

D3.12.1: SPECIFICATIONS ON DESIGNING AN INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION PLAN OF INHERITURA AREAS

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Region of Murcia



INHERIT

**Sustainable Tourism Strategies to Conserve and
Valorise the Mediterranean Coastal and Maritime
Natural Heritage**

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1 INTRODUCTION

“INHERITURA” is a coastal area of touristic interest and rich natural heritage in the Mediterranean, set aside by regional or local authorities to utilise natural heritage as a tourism asset along with the application of environmental protection measures. Particular emphasis is placed upon sustainable tourism development through bottom-up approaches and collaborative, participatory efforts of local stakeholders.

Management planning is a fundamental step towards ensuring the efficient governance and management of INHERITURA areas. It is the process that helps to determine how authorities, responsibilities and roles are allocated to the involved bodies, and spells out the direction and sustainable development objectives of the area. Essential to the planning of protected areas is the widest possible consultation with stakeholders, and the determination of specific objectives and measures that can be agreed and adhered to by all entities who have an interest in the use and ongoing preservation of the natural area/site concerned.

The INHERITURA management and protection plan (present report) is a management document that outlines the governance scheme of the INHERITURA network, and sets out the approach and strategy for the protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites, together with a framework for the participation of stakeholders across all stages of the management chain. It is the result of dialogue and consultation with key stakeholders associated with natural heritage sites on the most efficient governance scheme and management processes for INHERITURA areas.

This plan is intended for the organisations (i.e. management agencies) responsible for drawing up the management and protection plan of an INHERITURA area. The plan can be mostly regarded as a frame of reference (guide) aimed to create an effective degree of coherence and integrity between all the management plans to be produced for INHERITURA areas at national level.

It provides guidance to management planning authorities on how to:

- Present the site context of the designated area (geographical boundaries and administrative authorities).
- Assess the current status of natural heritage sites and tourism offering on the area.
- Set strategic directions for natural heritage protection and sustainable tourism development.
- Define the management measures to be undertaken at the sites in question. They need to fall into 3 broad categories: a) environmental management and protection, b) valorisation of natural heritage as a tourism asset, and c) marketing and awareness raising.
- Allocate roles and responsibilities for all the parties involved in the management of the area.
- Measure progress and assess the impact of management measures against predefined targets.

The preparation of an INHERITURA management and protection plan needs to involve all the categories of stakeholders having a direct or indirect influence on the designated area and it must be tailored to the characteristics and specificities of the area concerned (size, types of natural ecosystems, tourism activity, conservation issues).

The network of INHERITURA areas has a three-tier governance and management scheme consisting of the INHERIT committee, the designation authority and the management agency. The INHERIT committee holds a coordinating and supervisory role with primary responsibility to determine network's strategy and declare INHERITURA areas. The designation authority sets aside the protected area, apply for the label and appoints the members of the management agency. The management agency, in turn, is the body nominated by the designation authority to draw up the management plan and charged with the efficient administration, management and development of an INHERITURA area. The 3 bodies are separate, have distinct roles but work closely to proliferate the principles of the INHERIT approach and promote sustainable tourism development in the areas concerned.

Overall, the report is structured as follows: Section 2 introduces basic concepts and definitions associated with the governance and management of protected areas. Section 3 provides the overall methodological approach employed for consultation with stakeholders. Section 4 presents selected management schemes with similar to INHERITURA network management objectives that complement the results drawn from consultation. Section 5 presents the main findings drawn from consultation with key stakeholders from partnership territories, assessing also the level of readiness and commitment of MED countries to engage in participatory management schemes. Section 6 outlines the governance and management scheme for the network of INHERITURA areas, defining roles and responsibilities for the different bodies, and addressing membership, status and decision making considerations. Finally, Section 7 outlines the structure of the INHERITURA management and protection plan, providing guidelines to interested bodies on how to produce site-specific plans, fully aligned with INHERIT principles.

2 THEMATIC BACKGROUND

2.1 WHAT IS A PROTECTED AREA?

A protected area is a territory (with clearly defined geographical boundaries) rich in biodiversity but vulnerable to natural hazards (due to geo-climatic conditions and/or human activities), which is recognised, dedicated and managed through legal or other (informal) management forms to achieve the long term conservation of natural resources and associated ecosystem services and cultural values.

Protected areas provide a wide range of environmental, social and economic benefits to people and local communities. They are essential for conserving biodiversity and wilderness as well as delivering vital ecosystems services such as food and water security, soil and watershed preservation, carbon sequestration, waste decomposition and detoxification, resilience to climate change effects (i.e. climate regulation) and disaster risk reduction. They embody considerable cultural and historical values and are widely considered as key drivers for sustainable development and social welfare, mostly through tourism and recreation.

2.2 IUCN MANAGEMENT CATEGORIES

The International Union of Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has introduced a global framework for distinguishing protected areas according to their main management objectives. This set of management categories provides a “common language” for describing protected areas at the global level.

The analysis of these categories will help to identify in which category the INHERITURA protection network can be classified so as to direct data collection towards areas (and subsequently management and protection plans) set aside to pursue similar goals and feature similar management approaches.

The IUCN categories were initially developed to facilitate data and information collection on protected areas; nevertheless they have developed over time into a more complex tool that provides a robust framework to decide on and subsequently run different conservation strategies along with supporting management systems within and outside the protected area or systems of protected areas. The IUCN categories are now used for diverse purposes such as land planning, setting regulations and defining land and water uses, and most importantly implementing conservation strategies. The framework serves 3 main purposes:

1. **To facilitate planning, management and governance of protected areas** by making available a range of tools and methodologies for planning conservation activities, encouraging the designation of networks and systems of protected areas that have the same environmental focus and pursue similar management targets and providing recognition to diverse management schemes and governance types.

2. **To improve information management about protected areas** by setting common standards for data collection and reporting on conservation activities, enhancing communication and understanding between all actors engaged in protected areas' conservation and valorisation, and preventing confusion that may arise from the use of different terms to describe the same kinds of protected areas in different regions and countries.
3. **To assist regulate activities in protected areas**, by prescribing certain activities that are allowed and/or forbidden in each protected area category in accordance with areas' management objectives, territorial characteristics and conservation status.

The framework identifies 6+1 different categories of protected areas, based on their management goals. Although protected areas under IUCN classification categorisation differ in their primary management objective(s) and environmental focus, they need to fulfil a common set of objectives. For instance, all protected areas should aim at conserving the composition, structure, function and evolutionary potential of biodiversity and contributing to regional conservation strategies. In addition, they should be operating under the guidance of a management plan and a monitoring and evaluation programme that supports adaptive management, and possess a clear, effective and equitable governance system. Another common objective is the need for integrated management planning (through the development of a management plan) to ensure that the desired outcomes will be achieved with the available means and resources. The 7 categories of protected areas are presented below.

1. **Strict nature reserve:** This category includes protected areas designated to conserve fragile ecosystems with high biodiversity (incl. endangered species, and species of community interest) and valued geological and geomorphological features. In this category, human interventions and visitation are strictly limited to scientific research, environmental monitoring and education, in an attempt to ensure the protection of conservation values. The purpose is to keep invaluable environmental resources (ecosystems, species, geodiversity features) undisturbed by harmful human activity through careful planning and appropriate management arrangements. What distinguishes strict nature reserves from other protected areas is that nature reserves host a largely complete set of native ecosystems and species in ecologically significant densities (focusing on a whole ecosystem and ecosystem processes), do not require substantial interventions to achieve its conservation goals, and are managed in a way to prevent any human intervention within the area (e.g. tourism or other economic activities) that may pose serious threats to environmental sustainability.
2. **Wilderness area:** The primary management objective of this category is to protect the long-term integrity and functioning of natural areas that are undisturbed by significant human activity (incl. habitation) and which are protected and managed to preserve their natural conditions so that future generations have the opportunity to experience them. What distinguishes wilderness areas from the other categories of protected areas is that they are characterised by a high level of biological intactness (with a large percentage of native ecosystems and species of community

interest) and the lack of permanent infrastructures and intense economic activities (e.g. industries, agriculture). Visitation is only allowed under the condition that human presence will not decrease wilderness values, and is realised through sustainable means of transport.

3. **National park:** This category contains large natural areas set aside and managed to preserve natural biodiversity, ecological structure and ecosystem services, and at the same time provide visitors and local communities with environmentally sustainable educational, recreational and tourism opportunities. An area, to be classified as national park, should be of sufficient size and ecological quality so as to maintain key ecological functions and processes; the composition and structure of biodiversity should be in a “natural” state or have the potential to be restored to such a state with minimum management interventions; and most importantly should feature landscapes with aesthetic value or environmental interest (e.g. biodiversity spots) and sceneries and geodiversity sites of special recreational and tourist significance.
4. **Natural monument or feature:** This category includes protected areas designated to protect a specific natural monument (e.g. lagoon, sand dune, lake, caves, and volcanoes) or even a living feature such as an ancient grove, alongside with their associated biodiversity and natural habitats. The primary management objective is to protect outstanding natural landscapes or seascapes that are known for their spiritual, historical and cultural value, and act as tourist attractions. This category of protected areas contains relatively small sites that focus on one or more prominent natural heritage sites, rather than on a broader ecosystem. In this management approach, the protection of the natural monument is the dominant objective while the preservation of site’s ecological conditions is of secondary importance. Human presence and tourism activities are not limited or strictly controlled; instead they are encouraged to increase site’s visitation but in a way that do not adversely affect the monument’s viability and structure, and associated biodiversity and environmental processes.
5. **Habitat and species management area:** The primary objective in these areas is to maintain, conserve and restore specific species or habitats of community interest. This category requires regular and active management interventions to address the requirements of particular species or to maintain habitats, such as to maintain viable populations of endangered species through for example the artificial habitat creation or maintenance. Human activities in the area are strictly limited to solely scientific and research purposes. To end with, this category is of more biological nature, focusing on targeted species or habitats, rather than on entire ecosystems or sites with high value for natural conservation.
6. **Protected landscape and seascape:** This includes areas where human activities have developed a landscape or seascape of distinct character with substantial ecological, biological, cultural and scenic value, and where the protection of these sites through the maintenance of a balanced and sustainable interaction between nature and human activity is the primary management objective. This category concentrates on landscapes and coastal/insular seascapes of high aesthetic value and distinct scenic quality, with significant associated habitats, flora and

fauna and associated cultural attributes. This category's management approach emphasises the need to provide opportunities for recreation and tourism (in compliance with sustainability principles), as a means to support local economy and employment. It also foresees the active involvement by the local community in the protection and management of valued landscapes or seascapes and the natural and cultural heritage that they contain.

7. **Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources:** This category includes protected areas set aside to protect ecosystems and natural habitats by focusing on the sustainable use of natural resources. They are generally large sites, with most of the area in a natural condition, where a small proportion is under sustainable natural resource management. In this category, the low-level non-industrial exploitation of natural resources, which abides by sustainability principles and has proven to sustain ecological integrity and functionality, is seen as the primary management aim. What distinguishes this category from other protected areas is that it links environmental conservation in natural areas with industrial and commercial activities, considers local communities' economic and societal needs in planning, and permits the use of natural resources to support sustainable livelihoods.

Table 1 presents the IUCN management categories of protected areas together with their distinguishing features, as presented in terms of primary management focus, size, level of management intervention, intensity of human activities and use of natural resources, to allow for comparisons and reveal similarities and differences with the INHERITURA approach.

The INHERITURA protection regime pursues multiple management objectives that are not fully captured by a single protected area category (as presented above) but are distributed and partially covered in more than one IUCN categories. The IUCN categories are mostly focused on a specific target and therefore management measures are planned towards its accomplishment. **This implies that INHERITURA cannot be classified as such in any category of protected areas, prescribed in the IUCN framework. INHERITURA can be mostly regarded as a "wider" protected area that encompasses multiple categories of protected areas inside.**

TABLE 1: IUCN MANAGEMENT CATEGORIES OF PROTECTED AREAS AND THEIR DISTINGUISHING FEATURES

Category	Distinguishing features				
	Primary management focus	Size	Level of management intervention	Intensity of human activities	Use of natural resources
Strict nature reserve	Protect entire ecosystems rich in biodiversity and valued geological features	Often small	Does not require substantial intervention to achieve conservation goals	Scientific research, environmental monitoring, education	No
Wilderness area	Protect the long-term integrity and functioning of natural ecosystems, characterised by biological intactness	Usually large	Does not require substantial intervention to achieve conservation goals	Human visitation by simple, quiet and nonintrusive means of travel	Yes, to support livelihood for local communities in harmony with nature
National parks	Conserve biodiversity and ecosystem processes in large nature areas, promoting education, recreation and visitor opportunities	Usually large	Minimum management intervention to maintain ecological functions and processes	Human visitation, education and recreational activities	No
Natural monument or feature	Protect a specific natural monument alongside with its associated biodiversity and natural habitats	Usually small	Targeted management interventions to maintain monuments' viability and structure	Visitation and recreation is strongly encouraged. Research and monitoring are limited to the understanding and maintenance of a particular natural feature.	No

Category	Distinguishing features				
	Primary management focus	Size	Level of management intervention	Intensity of human activities	Use of natural resources
Habitat/species management area	Protect particular species or habitats of community interest	Often small	Regular and active management interventions to address the requirements of particular species or to maintain habitats (e.g. artificial habitat creation)	Scientific and research activities	No
Protected landscape/seascape	Protect landscapes and coastal/insular seascapes of high aesthetic value and distinct scenic quality and with significant associated habitats, flora and fauna and associated cultural attributes	Often large	Targeted management interventions and active involvement by the local community in the protection and management of valued landscapes or seascapes and the natural and cultural heritage that they contain.	Continuous human interaction with nature (forestry, agriculture, recreation, tourism)	Yes, to sustain human livelihoods through forestry and agriculture
Protected area with sustainable use of resources	Promote the sustainable use of natural resources in pre-defined special zones within a natural ecosystem	Usually large	Setting internal zoning and management regimes to support sustainable use of resources	Scientific research on issues related to the sustainable use of resources and ecosystem protection	Yes

Category	Distinguishing features				
	Primary management focus	Size	Level of management intervention	Intensity of human activities	Use of natural resources
INHERITURA	Promote environmental protection and foster sustainable tourism development in MED coastal areas with rich natural heritage	Usually large	Bottom-up approaches and collaborative, participatory efforts for the protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites	Recreation and tourism activities	No

2.3 GOVERNANCE OF PROTECTED AREAS

2.3.1 What is governance of protected areas?

Governance and management are closely linked and are both essential for the achievement of protected areas' management objectives. These terms are often used interchangeably; although they refer to different concepts and processes. Governance is a formal attribution of authority and responsibility. It refers to the powers, authorities and responsibilities exercised by organisations involved and making decisions for a protected area, and the distinction of roles and collaboration arrangements between different actors. In simple words, governance responds to the questions "who decides what to do", "how these decisions are taken", "what are the management goals", and "what means/actions will be used/taken to achieve protected area's targets". Management is mostly about what should be done on a particular site to achieve the defined (by governance bodies) management aims. It refers to the resources, plans and actions taken to help governance actors promote environmental protection.

The most important governance decisions that could be taken for a protected area are those most directly relate to the preservation of natural resources (incl. biodiversity and habitats) and the (environmentally sustainable) development of local communities. These decisions include:

- To select the natural heritage sites in terrestrial or aquatic ecosystems to be conserved, clarifying its overall extension and perimeter.
- To set strategic and management objectives and clarifying how these objectives will affect local community's livelihoods and development.
- To agree on a management plan with a detailed action plan, ensuring the necessary resources and means to pursue management goals, and specifying the roles and interactions between all actors involved in the management of the protected area.
- To establish monitoring and evaluation processes to assess progress and adjust the management plan in light of validated results.

These decisions are crucial for the achievement of protected areas' management objectives as they help a) determine the sharing of relevant costs and benefits, b) prevent or manage possible conflicts of socioeconomic interest, c) define the level of involvement and management interventions by public authorities and stakeholders such as regional and local administrations, governmental agencies, tourism SMEs and associations, environmental institutions and local communities most directly concerned.

Nonetheless, governance in protected areas (and mostly as concerns the INHERITURA network) is not only a formal attribution of authority and responsibility but extends to defining the roles and jurisdiction of key stakeholders (from the lowest levels) in launching initiatives (either as independent actions devised by a single tourism business or cooperative schemes) in pursuit of strategic and operational objectives.

2.3.2 Types of governance

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) recognise 4 types of governance, according to the key actors holding authority and responsibility for the management (strategic) decisions affecting protected areas. These governance types can be associated with any management category described in the previous section.

