing clear functions. Almost 75% of tourism SMEs participating in the survey, agree or strongly agree that the online tool's functions are clear, while the 68% have stated that questions were easy to understand.

3.5.   Design and functionality

Tourism SMEs were asked to convey their agreement or disagreement by answering to the following statements:

- **Statement 9: The overall visual design of the tool was appealing to me.**
- **Statement 10: The interface was attractive.**
- **Statement 11: The interface was practical.**
- **Statement 12: The tool includes controls and notifications that make it easy to use and navigate.**
- **Statement 13: Registration to the online tool is quick and easy.**
- **Statement 14: The tool is loading fast.**

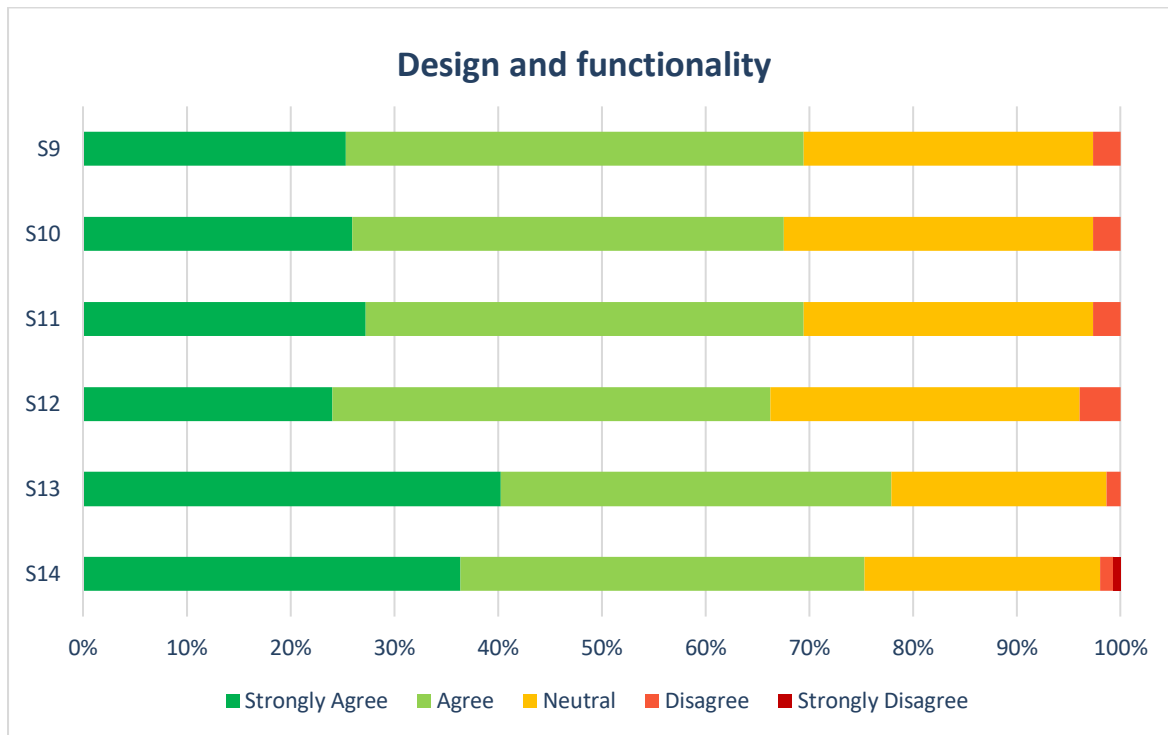The summarized data results are presented in Figure 6.

Figure 6. SMEs opinions on the design and functionality of the online tool.

Another critical component for the success of an online application is its design. An application should be designed in an attractive, aesthetical manner, to be successful. This entails features for capturing users' attention, retaining it and creating of positive experience. The SMEs overall experience with the tool in terms of interface design is considered positive. The overall visual design, the interface attractiveness, the practicality of the application, as well as the components supporting the users to navigate easily, were each evaluated positively between 66 and 69% by the SMEs. One-third of the respondents, between 28 – 30% showed neutral opinion about the overall design, the interface and the features that navigate the users while feeding information in the tool. In this regards, the researchers were encouraged to look for the reasons behind these results by reviewing the respondents' answers to the open-ended questions in the evaluation of the tool. Unfortunately, the opportunity in the evaluation form for concrete recommendations was not actively used by the SMEs. However, some recommendations were provided by participants on how to improve visual design and user interface, such as the need for modifications of some graphic illustrations in order to allow for clear visibility of the scales and need to improve the feature that allows for changes in the language of the application.