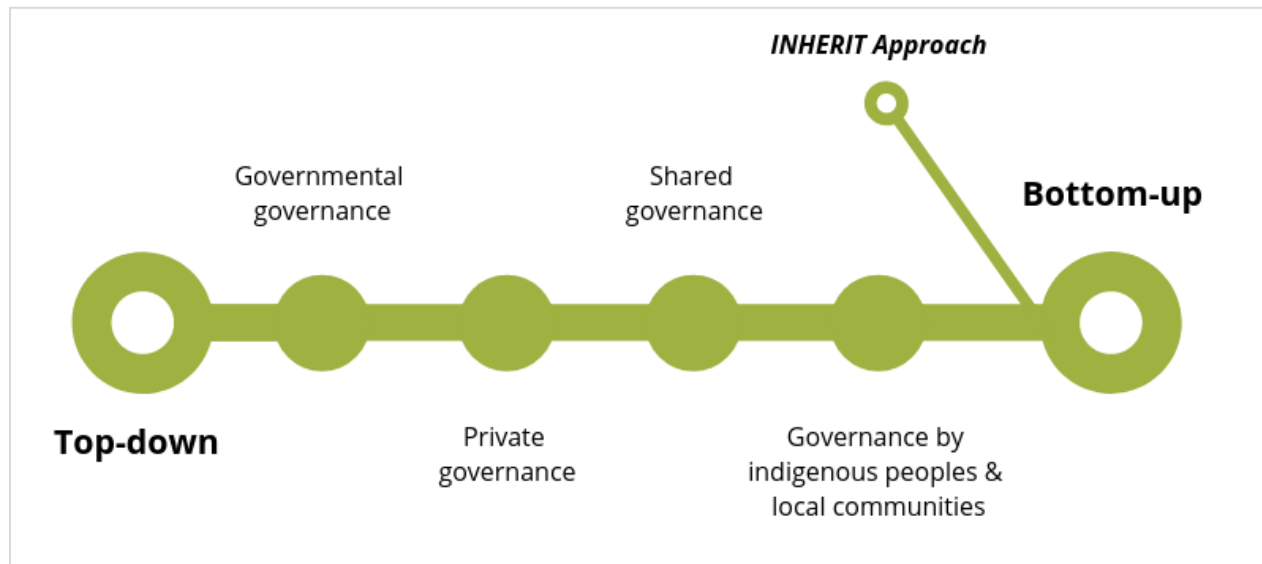
1. **Governmental governance.** In this type, one or more government bodies (such as a ministry or agency reporting directly to the government, or a sub-national or municipal body) has the sole authority, responsibility and accountability for making strategic decisions on the management of the protected area, including the definition of management and conservation objectives and the elaboration and enforcement of its management plan, and the allocation of roles (incl. resources) among all actors involved in the designation and management of the protected area. Under this governance type, all management actions, to be taken by stakeholders or local communities, require approval and authorization by governmental bodies (top-down approach).
2. **Shared governance.** This type comprises complex institutional mechanisms and processes set aside to share management authority and responsibility among more than one governmental and non-governmental actors. Collaborative governance is one form of shared governance in which there is only one body holding decision-making authority and responsibility; however it is obliged by law or policy to inform or consult other stakeholders, at the time of planning or implementing initiatives. In joint governance forms, multiple actors of various interests and background come together to create an independent governance body, which holds the sole authority to take decisions concerning the management of the protected area. In this scheme, decisions are taken by enhanced majority or consensus. Shared governance is believed to relief conflicts between central and local level as it generates increased accountability upwards and increased legitimacy downwards (Hovik and Hongslo, 2017). The most common application of shared governance schemes is found in cross-border or transboundary protected areas. This scheme involves 2 different governmental bodies to execute governance; one from each country. Decisions are taken by consensus only.
3. **Private governance.** This type includes protected area under the ownership and governance of individuals (land owners), companies, groups of people or companies (cooperatives) and non-governmental organisations. Provided that a large segment of natural heritage assets (incl. biodiversity, natural resources) is found on privately owned land, it is rationale that private sector bodies have undertaken governance and management roles in areas designated to protect natural assets. In addition, several individual landowners or businesses, being environmentally aware or as a part of a corporate social responsibility programme, pursue environmental and conservation objectives and hold a strong desire to maintain and showcase their lands' aesthetic and ecological values. Under this type of governance, landowners have the authority and responsibility to

determine management and conservation aims, develop and enforce management plans and remain in charge of decisions, subject to applicable legislation and accountable to public opinion.

4. **Governance by indigenous peoples and local communities.** This governance type comprises protected areas where the management authority and responsibility rest with indigenous peoples and/or local communities, through various forms of customary or legal, formal or informal, institutions and rules (IUCN). Under this governance regime, the indigenous peoples and/or local communities create an institutional arrangement (i.e. social contract) which is fully recognised by governmental actors as the legitimate authority to make decisions on the management of the protected area, determine the permitted uses for land, water and natural resources, and prescribe actions and opportunities for recreational and tourist activities in natural heritage sites and landmarks.

Figure 1 depicts how the different governance types for protected areas are situated in the (top down vs bottom up) planning and management spectrum. “Shared governance” and “Governance by indigenous peoples and local communities” are closer to the INHERITURA approach as they encompass collaborative arrangements for managing protected areas that allow for actions developed from the grassroots, not imposed and regulated by a central authority.

Figure 1: Top down vs bottom up planning and management spectrum



To end with, protected area governance can take place at different levels which often interact with each other (e.g. global, transnational, national, sub-national, protected area system and protected area). In some cases, one level implements management tasks and another monitors and oversees; in others, different levels need to combine their efforts and act in a coordinated way, or act consecutively following a formal horizontal hierarchy. The governance in INHERITURA areas will occur at the level of **the protected site/area** by both public authorities and relevant stakeholders such as tourism SMEs,

associations, environmental agencies, and local communities. The project will follow a **decentralised approach for site management**, in which central or **regional governments will cede power to actors and institutions at the lowest level** (e.g. tourism SMEs), and will encourage the initiation and application of **bottom-up initiatives for the protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites**.

2.4 MANAGING PROTECTED AREAS

Protected areas, such as INHERITURA sites, constantly face serious dangers that do not threaten only their ecological integrity but also ruin the social and cultural fabric of local communities, especially when they are largely dependent on natural resources and associated economic activities (agriculture, recreation and tourism). These may include climate change effects, tourism and visitor impacts, vandalism, poaching, pollution, unsustainable development and extraction activities, wildfires and extreme storms. Protected areas, therefore, require constant and effective management to respond to these issues/pressures and carry out their management responsibilities.

Management in the context of protected areas can be described as the process of aggregating and using different types of resources (e.g. human resources, competencies, financial resources, equipment, information) to accomplish specific management objectives in a directed manner and within a structured governance scheme with distinct roles and functions (Worboys and Trzyna, 2015). It is made up of 4 main functions as well as the activities and operations that are associated with them. These functions are “planning”, “organising”, “leading” and “evaluating”.

1. **Planning** is a key function of site management, concerned with setting strategic and operational objectives for an area’s future direction (based on actual environmental, economic and societal data) and determining the roles and resources to achieve those targets.
2. The **organising** function follows the planning stage. It involves the development of an organisational structure with specific roles and authorities, as well as the allocation of resources, to ensure the accomplishment of objectives. The structure of the management scheme is the framework within which all management interventions and tasks are coordinated.
3. The **leading** function includes communicating, motivating, inspiring and encouraging the different actors involved in the management of protected areas to carry out their tasks (as assigned during the previous stage) towards the accomplishment of management objectives. This function has also been described as the ‘directing’ function. This function can be manifested by executives and managers in multiple ways (mostly at a person-to person level) depending on the nature of the management action, the situational context for the action and the background, experience and competencies of the people involved.
4. The **evaluating** function contains reviewing the progress of implementation against the predefined management objectives, and taking corrective or supplementary action if necessary.

Evaluating ensures that there is effective and efficient utilization of organizational resources so as to achieve the planned goals.

2.4.1 The role of tourism in site management

Tourism, as a resource demanding industry, remains a controversial issue concerning the management of protected areas. Whereas widely recognised and promoted as a critical source of income for local communities and key driver of rural development, if unregulated, it can exert enormous stress on land use, lead to soil erosion, increased pollution and biodiversity loss, and gradually deteriorate the environmental integrity of the natural ecosystem. On the other hand, if regulated and well planned, tourism can provide growth opportunities and socioeconomic benefits to local populations, whilst contributing to the preservation of natural resources.

Nonetheless, management and conservation problems are intrinsic to tourist activity in protected areas and natural heritage sites across terrestrial and marine ecosystems. Areas set aside to promote environmental protection of valued natural assets (e.g. biodiversity or monument and landscapes) require constant and effective management to respond to issues associated with massive and seasonal tourism, including the increasing use of resources (energy and water), biodiversity and ecosystem disturbance, littering, noise making, damage to geological features, increased fire risk, soil erosion and land use changes. Some of these impacts can be so serious that they can compromise the long-term viability of natural ecosystems, change the structure and create conflicts within the society, resulting also in a decreased quality of recreational and tourism activities offered in the area.

Being responsive in a planned and effective way can alleviate tourism pressures on natural resources and support a new tourism paradigm that will built on the premises of sustainability and respect for the natural environment. Targeted management interventions, such as zoning protected areas, small-scale investments for environmental protection (e.g. installation of underground compression bins, erosion control structures), prohibiting unsustainable activities (e.g. mining, camping, husbandry), and tourist routes to experience wildlife and natural sceneries, can essentially direct main fluxes towards the least fragile sites and ecosystems, improve destinations' branding and prolong touristic season.

2.4.2 Management principles for IHERITURA areas

INHERITURA areas will be designated to promote ecological integrity and environmental protection in natural heritage sites, alleviate the pressures exerted by tourism activities, and provide opportunities for sustainable local development using natural heritage as a tourism asset. The management of INHERITURA areas should be proactive and based on the following principles to assure good governance and assure consistency with the priorities set at the EU level for sustainable tourism development.

- Tourism activities that are in harmony with nature and the conservation of the social, cultural and economic fabric of local communities surrounding or depending on natural heritage sites should be supported.
- Land, coastal and sea uses/activities that exert significant pressures on natural heritage sites and threaten their ecological integrity should not occur.
- Opportunities to experience landscapes with aesthetic value, rich in biodiversity and high environmental value should be provided through recreational and tourism activities appropriate in type and scale.
- Scientific and educational activities that will contribute to the preservation of fragile natural heritage sites and associated biodiversity as well as the long-term wellbeing of resident populations should be encouraged.
- The diversity of landscape, seascape and associated species and ecosystems should be maintained and further enhanced in cases human activity has altered their structure, intensity and functionality.
- Management practices should be applied to ensure ecologically sustainable use of natural resources.
- Management practices should be applied to address excesses in the carrying capacity and prolong the touristic season.

3 METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

3.1 PURPOSE AND RESEARCH DETAILS

The purpose of the online survey (also referred to as online consultation) was to a) define the responsible bodies and processes for managing INHERITURA areas based on a participatory and bottom-up approach that involves local communities, tourism economic operators, and public administrations and b) to identify the level of readiness and commitment of INHERIT territories to engage in such management schemes and implement protection and valorisation activities.

The scope and research details of the online consultation process are defined in the INHERIT Application Form, as follows:

- **Thematic areas:** Management scheme, Decision making and stakeholder participation, monitoring and reporting, readiness and commitment.
- **Participants:** Tourism actors and economic operators, representatives of public administrations and agencies, representatives of non-governmental organisations, academics and technical experts.
- **Data collection method:** Field survey
- **Data collection tool:** Online questionnaire
- **Geographical scope:** MED countries represented in the project consortium (Greece, Croatia, Italy, Spain, Portugal, France, Slovenia, Cyprus, Malta and Montenegro).

* The Application Form foresaw also desk research on existing management schemes with similar to INHERITURA areas purpose. This is meant to complement the results drawn from consultation with stakeholders and provide guidance towards the development of the INHERITURA management and protection plan. The results of desk research are presented in section 4.

3.2 PARTICIPANTS

The online survey aimed to include all those stakeholders that interact directly or indirectly with the management and/or use of the territory in question through their decisions or actions, maintain long-term commercial or environmental interests in natural heritage sites, and can stimulate policy developments in the field of tourism. Overall, participants in the consultation process originated from 4 target groups.

- **Representatives of public authorities.** High level executives from state departments (e.g. Ministries) and regional prefectures as well as local elected representatives.
- **Representatives of non-governmental organisations.** Representatives from non-governmental organisations and para-public institutions that create a link between the different

stakeholders from local community, but also with the State. These include environmental agencies, tourism and other professional associations, regional chambers of commerce, guilds or agriculture cooperatives.

- **Tourism economic operators.** Property and business owners (or representatives) across the natural heritage (coastal) zone, whose offerings are reliant and impact on the natural heritage they occupy. Relevant tourism facilities are accommodation providers (e.g. hotels, campsites), food and beverage (e.g. bars, pubs, and restaurants), travel agencies, leisure centres, event centres and tourist attractions.
- **Academics, scientific and technical experts.** Individuals with technical and scientific knowledge that can provide science based advice on the most efficient management techniques for protected areas. Whether they be academics, researchers, biologists, agronomists and tourism experts; they are highly involved in addressing environmental and sustainable development issues, and may have previous experience (either as members of similar management boards or as stakeholders) in the governance and management of protected areas.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION TOOL

A structured questionnaire was the main instrument employed to collect survey data. The questionnaire was designed to gather opinion-based evidence and personal views on the most efficient governance scheme and management processes to be applied to the INHERITURA network of protected areas. A web-based approach was employed for reasons of practicality, and to facilitate data collection, coding, and analysis. The questionnaire was structured in a clear and simple manner to facilitate participation. Direct communication (by e-mail or phone) with participants took also place in order to establish an initial contact, and provide potential participants with the possibility to ask for additional evidence or clarifications on the features of INHERITURA areas and the scope and objectives of the consultation process.

The survey questionnaire comprised mostly closed-ended questions as they are easier and quicker for respondents to answer; offer better coding, analysis and comparison possibilities; and can further clarify the meaning of each question through response choices. Open questions were also included (in certain cases) to allow for more detailed responses. This was mostly to enable survey participants to provide specific examples of bottom-up approaches implemented in their territory for the protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites. The online questionnaire was made up of five (5) sections:

1. Management scheme
2. Decision making and stakeholder participation
3. Monitoring and reporting
4. Readiness and commitment
5. Demographics

The online questionnaire was hosted on the EU Survey platform and remained open for 17 days from 22 February until 7 April 2019. Region of Murcia (CARM) was the partner responsible for coordinating the process, monitoring data collection and encouraging partners to invite as many industry and policy stakeholders as possible.

Interreg
Mediterranean
INHERIT

Project co-financed by the European
Regional Development Fund

What is the purpose of this research?
To help define the responsible bodies and processes for managing INHERITURA* areas, based on a participatory and bottom-up approach that involves local communities, tourism economic operators, and public administrators.

* "INHERITURA" is a label given to a coastal area of touristic interest and rich natural heritage in the Mediterranean, which utilises natural heritage as a tourism asset along with the application of environmental protection measures. Particular emphasis is placed upon sustainable tourism development through bottom-up approaches and collaborative, participatory efforts of local stakeholders.

Who should participate?
Tourism actors/economic operators, representatives of public administrations and agencies, representatives of (environmental) non-governmental organisations, as well as academics, scientific and technical experts.

How long does it take?
Approximately 15-20 minutes.

Thank you very much for your valuable contribution!

Participants are informed that responses are confidential and will only be treated quantitatively and qualitatively for the analysis.

Section A. Management scheme

*1. Who should appoint the members of the managing authority of a site with touristic interest and rich natural heritage (i.e. INHERITURA area)?

- ☒ Ministry of Environment or Tourism
- ☐ The regional or local authority responsible for the designation of the protected area

Section C. Monitoring and reporting

*12. What type of performance indicators should be primarily included in the management and protection plans of INHERITURA areas? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Indicators of resources (financial, human, material, organisational or regulatory) used by the managing authority
- ☐ Achievement indicators (level of implementation of each measure)
- ☐ Result indicators (describe the direct, short-term effects of the actions carried out)
- ☐ Impact indicators (describe the more or less long-term, indirect or inferred effects of the implemented measures)

Other (please specify)

*13. In assessing the effectiveness of measures, who should contribute by providing relevant data? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ The managing authority
- ☐ External expert(s)
- ☐ Tourism actors/economic operators
- ☐ Local communities

Other (please specify)

*14. Which entity should be responsible to determine the effectiveness and impact of protection and valorisation measures?

- ☐ The Ministry of Environment
- ☐ The Ministry of Tourism
- ☐ The regional or local authority responsible for the designation of the INHERITURA area
- ☐ The managing authority
- ☐ An external expert

4 MANAGEMENT SCHEMES WITH SIMILAR TO INHERITURA AREAS PURPOSE

This section presents the structure of 7 management plans with similar to INHERITURA areas management purposes, which are currently applied at the EU level and considered quite representative as (each one) addressing different aspects of the INHERIT approach. For instance, NATURA 2000 concentrates on preserving biological biodiversity in sensitive nature areas (environmental protection aspect); PANACHE seeks to maintain good ecological status of the marine environment in the Channel area through proper ICZM planning (sustainable development in coastal and maritime areas); England's heritage protection plans focuses on the management of specific sites and monuments addressing also promotional measures to attract visitors (protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites); and UK destination management plans focuses on the sustainable development of the tourism industry in a destination, addressing seasonality issues and directing flows towards less visited sites. These management schemes were used as case studies to receive best practices and guidance towards the development of the INHERITURA management and protection plan, offering also insights on governance and management processes employed to engage stakeholders in consultation and decision making processes.