The functionality of the online tool was also assessed very positively by the users. Tourism SMEs were asked to evaluate the complexity of accessing the tool, namely if the initial registration was easy and not time consuming. The majority of the SMEs were very satisfied – 78% with the user-friendly access to the online tool. The lack of slow-downs in the loading process of the application that could cause frustration and decrease of the number of its users is also highly appreciated – 75% of the SMEs were content with the speed of loading. The share of negative reactions was the lowest documented for tool's functions and features in the questionnaire. The "disagree" and the "strongly disagree" options on this statement were selected by 1% of survey participants, followed by a slightly higher share of negative replies (2%) on the statements concerning the ease to register to the online tool and loading speed.

3.6. Transferability

The transferability potential of the online tool is evaluated by the following question:

Do you think that the CASTWATER online tool can be used by other types of tourism facilities for measuring their water management performance?
a. Yes (Please specify the type of tourist facility e.g. restaurants, hotels etc.)
b. No (Please specify the reason)

The results on this question are presented in Figure 7.
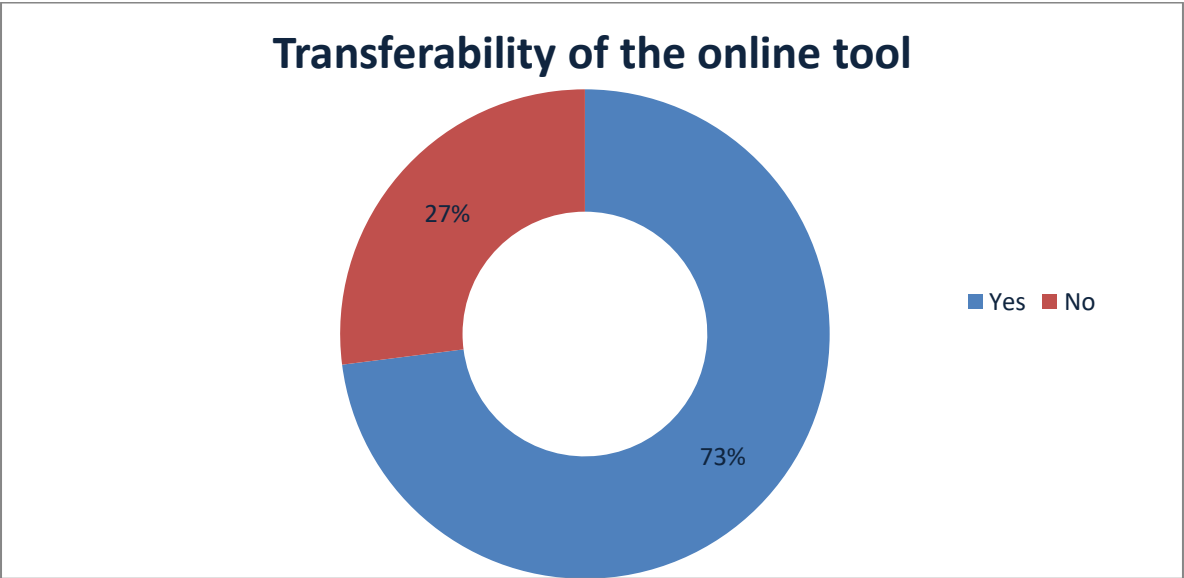

Figure 7. SMEs opinions on the applicability and usability of the online tool by other tourism sector SMEs

The opinion expressed by the respondents is that the usage of the online tool could be increased with new target groups of tourism facilities that could benefit of it – 73% of the

SMEs. In should be noted, that this results project the possible applicability of the tool by other types of tourism facilities and not that it is applicable.

Some of the SMEs submitted additional information on the different types of tourism facilities that could practically use the online tool for assessing and monitoring their performance in sustainable water management. The types of tourism facilities that can be benefitted by the online tool are displayed below in order of transferability potential.

1. Any type of tourism facilities

2. Hotels

3. Restaurants

4. Bars and pubs

5. Theme parks

6. Guest houses and apartments

7. Spa facilities

8. Swimming pools

9. car wash facilities;

10. Clothing laundry facilities

11. Resorts

Additionally, several respondents pointed out that the online tool could be mostly used by facilities with bigger water consumption. Compared with the initial scoping of the online tool, the answers of the respondents reveal that specific new types of facilities can be considered as possible new "clients" of the application. Those are the car wash and laundry facilities.