4.1 NATURA 2000 NETWORK

Natura 2000 is the largest network of protected areas in the world. These areas include core breeding and resting sites for rare and threatened species and some rare natural habitat types. The network is made up of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) set aside respectively under the Habitats Directive and Birds Directive. The primary objective of the network, which has over 26500 sites and covers over 18% of the EU's territorial area and almost 6% of its marine territory, is to ensure the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats, and contribute to the preservation of biological biodiversity. Natura 2000 sites are classified under the first IUCN category of protected areas; namely strict natural reserve. In 2011, the managing authority of the network published a methodological guide to help the national designated and management planning authorities of terrestrial and marine Natura 2000 sites across the EU draw up or revise their management plans. The guide is a point of reference (not a binding document) that needs to be adapted to each site characteristics and management objectives. According to the guide, a management plan should comprise the following categories of information.

1. **Site description and assessment.** This chapter provides general information on the site such as physical characteristics, land tenure and climatology, an ecological appraisal of the natural habitats and species of community interest and a socioeconomic appraisal of human activities

(within or surrounding area) and their effects on species and habitats, as well as on local communities.

2. **Sustainable development objectives.** This chapter presents the sustainable development objectives set out for the conservation or restoration of natural habitats and species for which the site was designated. Sustainable development objectives (expressed in a more generic way, as primary management objectives) are translated into operational objectives, which are then linked with the measures to be put into practice in order to accomplish the management objectives.
3. **Management measures.** This section prescribes the set of measures to be implemented during the management's time plan for achieving the sustainable development goals defined in the previous chapter. The selection and prioritisation of proposed measures is based on cost-assessment and feasibility analysis that takes into consideration diverse factors such as human and technical resources, the physical characteristics of the site, administrative procedures, funding requirements and sources of finance, and local acceptability.
4. **Standard specifications for contractual agreements.** This chapter sets out the specifications to guide contractual measures that facilitate the implementation of the management plan. Relevant contractual measures may be agreements with land owners (e.g. farmers) to undertake management activities for habitats species or concern construction works (procured) which are necessary to increase the resilience of natural ecosystems.
5. **Monitoring and assessment of the management plan.** The last chapter focuses on the monitoring of the implementation of the management plan, progress reviewing towards the accomplishment of sustainable development objectives, and the assessment of the condition of the species and habitats at the site upon the completion of the prescribed management interventions.

TABLE 2: NATURA 2000 MANAGEMENT PLAN - KEY FEATURES

NATURA 2000 sites	
Protected area	Core breeding and resting sites for rare and threatened species and habitats
Category of protected area	Strict natural reserve
Governance body	Steering committee appointed by national states
Management authority	Management planning and implementation authority
Document	Guide for drawing up Natura 2000 Management Plans
Chapters included in the management plan	
Site description and assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site information (e.g. position in the network, site size and administrative boundaries, land tenure) • Inventory of species and natural habitats of community interest • Biological importance and functions • Conservation priorities (habitats and species for which measures are necessary to guarantee their conservation) • Human activities (inventory of human activities, assessing their importance in the area, assessing their impact on ecological integrity)
Sustainable development objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable development objectives in accordance with the objective of the NATURA 2000 network, consistent with biodiversity conservation targets prescribed in other programmes, and in line with any regulation applicable to the site. • Operational objectives that take forward and express more specifically the sustainable development objectives, and guide activities
Management measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Categories of measures (administrative/regulatory, land tenure based measures, measures for improving scientific knowledge, contractual measures, measures facilitating the implementation of the plan) • Feasibility assessment • Cost assessment and financing • Scheduling
Standard specifications for contractual agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specifications for contractual measures facilitate the practical implementation of the Natura 2000 Management Plan
Monitoring and assessment of the management plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicators for monitoring and evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Indicators of means (or resources) ◦ Achievement indicators ◦ Result indicators ◦ Impact indicators • Assessment reports

4.2 PANACHE NETWORK

Panache is the network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) within the Channel area. The Channel area separates southern England from northern France and links the southern part of the North Sea to the Atlantic Ocean. The network comprises 354 marine protected areas and conservation zones across the United Kingdom and France. Its mission is to reach and maintain a good ecological status of the marine environment, contributing to the conservation of endangered and vulnerable species and natural habitats. The network seeks to accomplish this mission by assessing ecological coherence in marine environments, fostering interaction between MPAs' authorities, heightening public awareness on the importance of marine protected areas, and promoting scientific research. PANACHE is adjacent to the EU legislative landscape (e.g. Convention on Biological Diversity, OSPAR Convention and Marine Strategy Framework Directive) related to the conservation of biodiversity, works towards increasing the quality of the marine environment, and supports similar initiatives such as NATURA 2000 and MEDPAN network.

The network has developed a structured guide for MPA managers to assist them with the design or revision of their management plans, adopting a common approach to the management/governance of marine protected areas on both sides of the Channel. This guide acts as a point of reference and guidance that needs to be adapted to each country's management and regulatory particularities and site-specific characteristics. The guide contains the following chapters:

1. **Regulatory instruments governing MPAs.** This chapter summarises the objectives and legal provisions covering the various categories of Marine Protected Areas, as defined in national and regional regulatory instruments.
2. **Ecological features and functions.** This chapter provides an inventory of species and natural habitats of community interest in the protected area that should be managed in an effective way to guarantee their conservation and sustain environmental integrity. It also includes an ecological appraisal (incl. their functions) of these habitats and species, and specifies MPA's responsibilities and representativeness with regards to their management.
3. **Site description.** This part of the management plan provides key information on the site's position and importance to the coastal and maritime spatial and economic locale. It explains the reasons why this area is subject to a protection regime, includes a socioeconomic appraisal of human activities taking place in the area, and presents the main threats, pressures on natural resources.
4. **Conservation objectives.** This chapter sets out long-term conservation objectives for maintaining a good conservation status for all habitats and species in the protected area. It defines the conservation status to be achieved for each feature, the resources to be allocated (referenced as requirement level) and the course of actions to achieve the conservation objectives.

- 5. Management measures.** This section should set operational objectives for each conservation aim (over the medium term) and result in specific management measures and actions to be taken to achieve these goals.
- 6. Monitoring.** The last part of the plan needs to include evaluation criteria and indicators for monitoring and measuring management effectiveness in the protected area.

TABLE 3: PANACHE MANAGEMENT PLAN - KEY FEATURES

PANACHE Marine Protected Areas	
Protected area	Marine areas with rich ecological value
Category of protected area	Specialised application (Marine Protected Area)
Governance body	Managing authority of Marine Protected Areas
Management authority	Managing authority of Marine Protected Areas
Document	Management plan tutorial for PANACHE Marine Protected Areas
Chapters included in the management plan	
Regulatory instruments governing MPAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives of the MPA, as defined in national and regional regulatory instruments Legal provisions covering the MPA Roles of the various MPA players
Ecological features and functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selection of species to be managed Selection of natural habitats to be managed Ecological appraisal and functions MPA's responsibility and representativeness with regard to those species and habitats
Site description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reasons why this marine area is under protection Socio-economic activities taking place in the marine and coastal area and their impact on biodiversity and ecological integrity Natural and human factors affecting biodiversity
Conservation objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation status to be achieved for species and habitats of community interest Requirement level (resources to be allocated and efforts to be made)
Management measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operational objectives Management measures and actions Action sheets and time scale
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicators for conservation status Assessment reports

4.3 ENGLAND'S HERITAGE PROTECTION PLAN

The National Heritage Protection Plan (NHHP), developed by the non-departmental public body “English Heritage”, is a framework for heritage protection built around a clear set of priorities and action areas that resulted from widespread consultation with key stakeholders and the civil society. It is addressed to private owners and public bodies responsible for the protection and preservation of historical sites and monuments. The protection plan seeks to ensure that England's historic environment is not needlessly at risk of damage or erosion, is accessible and enjoyed by local communities, contributes to social welfare and quality of life and helps deliver sustainable development. The plan is organised around 8 categories of measures for enhancing the protection of cultural and historical sites alongside with support actions which are necessary to ensure their successful delivery. Half of the measures comprise the collection of evidence/data while the rest focus on practical activities. Each measure is structured into priority themes for actions, called activities. The plan is meant to ensure effective protection through local empowerment and coordinated efforts. The framework is divided into the following components.

- **Measure 1 – Foresight.** This chapter is focused on identifying likely threats, impact & opportunities that will help to define or revise priorities for actions through appropriate intelligence gathering and trends analysis in fields such as climate change, ICT development and social transformation.
- **Measure 2 – Strategic Threat Assessment.** This chapter includes assessing the magnitude of potential negative impact of different natural processes and human activities on historical and cultural heritage and setting the ground for appropriate response actions based on validated evidence.
- **Measure 3 – Recognition and Identification of the Potential Resource.** This part of the protection plan aims at documenting natural and historical assets that have not been previously identified as historically or environmentally valuable and are at risk of erosion or distinction. This is true more of buried archaeology and hard-to-access landscapes than it is of standing structures.
- **Measure 4 - Assessment of Character and Significance.** This chapter concentrates on a range of themes and places which have proven (during the consultation) to be insufficiently understood or even underestimated but demonstrate high significance in terms of their heritage values.
- **Measure 5 – Protection of Significance.** This measure works towards the development of formal protection systems for undesignated heritage assets. These may include management and protection plans, expansion of historic environment records and strategic designation programmes.
- **Measure 6 - Management of Planned Change in the Historic Environment.** This measure covers the management of change to places through actions targeting to ensure well-informed decision making by competence bodies.

- **Measure 7 - Managing major holdings of historic assets.** This measure set outs the general activities for the protection and management of the historic environment.
- **Measure 8 - Help and advice for owners.** The final measure focuses on the need of financial assistance and expert advice to perform management tasks, including protection measures.
- **Supporting actions.** These include cross-cutting activities, which do not themselves protect natural and historical heritage but support the implementation of core measures by ensuring local communities' engagement and understanding, providing the necessary skills and advice, and ensuring knowledge transfer.

TABLE 4: NATIONAL HERITAGE PROTECTION PLAN - KEY FEATURES

NATIONAL HERITAGE PROTECTION PLAN	
Protected area/sites	Historic buildings, sites and monuments (incl. natural assets)
Category of protected area	(Natural) monument or feature
Governance body	Private owners and public bodies in charge of historical buildings or sites
Management authority	Private owners and public bodies in charge of historical buildings or sites
Document	National heritage protection plan (framework)
Chapters included in the management plan	
Foresight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts of wider long-term changes • Mechanisms to identify flexible/timely responses to changes
Strategic Threat Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development-based threats • Social threats to significance • Natural and Environmental threats • Resource exploitation threats • Professional infrastructure threat
Recognition and Identification of the Potential Resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of heritage assets and their significance
Assessment of Character and Significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban and public realm • Transport, infrastructure and industry • Sport, leisure and entertainment • Worship and commemoration • Rural settlement and land-use • Alluvial and wetland archaeology • Marine assets and landscapes
Protection of Significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designation and registration tools • Management Frameworks • Historic Environment Records

NATIONAL HERITAGE PROTECTION PLAN	
Management of Planned Change in the Historic Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing change in the historic environment • Strategic Condition Monitoring
Managing major holdings of historic assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection and management of major holdings of historic assets
Help and advice for owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice and grant-aid to reduce risk or replace unavoidable loss with knowledge gain
Supporting actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-economic research • Capacity building • Information management • Community engagement

4.4 UK DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLANS

VisitBritain, the national tourism organisation for the UK (non-departmental public body), has delivered a manual with principles behind the elaboration and (subsequent implementation) of destination management plans. This guide is addressed to destination management organisations, which may be a single public or private entity or an informal partnership that has a leading role in the management and development of tourism in a destination, and is therefore responsible for the creation of its management plan. A Destination Management Plan (DMP) is a shared statement of intent within a local community to manage a destination over a stated period of time, setting a strategic direction and operational objectives, prescribing concrete and prioritised actions and the apportionment of resources, and articulating the roles of the different stakeholders (that share the same vision) for their delivery. The plan should cover all the fundamental aspects of destination management including i) tourism performance and (environmental and socioeconomic) impact, ii) working structures and communications (partnerships), iii) destination branding and marketing, iv) product and service mix, and v) development and environmental needs, and growth opportunities. Either as members of the destination management organisation or as stakeholders and partners, the management scheme should involve key tourism businesses, local administrations, civil society, research institutes, and heritage partners, to guarantee a balance of different (and potentially conflicting) interests. The guide foresees four stages in the development of a destination management plan.

- 1. Gathering the evidence.** Destination management plans should be evidence based rather than being built on assumptions or on limited knowledge and opinion. At a first stage, the plan needs to establish the image/profile of the tourism industry in the destination, indicating how it is performing within the local context. It should highlight tourism importance and its contribution to the destination's local economy and social cohesion, providing a detailed documentation and

socioeconomic appraisal of current offering, assessing current and future trends (e.g. seasonality, visitor arrivals, revenues).

2. **Setting the direction.** Based on the evidence reported in the previous section, the plan should provide a direction for all tourism stakeholders in the destination by setting strategic objectives and priorities for sustainable tourism development over a stated period of time. Priority areas to consider may include the seasonality of the tourism, the need to develop new services, the spread and intensity of tourism activity, and the protection of fragile natural assets or historic sites. For instance, a strategic objective could be to develop and promote new products and experiences that the defined target markets will enjoy at different times of the year, decreasing seasonality.
3. **Identifying the action.** Destination management plans should prescribe clear action plans to form the basis for their implementation. All actions to be included in the plan should be guided by the strategic objectives and relate back to them in the way they are framed, selected and prioritised. The plan should present the rationale for each action, its timing, indicative cost and resources required, responsible body and key stakeholders involved as well as possible funding sources.
4. **Measuring progress and keeping it going.** The plan needs to contain a dynamic reporting process and key performance indicators to review progress and assess its impact. Destination management should be regarded as a dynamic process that should be kept relevant and alive by constant reporting, monitoring, and renewing.

TABLE 5: UK DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN - KEY FEATURES

UK DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN	
Protected area/sites	Tourism destinations
Category of protected area	n/a
Governance body	Destination management organisations
Management authority	Destination management organisations
Document	Principles for destination management plans
Chapters included in the management plan	
Gathering the evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowing the product • Understanding current performance • Listening to visitors • Understanding businesses • Identifying local issues • Reflecting external trends • Assessing the destination's competitor set
Setting the direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lining up with existing policies • Shaping the approach together • Summarising the situation – SWOT • Shaping the strategic direction and priorities • Preparing a vision statement • Identifying strategic objectives and targets
Identifying the action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covering the ground • Identifying and defining actions • Allocating roles and securing commitment
Measuring progress and keeping it going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting and maintaining the DMP • Selecting indicators and undertaking monitoring • Reviewing and renewing the Destination Management Plan

4.5 ISLE OF MAN

The Isle of Man is a self-governing British Crown dependency in the Irish Sea between England and Ireland. The isle is famous for its rugged coastline, medieval castles, and rural landscape, rising to a mountainous centre. The Isle of Man is a popular tourist destination especially for the British, offering a wide range of tourism activities to satisfy the diverse needs of visitors. For instance, the Isle of Man TT is a major annual cross-country motorcycle race around the island, attracting hundreds of tourists from across Europe and providing an extraordinary experience to motorsports enthusiasts. Recent statistics, however, show that the volume of visits to the Isle of Man over the last 12 years has steadily fallen by an average of 1.7% a year. This has led regional authorities to develop a comprehensive management plan for the period 2016-2020 with specific measures and targets, to respond to the challenges the tourism industry in the island is facing and strengthen destination's position in the marketplace. The overriding purpose is to promote and develop the Isle of Man as a place to visit, live, work and invest. The Destination Management Plan comprises the following categories of information:

1. **State of play.** This chapter provides general information to shape the profile and present the situation at hand in the destination and (natural assets, visitor attractions, events). It also explains the reasons why a coordinated approach is needed to advance the sector and address the challenges the destination is facing. In addition, this section provides specific information regarding the current performance of the Isle of Man tourism, which is broken down into three sections: current offer, trends, and forecast.
2. **Sustainable development objectives.** This chapter presents the sustainable development objectives set out for turning the Isle of Man into a quality leisure visitor destination. This chapter focuses on the targets for success as well as the as on the 'road' getting there.
3. **Action plan.** This section prescribes the set of measures to be implemented during the management's time plan for achieving the sustainable development goals defined in the previous chapter. The selection and prioritization of proposed measures is based on research and feasibility analysis taking into consideration diverse factors such as the creation of effective partnerships, the promotion of the Isle of Man's image and boost its strengths in order to target markets, the creation of tourism services of exceptional quality, the encouragement of a new investment and product development and the creation and maintenance of a programme of market intelligence to direct strategy and measure achievement.

TABLE 6: ISLE OF MAN, DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN - KEY FEATURES

Isle of Man – Destination Management Plan 2016-2020	
Protected area	Isle of Man
Category of protected area	Tourism destination
Governance body	Local authority
Management authority	Local authority
Document	Destination Management Plan 2016-2020
Chapters included in the management plan	
State of play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research into the current Isle of Man offering, perception and potential markets have been taken into account. • Current Offer's categories: TT, nature, visitor attractions, culture, events, accommodation, infrastructure. • Trends on visitors' volume and profile over the last 12 years, as well as on seasonality and accommodation sector. • Forecast by visitor type that presents that whilst there is predicted to be continued growth in leisure visitors, visiting friends and relatives, volumes continue steadily to fall and business visitor volume continues to fall significantly.
Sustainable development objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mission and the aim of the DMP is to promote and develop the Isle of Man as a quality leisure tourism destination through implementing strategies to increase economic and social benefits from tourism and the visitor economy. • Effective destination management requires the engagement between the following key partners: the Government, the visitor economy strategy group and the local engagement.
Strategic objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS: Building new kinds of partnership working across public and private sector tourism interests to deliver the DMP's vision and mission. OBJECTIVE: To have consistent private/public marketing of the Isle of Man as a destination. This will lay a solid foundation for product and market development. • PROMOTION & MARKETING: Promoting the Isle of Man's distinctive image and offering to strengthen existing and attract new, year-round growth markets. OBJECTIVE: To define target markets and use cross-platform marketing campaigns to raise awareness. This will define the market areas for growth in line with the 20% target increase.

Isle of Man – Destination Management Plan 2016-2020	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VISITOR EXPERIENCE: Providing an exceptional visitor experience that creates lasting positive memories and compels visitors to return and recommend the Isle of Man to others. <u>OBJECTIVE</u>: Work with industry partners to ensure that the tourism offering continues to improve and grow, giving visitors a high quality and memorable experience. • PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT: In line with market needs and opportunities create a positive environment for investment and reinvestment in product development. <u>OBJECTIVE</u>: Develop and create new products and experiences that the defined target markets will enjoy at different times of the year. This will help to achieve growth in the market areas as well as achieve a longer tourism season. • RESEARCH & INTELLIGENCE: Creating and maintaining a strong programme of market intelligence gathering on which to base strategy and measure achievement <u>OBJECTIVE</u>: To ensure the continued development of products and markets is supported by comprehensive research to ensure maximum effectiveness of the strategic objectives.

4.6 PLITVICE LAKES NATIONAL PARK

As an area of exceptional natural beauty, the Plitvice Lakes (Croatia) has been designated as a national park on the initiative of the respected scientist Ivo Pevalek, who was the first to study the phenomenon of tufa formation and was continually stressing the importance of their protection since 1926. The Plitvice Lakes constitute the oldest and best known Croatian national park, whose uniqueness has been recognised worldwide. The Plitvice Lakes were registered in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1979. The Park has established sound cooperation with many institutions, non-governmental organizations and individuals at the national and international levels, and from 2003 to 2007 it was encompassed by the “Karst Ecosystem Conservation” (KEC) Project sponsored by the World Bank and the Croatian Government, and the ministry in charge of environmental protection. The Park is a key driver for regional sustainable development, attracting hundreds of visitors every year and providing local communities with stable and vital income. The Park offers unique experiences to visitors, taking advantage of its natural environment and the range of recreational possibilities offered in the area. The Park is administered through a comprehensive management plan, which comprises the following categories of information:

1. **Vision.** This chapter provides general information on the site, used as introductory in order to present the park and locate in the international context of the sustainable tourism analysis. Furthermore, this section provides specific information regarding the vision of the future and the general aims of the Plitvice Lakes National Park.
2. **Current status and values of the park.** This chapter presents the existing status of the Plitvice Lakes National Parks, providing the legislative framework underlying the management plan, introducing the managing authority, responsible for the implementation of the plan and all the necessary information included (infrastructures and financial). Furthermore, it deciphers natural values such as geology and habitats while providing information on the population and cultural heritage of Plitvice Lakes.
3. **Sustainable development and conservation objectives.** This section prescribes the set of objectives and the measures to be implemented during the management’s time plan for achieving the sustainable development goals for the park. The selection and prioritization of proposed measures is based on research and feasibility analysis taking into consideration diverse factors such as biodiversity, cultural heritage, research, etc.
4. **Implementation.** The final chapter provides solid action plans for implementation in the framework of the Plitvice Lakes National Park management plan and outlines the financial aspects and cost estimates. This section also provides information on the monitoring tools to be used for measuring progress towards the attainment of the defined sustainable development and conservation objectives.

TABLE 7: MANAGEMENT PLAN OF THE PLITVICE LAKES NATIONAL PARK - KEY FEATURES

Plitvice Lakes National Park	
Protected area	Plitvice Lakes
Category of protected area	National park
Governance body	Plitvice Lakes National Park Public Institution
Management authority	Plitvice Lakes National Park Public Institution
Document	Management Plan of Plitvice Lakes
Chapters included in the management plan	
Vision	<p>The vision statement constitutes the foundation for developmental decision-making in the Park, and all activities must lead to its actualization. To achieve this vision, the following long-term objectives have been set:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve the unique karst biological diversity by facilitating natural processes and securing protection of the area with negligible human impact. • Cooperation between the local community and the Park's management to plan and implement local development. • Secure visitor access to the authentic experience of the National Park's value. <p>The three fundamental objectives foreseen for the long-term sustainable management of the Park are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation: to conserve biological and landscape diversity and the cultural heritage in perpetuity. • Education and recreation: to promote understanding of the importance of conservation and protection of its natural value and cultural heritage, and enjoyment of the pristine natural environment and other specific qualities of the Park. • Strengthening the local community: to reinforce cooperation initiated with the local community in sustainable use of the Park's natural resources with the objective of local and regional economic growth and development, ensuring income for the local community and the creation of new jobs.

Plitvice Lakes National Park	
Current status and values of the park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional and legislative framework • Presentation of the Public Institution of the Park • Natural value of the Plitvice Lake National park including indicators such as: geology, hydrology and soils, climate, landscape, land cover and habitats. • Population of cultural heritage in the territory • Visitors and tourism
Sustainable development and conservation objectives	<p>Objectives and measures fall into the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity (forests, water ecosystems, grasslands) • Cultural heritage • Research • Tourism, marketing and visits • Infrastructures (roads etc.) • Local population (land ownership and regulations) • Zoning concept
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action plans (biological and landscape diversity, marketing and visitor system, cultural heritage, property title issues and local community / public) • Financing aspects and cost estimates • Monitoring procedures • Adaptive management

4.7 ISLE OF WIGHT

The Isle of Wight (UK) sits on the fringe of one of the most thriving regional economies, however, is far enough away to be different. The impact of tourism on the Isle of Wight is extensive. The island's economic, environmental and social well-being is fundamentally influenced by the way in which the tourism industry operates. Tourism's worth on the island economy exceeds half a billion pounds. It currently generates £360 million of direct tourist expenditure, £25 million from visiting yachts and a further £150 million through the multiplier effect on suppliers and income induced spending. It also supports over 20% of jobs on the island. The local Council has developed in conjunction with local stakeholders a comprehensive management plan to address the challenges the island is facing and promote sustainable tourism. The Tourism Development Plan aims to ensure that the Isle of Wight will maximise the potential of the tourism industry and enable it to grow in a way that is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable. The plan comprises the following categories of information:

1. **Value, challenges, and vision.** This chapter provides general information on the site, used as introductory in order to present the value of tourism for the island and the challenges to be faced in the future. In parallel it provides the Management Plan's vision for the Isle of Wight for 2020 and outlines the strategic hierarchy, mentioning as well the key customer groups.
2. **Destination management.** This chapter presents the main axis of the management plan in regards to the bedrock for development, the analysis of sector-specific issues involving tourists and tourism services. Finally, this section provides a green tourism plan including important information on sustainable tourism.
3. **Destination marketing.** This section prescribes the set of objectives and the measures to be implemented during the management's time plan for in order to create a new image for the Isle of Wight and promote its sustainable development goals. This section provides a selection of diverse marketing tools in order to support the strategy, with emphasis on the diffusion of technological innovation.
4. **Working smarter.** The final chapter provides solid information that will help with the implementation of the plan for the Isle of Wight. This section includes the identification of key players, the allocation of responsibilities and roles, and the description of monitoring and evaluation procedures.

TABLE 8: ISLE OF WIGHT, TOURISM MANAGEMENT PLAN - KEY FEATURES

ISLE OF WIGHT	
Protected area	Isle of Wight
Category of protected area	Tourism destination
Governance body	Isle of Wight Council
Management authority	Isle of Wight Council
Document	Tourism Development Plan Isle of Wight
Chapters included in the management plan	
Value, challenges and vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism offering <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 1500 commercial accommodation establishments on the island, including 400 Hotels and Guest Houses ○ 1000 units of self-catering and 80 Holiday & Camping parks accounting for nearly 44,000 bed-spaces. ○ Staying Visitors account for 1.56 million (59%) of the visits ○ Day Visitors account for 1.07 million (41%) of the visits ○ The average length of stay is 4.4 nights • Challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meeting customer needs ○ Building confidence ○ Ensuring sustainability • Vision: "A progressive island built on economic success, high standards and aspirations and a better quality of life for all."
Destination management	Priority areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement in Skills and Training • Increasing the quality of the Natural and Built Environment • Improving public transport Infrastructures
Destination marketing	Marketing Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To raise the general profile of the Isle of Wight in the domestic and overseas market place • To reposition the Isle of Wight brand in accordance with the proposed key customer groups and Inspire Branding Programme • To increase reach and penetration to the proposed Key Customer Groups in order to increase yield and reduce seasonality problems • To maximise the opportunities available through the development of the internet and information technology generally.

ISLE OF WIGHT	
Working smarter	<p>Short-Term Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Development Team to engage with potential major planning applications at an early stage Review outcome of Hotel Sector Futures Study and Holiday Parks Audit and Future Market Study and inform LDF process Ensure that potential new Tourist Attraction developments will bring a net additional benefit to the island Assess new planning applications or potential approaches for new or indigenous attraction developments. <p>Medium Term Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt a responsive and proactive approach to new development. <p>Long Term Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure the most economically, socially and environmentally beneficial new developments for the island.

5 ONLINE CONSULTATION RESULTS

This section presents the main findings drawn from the online consultation, and more especially from the statistical analysis of participants' replies on the survey. Stakeholders' views and perceptions on efficient management techniques, coupled with evidence from existing management schemes with similar to INHERITURA areas scope, will help to define the responsible bodies and processes for managing INHERITURA areas. These will be also used to assess the readiness and commitment of INHERIT territories to engage in participatory management schemes for supporting the protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites, and promoting sustainable tourism development. The measurement areas and variables analysed are the following:

- **Management scheme**
 - Appointing authority
 - Composition of management board
 - Criteria for selecting management board members
 - Serving period
 - Board's role in implementation (executive or advisory)
- **Decision making and stakeholder participation**
 - Decision making approach
 - Functions served through stakeholders' engagement
 - Level of stakeholders' participation in the management of INHERITURA areas
 - Methods for stakeholder engagement
 - Funding sources
- **Monitoring and reporting**
 - Performance indicators
 - Entities involved in reporting and data collection activities
 - Entity responsible to assess the effectiveness of measures
 - Frequency of assessment reports
- **Readiness and commitment**
 - Previous experience in bottom-up approaches
 - Barriers to effective collaboration
 - Territorial reality
 - Willingness to participate in the management of INHERITURA areas

There will be 2 levels of analysis. The total number of responses will be taken into account in order to define the management scheme of INHERITURA areas (the first 3 measurement areas) while a country level analysis will be carried out for assessing the level of readiness and commitment of INHERIT territories, to engage in participatory management schemes. The results of each (survey) question are

presented using tables and charts (graphs). The structure of the analysis that follows is mostly based on the structure of the online questionnaire and the sequence of questions included.

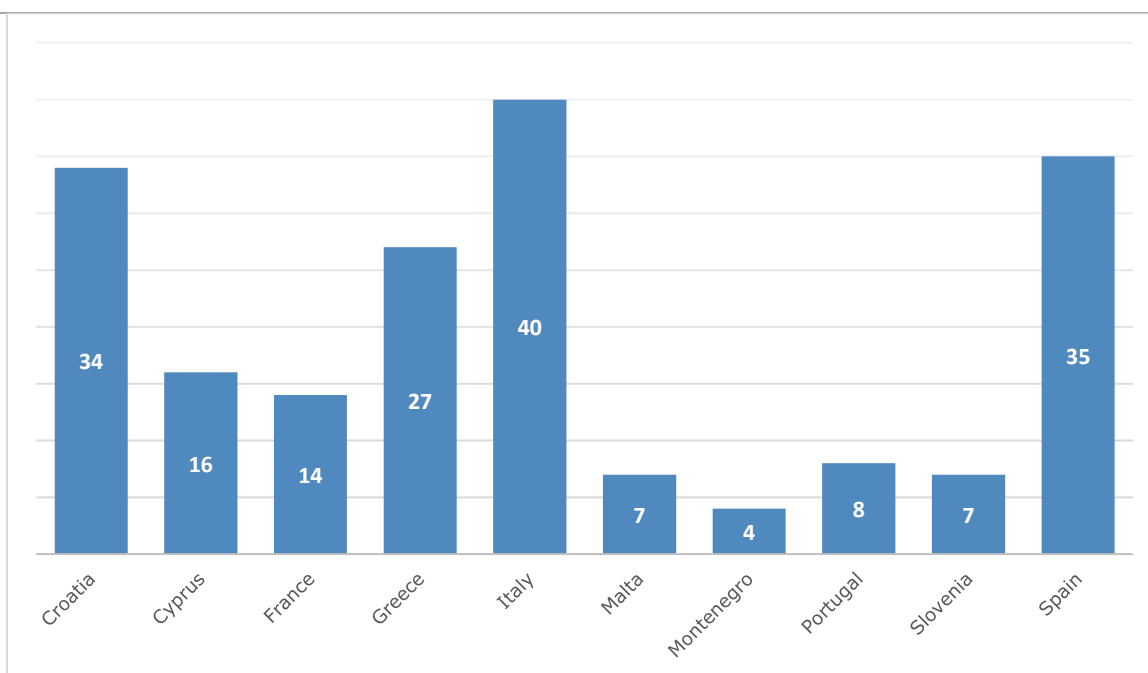
5.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

In total, 192 individuals participated in the online survey, advising on responsible bodies and processes for effectively managing INHERITURA areas. Survey participants included both industry and policy stakeholders from all partnership countries (Croatia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Montenegro, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain). The results are deemed representative in terms of geographical distribution and diversity of target groups.

The following figure portrays the geographical distribution of the resulting sample by country of residence. Italy was found to participate with the highest rate, accounting for 21% (40 stakeholders) of the total sample. Spain and Croatia follow with approximately 18% rate of participation each (34 and 35 answers respectively). Greece contributed to the survey with 27 responses, followed by Cyprus and France with 16 and 14 responses respectively. All consortium partners have more or less equally contributed to the online consultation with participants and responses from all target groups, demonstrating a high level of commitment. They also managed to reach the ambitious targets set in the methodology report, despite the narrow time frame for this research activity.

Participation in online survey

Responses per country, n=192

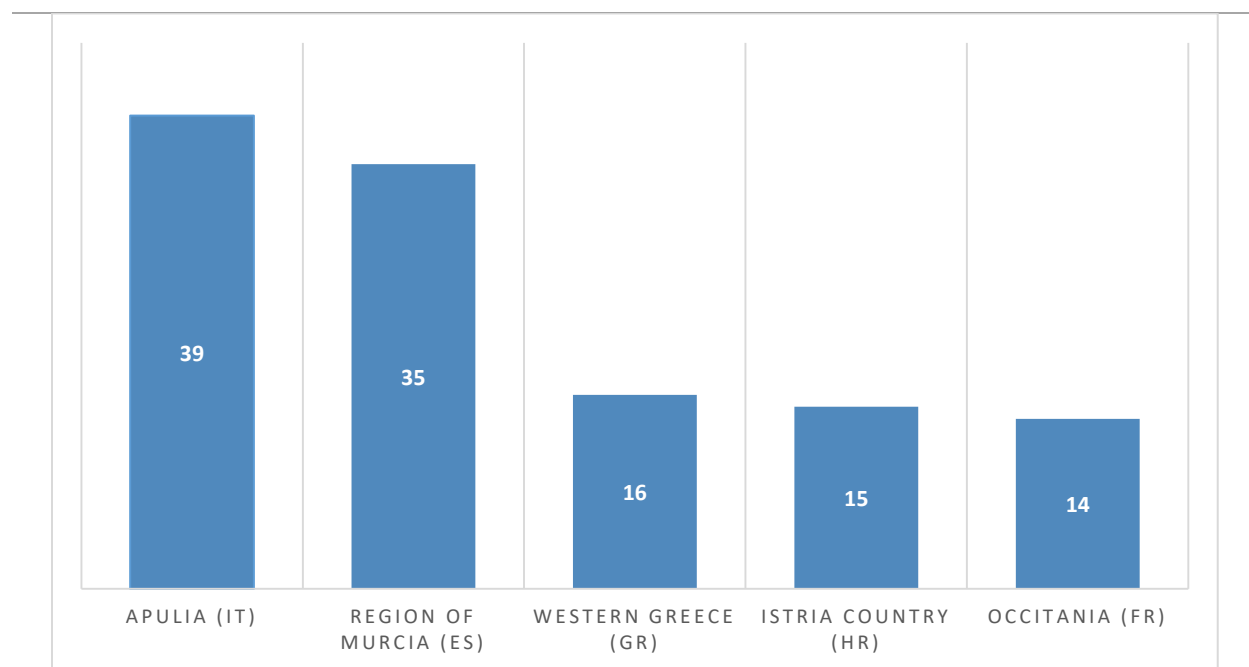


Source: INHERIT A3.12 results

The next figure depicts the NUTS2 regions with double-digit participation in the survey. In total, stakeholders from 40 different NUTS2 regions took part in the survey. Monitoring distribution from a regional (breakdown) perspective, a significant share of survey participants comes from Apulia Region (Italy) with 39 individuals. Region of Murcia (ES) and Western Greece (GR) follow with 35 and 19 participants respectively. Istria County (HR) and Occitania (FR) share also double-digit number of responses with 16 and 15 respectively. The remaining number of responses is unequally distributed to 35 NUTS2 regions from partnership countries. The low number of responses gathered from different MED regions, despite the overall high representation of regions in the sample, leaves no room for a statistical analysis at NUTS2 level.