2.3 Recommendations

This section presents a series of recommendations on how to improve the online tool based on participants' replies on the questions:

- **"Do you think that the CASTWATER online tool can be used by other types of tourism facilities for measuring their water management performance?"**

- "**What aspects of the online tool could be improved? Please give specific examples.**"

Participants' recommendations are illustrated below in no particular order or priority:

1. **The questionnaire of the online tool is too long, e.g.:**

    - Need for removal of some questions, especially on territory, public authorities and policy framework.

2. **The tool includes a lot of technical questions, e.g.:**

    - Simplification of questions 11-13, that require the tourism SMEs to provide specific metrics on water consumption and the wastewater from the facility that has been treated.

- Simplification of the questions that are related to the policy framework (14 – 21) – the awareness of the respondents about the policies and how often the authorities are implementing water monitoring, as well as those questions that requite the SMEs to express their agreement/disagreement with different factors that affect the sustainable water policies (e.g. political, economic, socio-cultural, etc.).

3. **Gathering of data is not easy, e.g.:**

   - The type of data on water consumption that should feed the online tool must be provided in advance to the users of the tool.

   - The data format should be aligned between the tool and the invoices and the water efficiency software that the companies are using.

4. **Need for customised solutions and for concrete advice on economic savings, e.g.:**

   - Need for specific and practical customised recommendations.

   - Proposals for face-to-face discussions after using the application for optimisation of the water efficiency recommendations.

4. CONCLUSIONS

This section provides an overall assessment of the performance of the online application, showcasing possible directions on what features could be improved in order to further customise the application, based on evaluation results. Evaluation results are translated into strengths, weaknesses, and recommendation for further improvements (see Table 2).

- **Strengths** of the online tool. The features of the tool that have received more than 50% positive feedback ("agree" and "strongly agree") from the respondents in the evaluation exercise.

- **Weaknesses** of the online tool. This section includes those features of the online tool that have received less than 50 % positive feedback ("agree" and "strongly agree") from the SMEs who assessed the online tool.

- **Recommendations** by the SMEs when asked to specify why they would not recommend the tool to other types of tourism facilities and when asked for exact recommendation for improvements of the application.

Table 2. Summary of the SMEs feedback on the evaluation of the online monitoring tool.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	RECOMMENDATIONS
	RELEVANCE	
Assessing water performance		
Identification of water management weaknesses		
	Sectoral positioning assessment	
Guidance on how to improve water performance based on individual metrics		- To present policies and practices applied by the public authorities to incentivise companies for better water management in the tourism facilities. - Recommendations to be more specific, customised with more practical advice about water efficiency to be provided, e.g. concrete advice on economic savings on water consumption metrics. - After the usage of the tool, face-to-face discussions to be organised for achievement of tangible and custom solutions.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	RECOMMENDATIONS
USABILITY		
Clarity of functions		
User friendliness		
Facilitated data collection		- The number of the questions embedded in the tool should be decreased, e.g. removing those regarding management of public water, territory, on policies. - Before usage of the tool, the SMEs should be provided with information about what documents are needed as a basis for data provision, e.g. where to obtain water consumption figures. - The questions requiring data from the water invoices should be adapted to the format of the invoices or the format of the software the companies are using. - The questions on water consumption numbers to be modified in order to be filled in by companies operating less than 12 months a year.
Understandable questions		- The questions should be less technical, e.g. about the territory, policies. - Questions: 11, 13 - 21 need simplification.
DESIGN AND FUNCTIONALITY		
Visual design		
Appeal of the interface		
Workability of the interface		- Need for modifications of some graphic illustrations in order to allow for clear visibility of the scales. - Some of the users experienced difficulties with the feature that allows to change the language by which the tool operates.
Easy navigation		
Registration		
Loading speed		

The following conclusions could be drawn by the evaluation on the online tool:

1. The tool is positively assessed by almost all testing participants, working as intended and reaches the targeted results for all of its sections - relevance, usability, design and functionality and transferability by the SMEs.

2. The aspect/feature of the online tool that doesn't seem to adequately address users' expectations and therefore was negatively evaluated, is its capacity to allow users to compare their performance with those of their competitors. This result requires further research and efforts for improvements in the future.

3. The positively evaluated features of the online tool that however received recommendations for improvements (see Table. 2) should be further explored in detail and adjusted in order to fully satisfy the emerging needs of tourism SMEs.

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