Participation in online survey

NUTS2 regions with double-digit responses, n=192



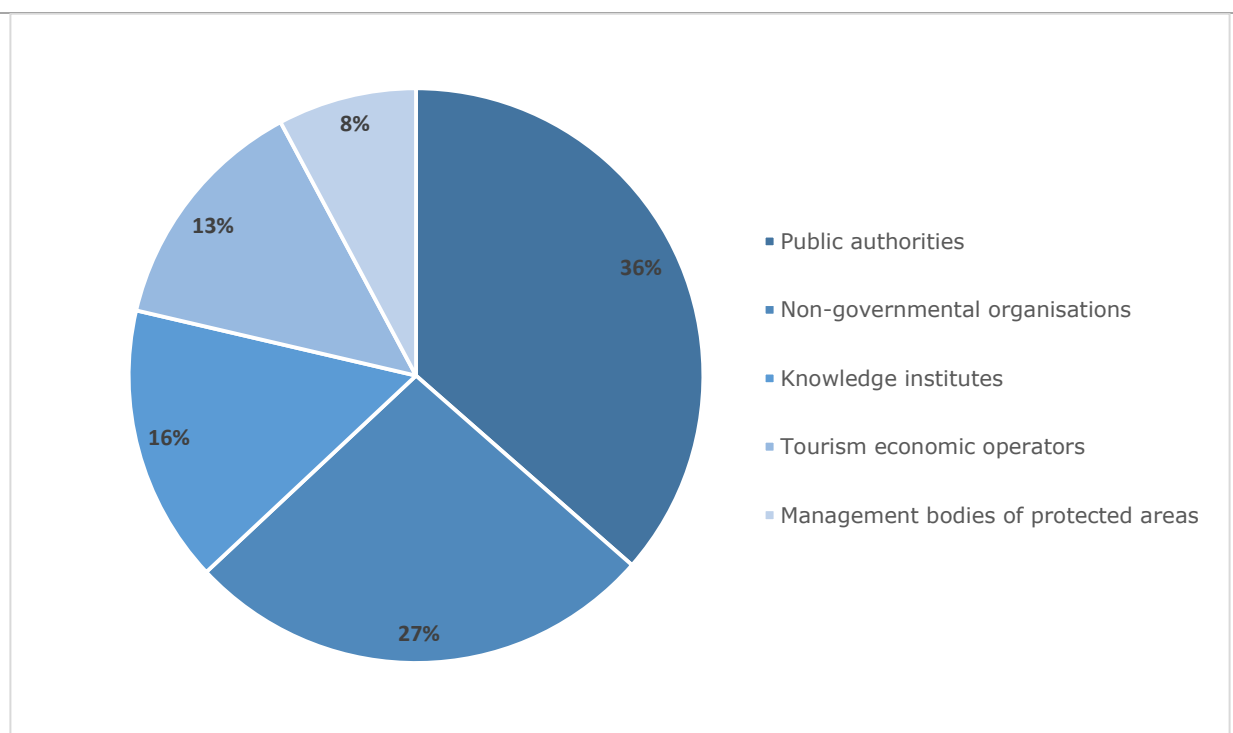
Source: INHERIT A3.12 results

The survey was addressed to public and private stakeholders that can be directly or indirectly affected by INHERITURA areas. Each participant represents either a public administration, a non-profit organisation, a tourism enterprise, a knowledge institution or a management body of protected areas, located in the partnership countries. The majority of participants (36%, 70 participants) comprise representatives of regional and local public administrations. Public authorities, are the entities which can take the initiative to designate the area and are eligible to apply for the INHERITURA label. Representatives of local and regional authorities can be also appointed as members in the management agency of established INHERITURA areas. Non-profit organisations, which may be environmental

organisations, development agencies, professional associations, civil society organisations, chambers of commerce, account for 27% of the resulting sample. Knowledge institutions and tourism economic operators follow with 16% and 14% rate of participation respectively. Despite a lower number of observations compared to public authorities, the number of responses gathered from tourism actors during the online consultation is well enough to provide insights from the tourism industry and valuate businesses' willingness to participate in the preservation and proactive management of natural heritage sites. The following figure shows the distribution of participants by type of organisation represented.

Survey respondents per type of organisation they represent

% of respondents, n=192



Respondents	Number
Public authorities	70
Non-governmental organisations	51
Knowledge institutes	30
Tourism economic operators	26
Management bodies of protected areas	15
Total	192

Source: INHERIT A3.12 results

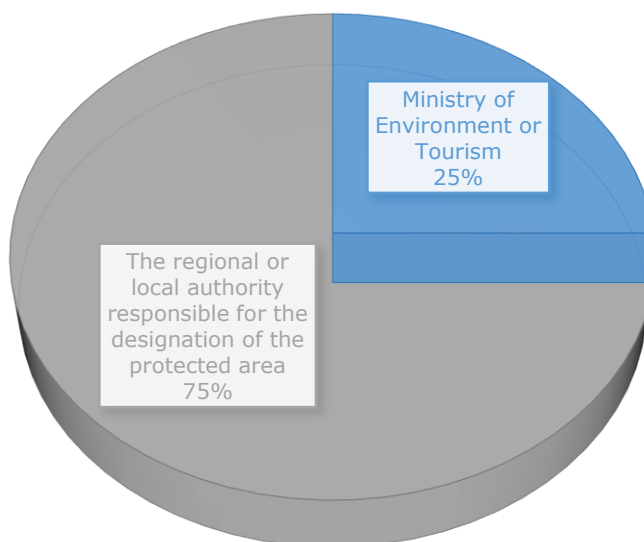
5.2 MANAGEMENT SCHEME

Good governance is crucial for effective conservation of sites with ecological value and sustainable tourism development. This section aims to outline the management scheme for INHERITURA areas addressing issues related to the composition and role of the management board (incl. criteria for selecting its members, and serving period), as well as specifying the authority/body responsible to appoint board members.

The first question addressed to stakeholders was related to the public entity holding the authority to appoint the members of the managing authority of INHERITURA areas. Results clearly demonstrate a wide consensus towards a decentralised, localised approach. Three out of four respondents (144 individuals) perceive that regional and local authorities should be charged not only with the designation of INHERITURA areas but also with the selection of the members of the managing authority. Survey participants find subnational authorities better suited to select and appoint the members of the board of the management agency, compared to national authorities.

Who should appoint the members of the managing authority of an INHERITURA area?

% of respondents, n=192



Authority	Number
Ministry of Environment or Tourism	48
The regional or local authority responsible for the designation of the protected area	144
Total	192

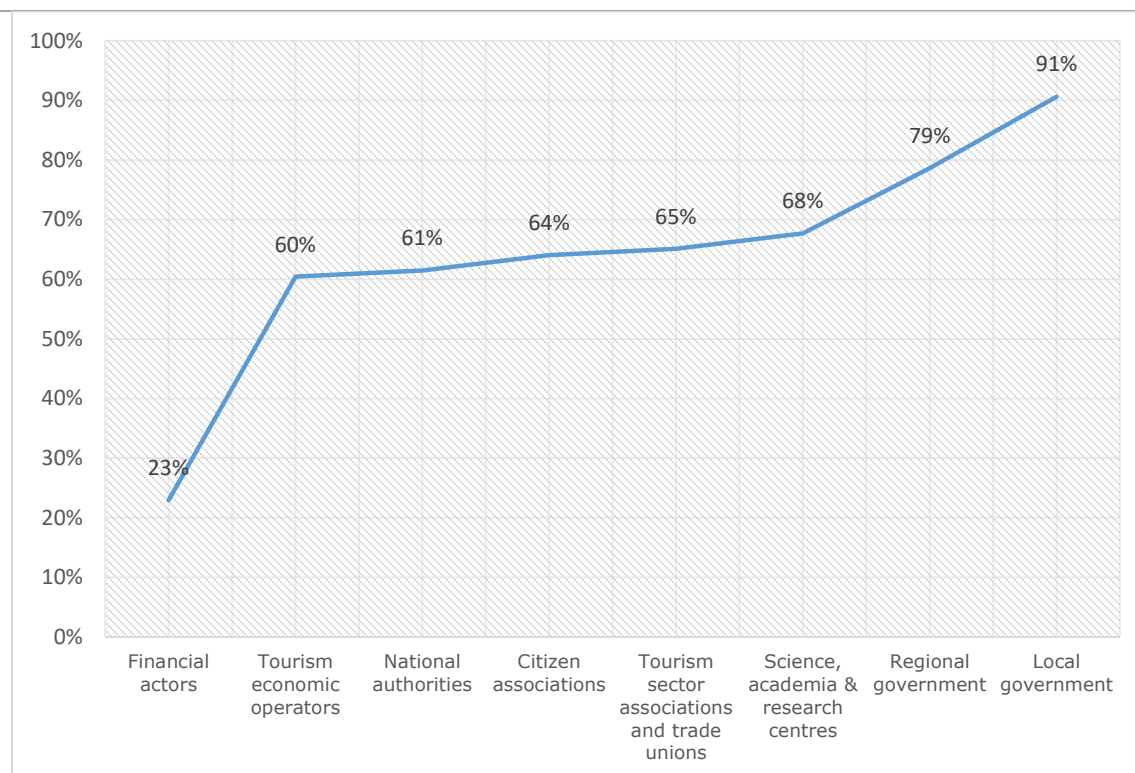
Source: INHERIT A3.12 results

The reasons may be that they know better territorial reality and the conservation and management needs of natural heritage sites located. It is particularly important the appointing authority to be aware of the different land uses and tourism activities taking place on the area concerned, and know which stakeholders have long-term commercial or environmental interests in natural heritage sites, can support the transition to a sustainable mode of tourism development and interact directly or indirectly with the management and/or use of future INHERITURA areas through their decisions and activity. What is more, as reported during the consultation, regional and local authorities are considered to be more concerned about environmental and sustainable development issues, as they have been forced to actively deal with the impacts caused by unsustainable tourism activity on local cultural and natural assets and finally their experience in the area facilitates the adoption of more bespoke for the sites management plans.

The results of the online consultation demonstrate that INHERITURA areas will need to adopt a participatory management model that will involve all those stakeholders who have a direct or indirect influence on the designated area, and can contribute to its management through different ways and functions. According to survey results, almost all categories of stakeholders (to assure representation of diverse interests) shall be represented in the managing authority of INHERITURA areas. Local and regional governments gather the highest percentages, selected by 91% and 79% of participants respectively. For the rest categories of stakeholders, it is observed a similar perception, as the percentages range from 68% for science, academia and research centres, and 60% for tourism economic operators. These two categories along with tourism and civic associations and national authorities should have a distinct role in the managing authority of INHERITURA areas. Interestingly, survey participants have shown some reluctance towards the involvement of financial actors, (only 23% of respondents endorsed this options). This percentage may be explained from peoples' relatively negative attitude towards financial institutions, mostly questioning their motives and eagerness to support actions and investments whose primary goal is to bring a positive impact in the society rather than make profits.

Which stakeholders should be represented in the managing authority of INHERITURA areas?

% of respondents, selected answers

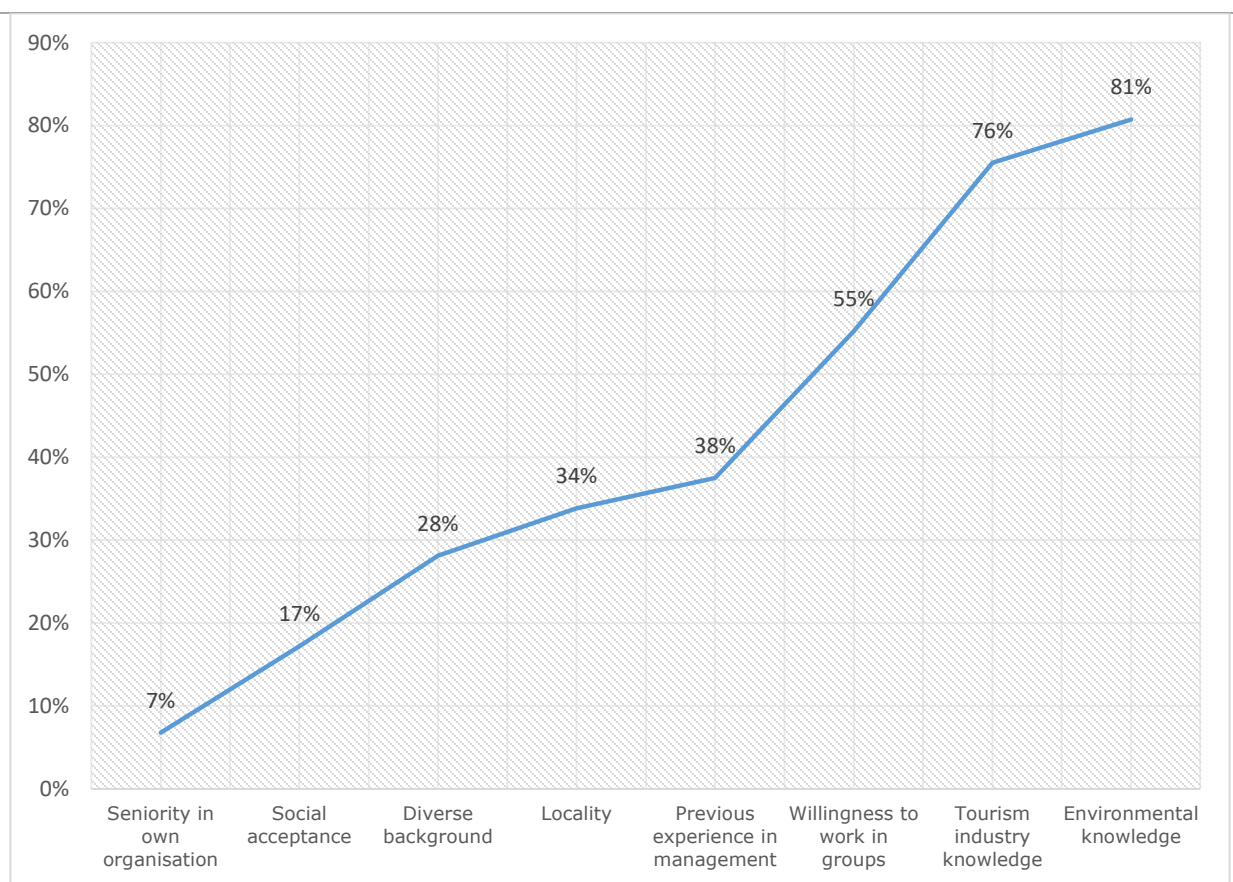


Source: INHERIT A3.12 results

At a next stage, respondents were asked to select the criteria that should be used for appointing the members of the managing authority. Cognisance on environmental issues was found to be the most pronounced quality for board members, followed by tourism industry knowledge. Environmental and tourism industry knowledge is not unfairly in this position as the management and development of INHERITURA areas will be a challenging and composite process requiring adequate and precise knowledge and skills. Furthermore, 55% perceive that individuals' willingness to work in groups is a key element for smooth collaboration, also regarded as success factor that assures the attainment of strategic and operational objectives for an INHERITURA area. Criteria such as locality, diverse backgrounds, social acceptance/popularity and seniority are more seen as complementary qualities rather than core ones.

Criteria for selecting the members of such a managing authority

% of respondents, selected answers

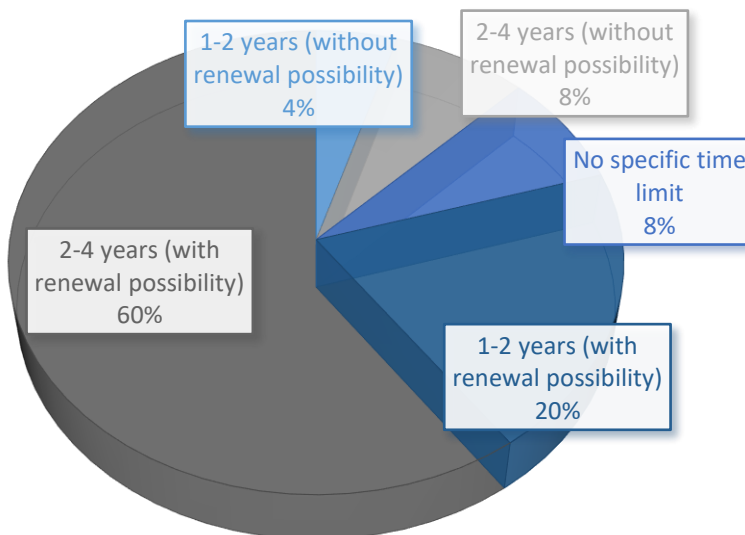


Source: INHERIT A3.12 results

Another issue that the survey examines is the optimal serving period for the members of the managing authority (terms of office). It can be inferred that there is a consensus leaning towards 2-4 years with renewal possibility, with three out of five stakeholders opting for this approach. This seems rather reasonable considering that a managing authority needs to have sufficient time to implement its plan and for the results to become evident. By allowing the extension of serving period, managing authorities (with the same composition) will be able to pursue long-term objectives, capitalise on previous work, and achieve wider impact and more sustainable results. In addition, the use of participatory and democratic approaches in decision making (coupled by supervision from the INHERIT committee and the designation authority) will minimise the risk of mishandlings and any type of exploitation to be potentially committed by board members.

Serving period

% of respondents, n=192



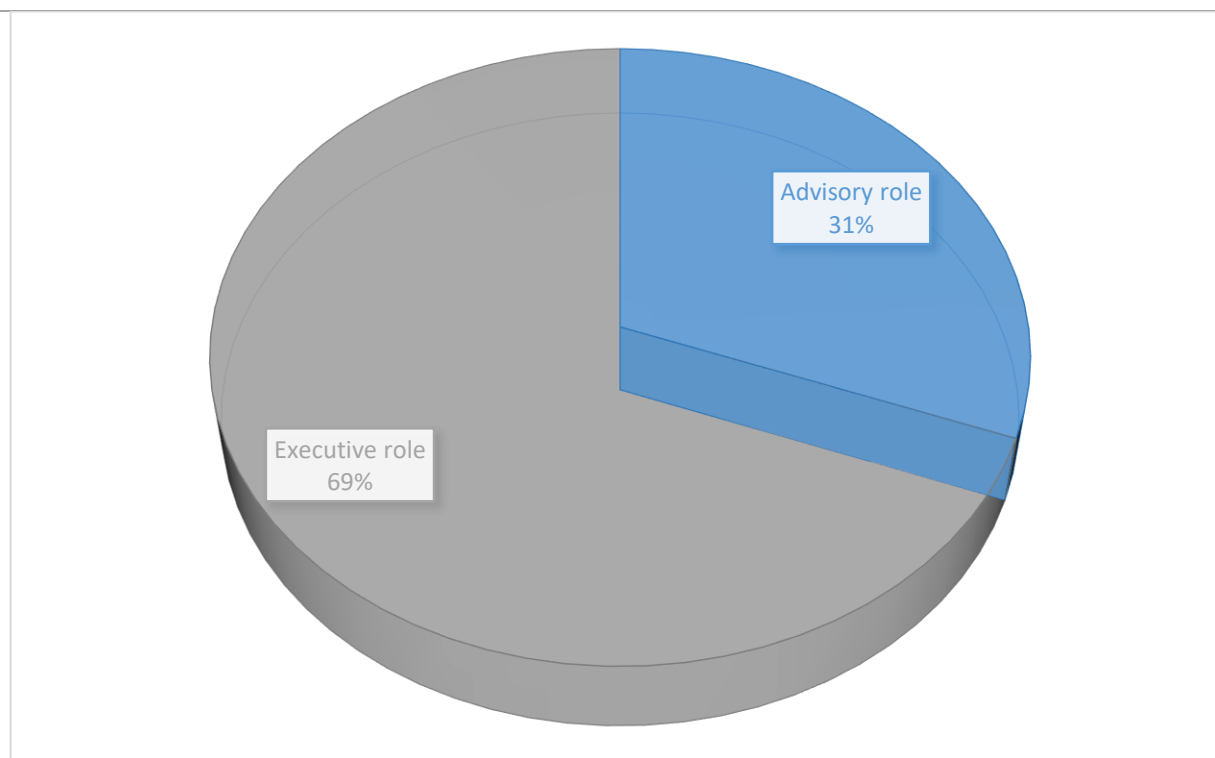
Period	Number
1-2 years (without renewal possibility)	9
2-4 years (without renewal possibility)	15
1-2 years (with renewal possibility)	38
2-4 years (with renewal possibility)	115
No specific time limit	15
Total	192

Source: INHERIT A3.12 results

The final question of the first section of the questionnaire investigates stakeholders' perceptions on the role of the managing authority in the administration and management of designated areas. The majority of participants, approximately 132 persons (69% of the sample), perceive that the managing authority should have an executive role, being at the frontline of setting objectives and implementing management measures. Only 1 out of 3 respondents considers that the managing authority should have only an advisory role. Under this scheme, implementation rests solely on designation authorities with managing authorities and stakeholders to have a consulting role. Consequently, it can be inferred that there is a general acceptance that the managing authority should have increased responsibilities and the necessary power in order to administer adequately the INHERITURA areas.

Role of managing authority (advisory or executive role)

% of respondents, n=192



Role	Number
Advisory role	59
Executive role	133
Total	192

Source: INHERIT A3.12 results

5.3 DECISION MAKING AND STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION

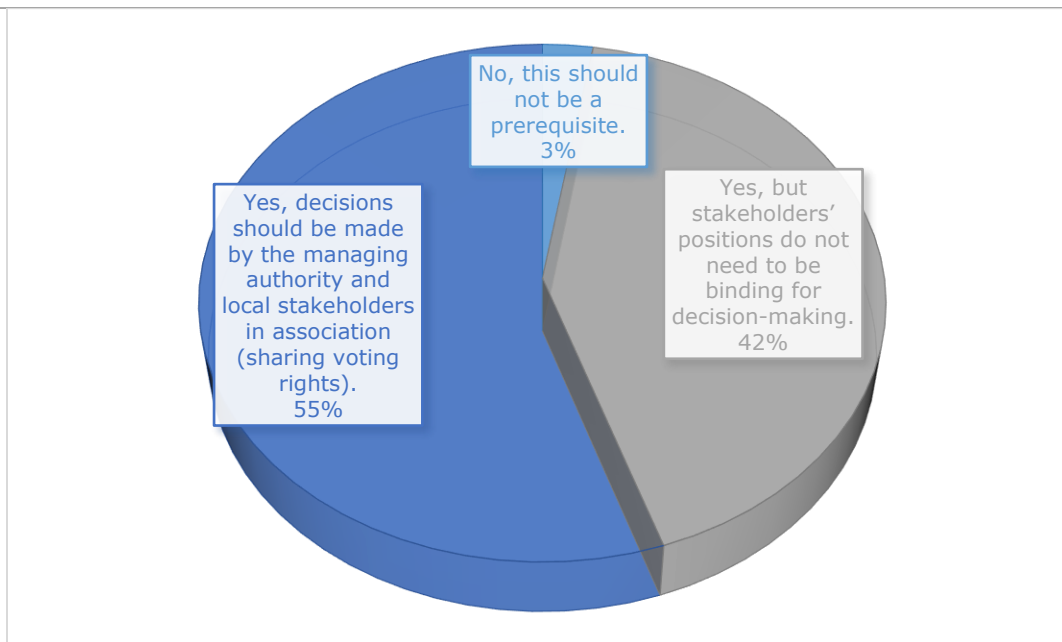
This measurement area concentrates on issues related to the participation of stakeholders in the governance and management of INHERITURA areas. Local participation is critical to natural sites management, biodiversity conservation and sustainable tourism development (Borrini-Feyerabend et al. 2013). The benefits of involving people that may have commercial or environmental interests, in the management of protected areas include a) increased sense of ownership and co-responsibility for sites with environmental value and touristic interest, b) greater public support and easier social acceptance of controversial measures (such as those addressing the seasonality of tourism or directing tourism inflows from overcrowded attractions to less visited sites), c) more legitimate decisions, d) cross-sectoral cooperation and bottom-up approaches at local level, e) different perspectives integrated into decision making, and f) diverse scientific and technical expertise and management experience.

This section aims to define the level of stakeholders' engagement in each management phase, and suggest effective instruments/mechanisms to ensure their participation in decision-making and implementation tasks. It also turns to decision-making and funding responsibilities, addressing the most effective decision-making approach for the INHERITURA areas' management scheme, as well as possible sources of funding to support their operation.

Survey results indicate the importance of actively involving local stakeholders in decision making processes (for both strategic and operational issues) from the very beginning (e.g. preparation of the management plan). Besides, collective decision making is a key condition for a participatory management model, as the one envisioned and suggested for INHERITURA areas. At first glance, it is visible that almost all participants (97% of the sample) are in favour of local stakeholders' participation in decision making procedures for INHERITURA areas. Nevertheless, this percentage can be divided into two broad groups; those who stands for a decision making system of sharing voting rights between the managing authority and local stakeholders (55%) and those who state that stakeholders' views are welcome and needs to be taken into consideration but they should not be binding. This means that local stakeholders do not enjoy voting rights. Finally, only a small share of respondents (3%) are proponents of a centralised decision making model.

Should the managing authority of an INHERITURA area be required to consult local stakeholders for decision making?

% of respondents, n=192



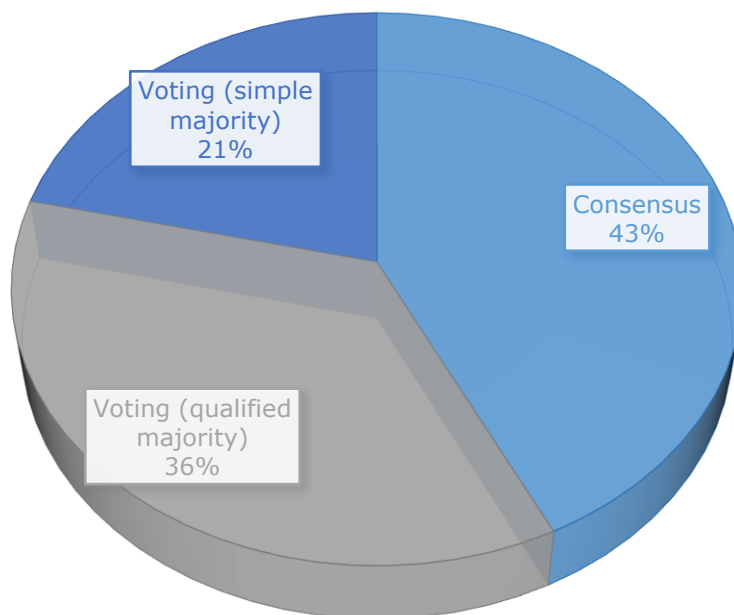
Answer	Number
No, this should not be a prerequisite	9
Yes, but stakeholders' positions do not need to be binding for decision-making	15
Yes, decisions should be made by the managing authority and local stakeholders in association (sharing voting rights)	38
Total	192

Source: INHERIT A3.12 results

Stakeholders declared their conviction that decisions should be made on the basis of equal representation, in-depth dialogue and consultation with stakeholders and local community, seeking to resolve conflicts of interests, achieve compromises and reach consensus and social approval. If consensus cannot be reached, a qualified majority voting scheme should be employed. Simple majority voting is the least chosen decision making approach among stakeholders, accounting for 21% of the total sample. It is noteworthy that the three aforementioned options are hierarchically categorised by percentage from the most democratic approach (consensus) to less democratic approach (simple majority). Another interesting fact is that participants selecting the consensus option, highly believe in the mutual understanding and fair play among entities organised for the promotion of the same objective.

Decision making approach

% of respondents, n=192



Method	Number
Consensus	82
Voting (qualified majority)	69
Voting (simple majority)	41
Total	192

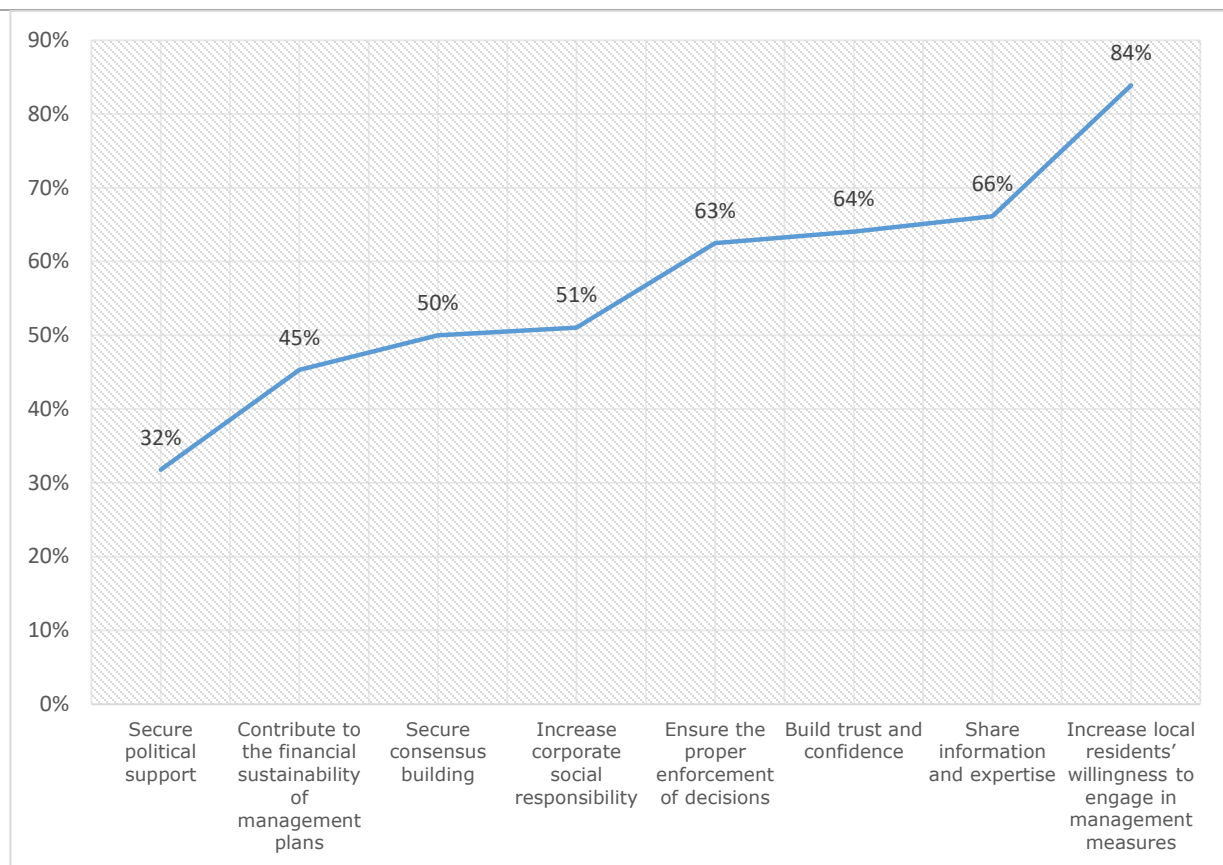
Source: INHERIT A3.12 results

The functions that stakeholders could better serve through their participation in decision-making was another issue that the survey looked into. Survey results indicate the importance of involving local stakeholders in the management of INHERITURA areas, as their contribution is expected to be multi-dimensional. Approximately nine out of ten participants believe that stakeholders' most important function will be to raise public awareness and increase local residents' eagerness to engage in protection and valorisation measures. The latter is highly legit as stakeholders and natural heritage sites are in continuous interaction, with the former to be primarily concerned for achieving a good environmental status for their territory, which in turn will act as a driver for new opportunities for tourism development with implications for local income and employment. "Sharing of information and expertise", "building trust and confidence" and "ensuring proper decisions/regulations' enforcement" follow in order of importance and level of anticipated contribution with percentages ranging from 66% to 63%. Next, almost half of participants has selected that local stakeholders would be valuable at increasing social responsibility, and securing consensus building (51% and 50% respectively). Finally, it is visible that

percentages fall well below 50% when it comes to funding considerations (42%) and even further to securing political support from central government (32%).

What function(s) could local stakeholders better serve through participating in decision-making?

% of respondents, selected answers



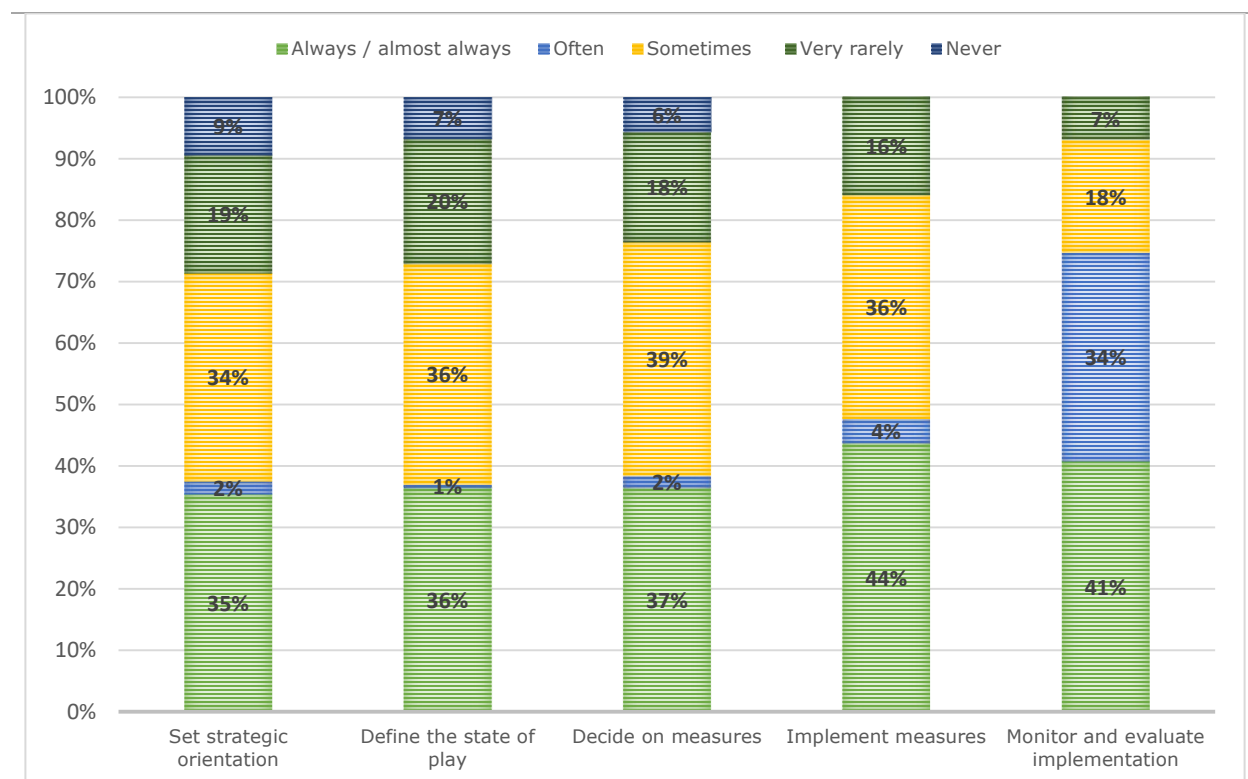
Source: INHERIT A3.12 results

Regional stakeholders can be involved in different stages of managing a protected area while their level of involvement may range from receiving information about proposed actions and consulting, to co-deciding and implementing decisions. Nonetheless, participatory management requires that local stakeholders should be an integral part of the management process from planning to implementation and assessment. In this frame, survey participants were asked to express their views on which stages stakeholders should take part by either consulting or co-deciding with the managing authority, in an attempt to assess stakeholders' commitment to bottom-up approaches and determine the desired level of participation in the management of INHERITURA areas. Evidence confirm stakeholders' desire to employ a participatory management scheme with local stakeholders participating in all instances of the management process from setting strategic directions to monitoring and evaluating implementation.

What is noteworthy is that a small share of participants (less than 30%) were against providing stakeholders with a key role in the formulation of strategic objectives, definition of state of play and selection of management measures, mostly promoting a more centralised approach with core responsibilities to rest on the managing authority. Finally, almost all agree that stakeholders should be at the frontline when it comes to implementing measures and evaluating progress and results.

How should stakeholders get involved in different stages of managing an INHERITURA area?

Level of participation, % of respondents, selected answers



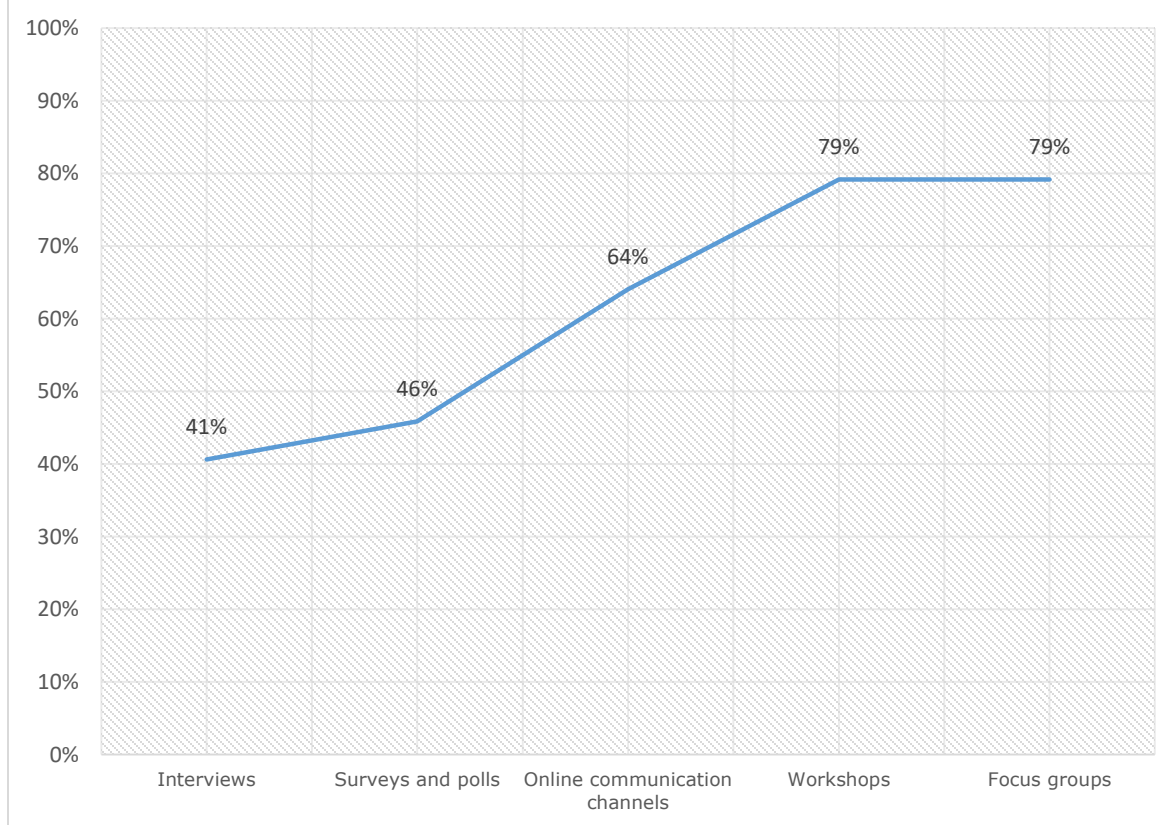
	Always	Often	Sometimes	Very rarely	Never	Total
Set strategic orientation	35%	2%	34%	19%	9%	100%
Define state of play	36%	1%	36%	20%	2%	100%
Decide on measures	37%	2%	39%	18%	6%	100%
Implement measures	44%	4%	36%	16%	0%	100%
Monitor and evaluate implementation	41%	34%	18%	7%	0%	100%

Source: INHERIT A3.12 results

When it comes to stakeholder participation methods, 79% of the participants believe focus groups and workshops are the best way to engage stakeholders in consultation and decisions making, and stimulate bottom-up approaches and self-regulated measures. These two mechanisms are rightly in this place as they involve intense human interaction. They can facilitate dialogue, increase participants' engagement and support decision making on the basis of extensive consultation. They have also an informative character. In addition, a considerable amount of participants (64%) have demonstrated a preference towards the use of online communication platforms to support interaction among stakeholders. Surveys and polls have gathered 46%, while interviews are considered to be the least efficient mechanism in order to enhance the bottom-up aspect of the decision-making process.

Which stakeholder participation mechanisms should be adopted, to enhance the bottom-up aspect of the decision-making process?

% of respondents, selected answers



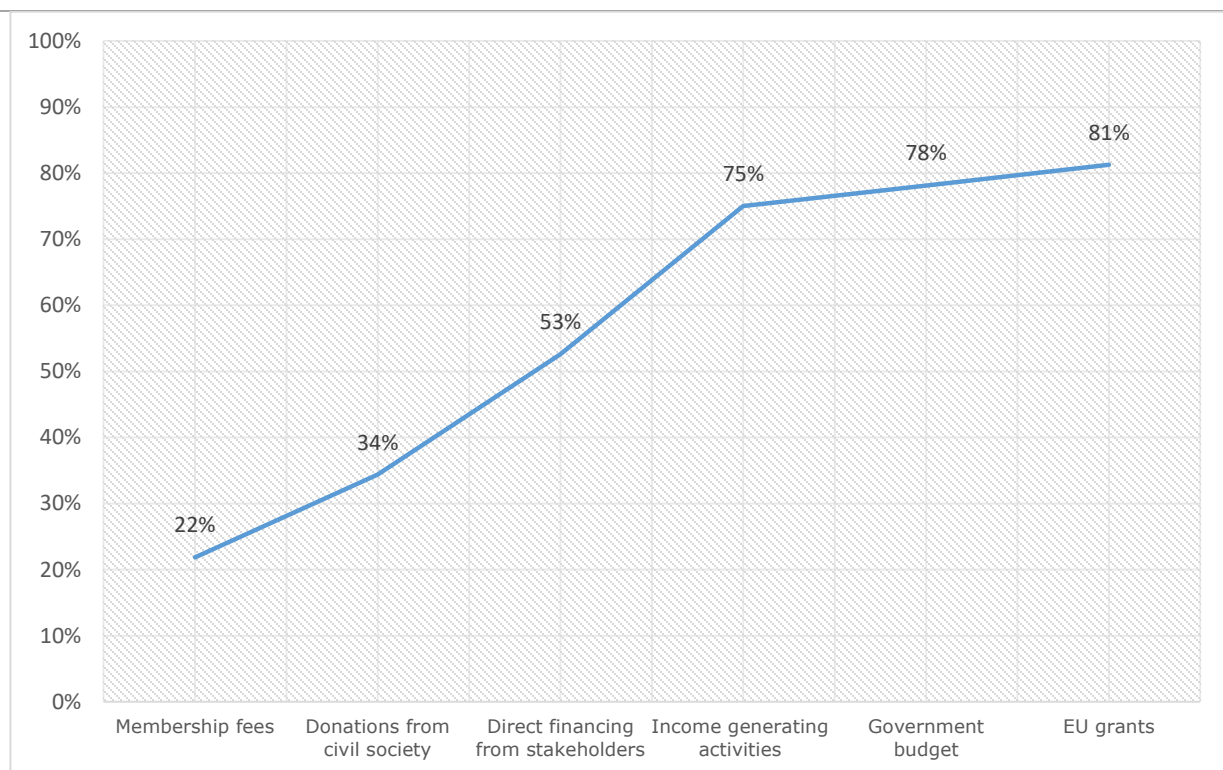
Source: INHERIT A3.12 results

Next, the analysis focuses on the different sources of funding to be pursued by managing authorities and stakeholders to support the management of INHERITURA areas. Evidence shows that EU grants emerge as the most preferable source of funding among stakeholders, reaching up to 81% of survey participants. Public funding through government budget and income generating activities are of almost

equal value, reaching 78% and 75% respectively. Direct financing from stakeholders' stands almost in the middle accounting for 53%, and rightfully considering that stakeholders' shares could possibly be of high value but they could be compared to EU and Government shares, while tensions could be generated, occurring from the disproportionality of the shares among different stakeholders. Donations from civil society and membership fees, although important, are not considered viable methods to financially support the management of INHERITURA areas, selected by 34% and 22% of participants respectively.

Which sources of funding or in-kind contributions should be pursued to support the management of INHERITURA areas?

% of respondents, selected answers



Source: INHERIT A3.12 results

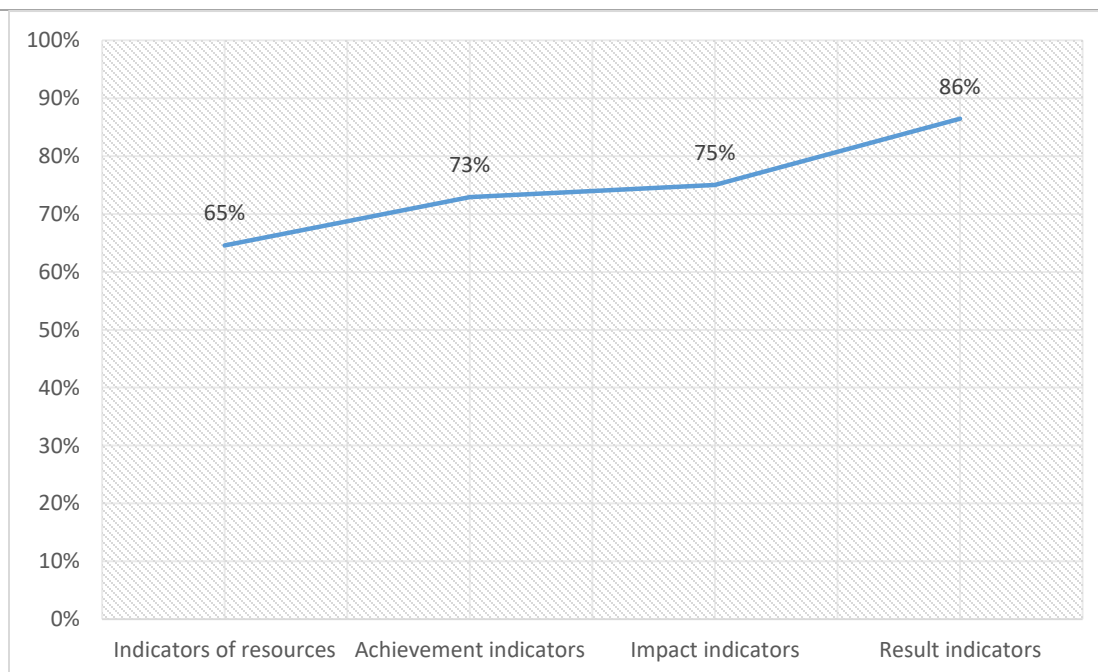
5.4 MONITORING AND REPORTING

The management and protection plan of INHERITURA areas needs to contain a dynamic monitoring & reporting process and key performance indicators, to review progress and assess the impact of protection and valorisation measures that are being or have been implemented. This measurement area aims to identify the different types of performance indicators to be incorporated in the management scheme, and evaluate the potential contribution of stakeholders and other bodies (e.g. external auditors, local residents) in reporting and data collection activities.

The first question examines the type of indicators to be included in the management and protection plan. Performance indicators are metrics used to measure and evaluate progress towards the attainment of strategic and operational goals. At first glance, it is evident that there are not considerably divergent results regarding the types of performance indicators to be used in the planning document. Firstly, there is an unchallengeable preference towards result indicators, selected by 86% of survey participants. These indicators relate to the direct effects of the actions carried out. In addition, impact indicators (relating to long term effects of the implemented measures) and achievement indicators (providing information about the degree of implementation of each measure) were as well highly selected among the indicators reaching the percentages of 75% and 73% respectively. Finally, the lowest, in selection, indicators are those focusing on resources used to implement management measures.

What type of performance indicators should be included in the management and protection plan?

% of respondents, selected answers

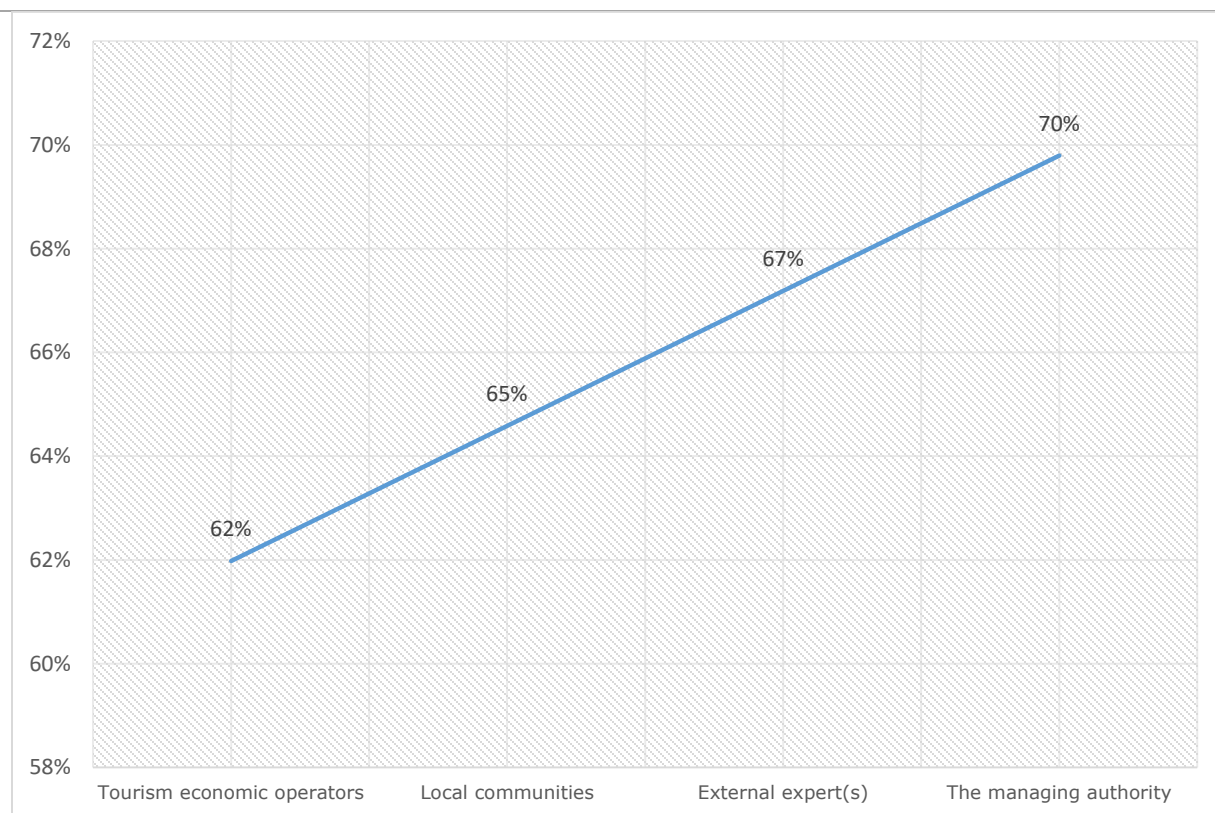


Source: INHERIT A3.12 results

Reporting activities are particularly important for measuring progress and assessing the effectiveness of measures implemented. This section aims to identify which entities are best suited to contribute in data collection activities. What we can conclude is that survey respondents long to employ an inclusive process with different entities participating in data collection activities through field studies, audits, surveys, technical reports and self-assessment. According to survey results, managing authorities should have a lead role (selected by 70% of survey participants), which seems reasonable assuming that they hold the responsibility to coordinate and administer management actions in the areas concerned. To assure objectivity and reliability, a substantial share of respondents (67%) argues that management agencies may consider to sub-contract an independent third-party or external experts to lead data collection and reporting activities. Local communities and tourism economic operators need also to contribute in reporting activities, with responsibilities varying depending on the type and scale of management activities.

In assessing the effectiveness of measures, who should contribute by providing relevant data?

% of respondents, selected answers

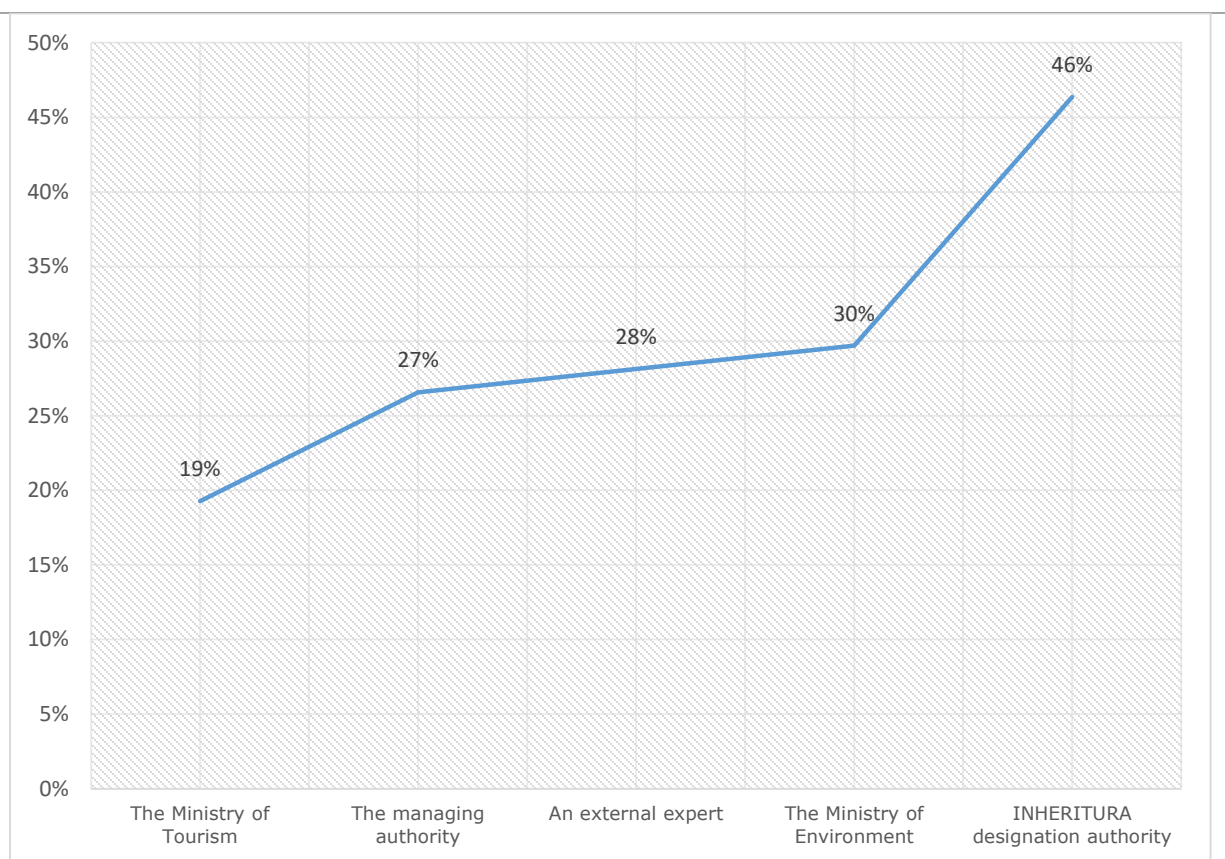


Source: INHERIT A3.12 results

Next, stakeholders were asked to indicate the entity, which will assume the sole responsibility to determine the effectiveness and impact of protection and valorisation measures implemented in the area in question. Stakeholders opted for the designation authority (i.e. regional or local authority designated the area and applied for the INHERITURA label) as the body considered to be more aware on territorial conditions, having administrative authority in the area concerned and more connections with the different categories of stakeholders.

Which entity should be responsible to determine the effectiveness and impact of protection and valorisation measures?

% of respondents, selected answers

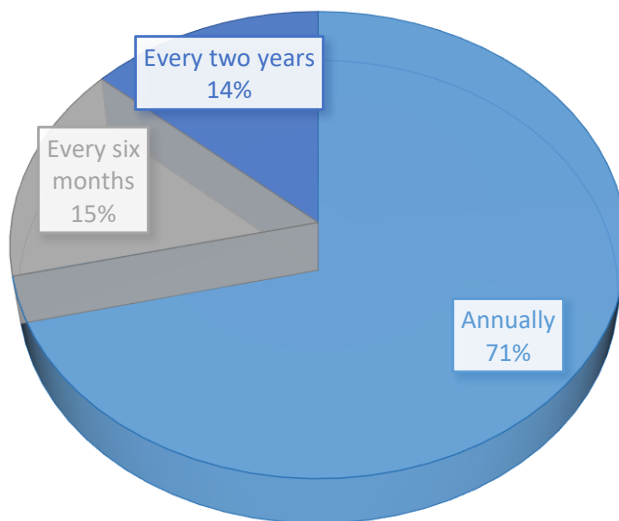


Source: INHERIT A3.12 results

Finally, the big majority of respondents argues that the management agency needs to prepare an annual assessment report to present what has been carried out and the results achieved up to the time being, based on the information and data reported by stakeholders.

How frequently should assessment reports be prepared and communicated to the public?

% of respondents, n=192



Frequency	Number
Every six months	29
Annually	137
Every two years	27
Total	192

Source: INHERIT A3.12 results

5.5 LEVEL OF READINESS AND COMMITMENT OF MED COUNTRIES

This section seeks to identify the level of readiness and commitment of INHERIT territories, to engage in participatory management schemes. To this end, the survey gathered information on partnership areas' previous proven record of bottom-up initiatives for the protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites. Respondents were also asked to highlight the factors impeding more intensive and effective collaboration between tourism economic operators in their territory. The above has aided to evaluate the potential for (or practice of) 'bottom-up' synergies. In addition, the questionnaire included a self-assessment exercise in which participants assessed the extent to which a number of variables/aspects/factors, which can be viewed as proxies to regions' readiness and commitment to promote environmental protection and foster sustainable tourism development, are in place in their territory. The online consultation produced some notable findings at the country level, which will be presented in the following sections. Regrettably, the low number of observations for different MED regions leaves no room for a statistical analysis at NUTS2 level.

5.5.1 Croatia

In total, 34 Croatian public and private stakeholders participated in the online consultation, with the majority coming from Istria County. As mentioned, participatory planning and bottom-up approaches are at the heart of the approach envisioned by the project for the preservation of natural heritage and the sustainable development of tourism. In Croatia, however, a more top-down approach (through policies) is taken to tackle the challenges posed by unsustainable tourism activity. Survey results indicate that almost 2 out of 3 participants in the survey have never been part of a collaborative approach targeting to create a positive impact on natural heritage in their territory, nor are aware of bottom-up initiatives implemented by other entities in their territory.

The most pronounced factors hindering effective cooperation among tourism economic operators in Croatia is businesses' resistance to change and lack of environmental awareness. Approximately 70% of stakeholders see the unwillingness on the part of tourism economic actors to invest in a more sustainable model of tourism development, mostly resulting from a lack of environmental awareness and a short-sighted approach to planning and development, as the most substantial barrier to bottom-up approaches. "Different mind-sets" and "Lack of trust" are placed third and fourth with percentage 59% and 53% respectively, followed by "lack of trust" and "lack of alignment around strategic objectives". Interestingly, "internal completion" does not represent, according to survey participants, a key factor impeding the collaboration among tourism economic operators.

At a next stage, Croatian stakeholders were asked to assess whether a number of aspects (in the form of statements), which can be viewed as proxies to actors' readiness and commitment to promote environmental protection and foster sustainable tourism development, are in place in their territory. The most notable finding is that survey participants perceive that the tourism sector neither devotes the

necessary attention to issues related to the protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites nor takes measures to improve the sustainability of their operations, even though there seems to be a consensus within the industry towards promoting a different paradigm of tourism development based on respect for nature and local qualities. Next, Croatian stakeholders, with a percentage that exceeds 70%, acknowledge the efforts made by public authorities to decrease seasonal variations of tourism demand while an uncertainty over the adequacy of the national regulatory framework to promote corporate social and environmental responsibility prevails. Finally, local communities in Croatia are environmentally aware, widely recognising the environmental and socioeconomic benefits associated with the protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites.

Almost all stakeholders (93%) have been positive towards assuming an active role in the management of INHERITURA areas. One out of four participants would see itself participating in decision making processes holding voting rights, while 21% would prefer having an advisory role delegating decision making and implementation duties to the managing authority. The percentages for participation in the implementation of measures and in the monitoring and evaluation processes are quite lower, accounting for 17% and 16% respectively. Finally, 14% of stakeholders would like to become member of the board of the managing authority. It can be inferred from the figure below that almost all participants are standing positively towards their involvement in the administration and management of INHERITURA areas. It is also noteworthy that the results regarding their role are proportionately distributed.

5.5.2 Cyprus

In total, 16 stakeholders from across Cyprus took part in the online consultation for the formation of the governance and management scheme of INHERITURA areas. To begin with, only 2 out of 16 participants are aware of at least one bottom-up initiative implemented by tourism entities in their territory, for the protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites. This demonstrates a reliance to top-down approaches where decisions are made (in the form of policy making) at the central level of governance, gradually transposed into regional and local public administrations, which in turn are responsible to engage economic actors in measures implementation. Protection activities are more rarely developed from the grassroots on the initiative of local tourism actors.

The factors, found to be the most pronounced barriers to effective collaboration among tourism economic operators in Cyprus with a percentage reaching almost 70% of the total sample, are the different mind-sets and internal competitiveness prevailing within the tourism industry. These divergent factors clearly state that each operator aims for his own good, careless to cooperate and achieve better common and shareable results. Also it is observed, that tourism economic operators have different mind-sets, being either highly conservative or extremely innovative. The latter leads to tensions that cast the partnerships problematic. Finally, "Lack of alignment around strategic objectives", "Lack of environmental awareness" and "Resistance to change" have also emerged as significant barriers to bottom-up approaches with percentages ranging from 63% to 31%.

Cyprus has managed to raise public awareness levels on the need to preserve the environment and amplify efforts to alleviate the pressures of overtourism on the natural environment and social fabric of local communities. Almost 9 out of 10 stakeholders agree that local residents are environmentally aware and acknowledge the environmental and socioeconomic benefits associated with the protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites. Cypriot stakeholders have full trust in public authorities' efforts and commitment to decrease seasonal variations in tourism demand, through regulations and measures targeting to prolong tourism season in the country (to make Cyprus an all year round destination) and force tourism economic operators to minimise their environmental footprint and endorse endeavours for the valorisation of a sustainable tourism development model. The greatest concern comes from the tourism industry which appears to be reluctant and unwilling to engage in conservation efforts and abandon the dominant "unsustainable" tourism model. Even though tourism economic operators in Cyprus are particularly concerned for the valorisation of natural heritage sites as tourism attractions that will increase the number of visitors in the island, they are doing too little for the protection of the natural environment, awaiting from public authorities and volunteering organisations to assume a lead role and implement relevant measures. What is also remarkable is that none of survey participants perceive that tourism actors could financially support local projects for wildlife protection or social causes by donating a small percentage of their profits.

At first glance, the most impressive evidence drawn from online consultation is that all Cypriot participants have a positive attitude towards assuming an active role in the administration and management of INHERITURA areas in their territory, either as a member of the managing authority or as a stakeholder providing input and advising on management measures. In particular, 1 out of 4 participants sees their company or organisation participating in the composition of the management board, assuming executive duties. Lower but still considerable percentages (22%) have been obtained concerning stakeholders' potential involvement in the decision making and monitoring processes.

5.5.3 France

In total, 14 stakeholders from France participated in the online consultation on the formation of the governance and management scheme of INHERITURA areas. In France, bottom-up is a widely used approach to environmental and tourism planning. It means that all any decisions and objectives do not come from the upper management (central government) but local communities identify their conservation and development needs and conclude to the corresponding tasks with all categories of stakeholders have a say and contribute in the planning and implementation process. It is also possible that conservation measures can emerge as self-regulated actions, developed from the grassroots on the initiative of local actors, then gradually moving up to the higher levels of management to get established. The majority of survey participants from France (almost 60%) either have been part of a collaborative approach targeting to create a positive impact on natural heritage in their territory, or are aware of at

least one bottom-up (self-regulated) initiative implemented by tourism economic actors in their territory.

French participants have diverse perceptions regarding the factors impeding the effective collaboration among tourism economic operators in their area, which range from different mind-sets to lack of trust and information hoarding. In particular, 3 out of 4 participants state that the factor that prohibit an organisation from participating in collaborative schemes with other entities is the different mind-sets and strategic objectives of counterparts. Experience has showed that different mind-sets within a collaborative scheme may delay the partnership to take a concrete form and agree on common objectives, and in some cases have led to unresolved disputes making the partnership fail. Resistance to change follows with a percentage of 63% while intense competition among tourism entities in the same areas often works against resource pooling and information sharing, common and shareable solutions, and open communication.

France has come a long way to set the ground for the transition to a sustainable model of tourism development that needs to include all categories of stakeholders in the implementation and management of relevant efforts. To begin with, all French stakeholders agree that public authorities have pledged to decrease seasonal variations of tourism demand, by taking a series of measures to prolong tourism season during the whole year and reach new target markets primary concerned for environmental quality and natural and cultural heritage, supporting at the same time the provision of high quality tourism services. In this context, almost 80% of survey participants state that regulations that oblige tourism operators to minimise their environmental footprint are well established. France has also managed to raise public awareness on the importance to invest in a sustainable tourism model that puts special emphasis on the protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites and acts proactively to avoid pressures from an influx of visitors on certain sites and attractions. In addition, local residents are fully aware about the environmental and socioeconomic benefits (even in the short term) associated with the protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites. Neither the tourism sector is found to lag behind. Almost 80% of stakeholders confirm that tourism economic operators are particularly concerned for the protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites, as they acknowledge that nature and site-specific beauties are largely responsible for maintaining destinations' attractiveness, assuring also actors' current levels of profitability.

Almost all stakeholders (86%) have been positive towards assuming an active role in the management of INHERITURA areas. Precisely one fourth of the participants envisage participating in the implementation of measures within the management authority of the INHERITURA area. Three possible functions gather the same percentage in the survey. In particular, participation in decision making processes, in monitoring and evaluation and membership in the managing authority gather 18%, clearly indicating a homogeneity in the participants' perceptions. Consulting services are located a little lower with a percentage of 15%.

5.5.4 Greece

In total, 27 stakeholders representing public and private organisations located in Greece took part in the online consultation. Greek participants come from different NUTS2 regions, most of which from Western Greece. Bottom-up approaches are not widely used in Greece. Strategic decisions on environmental and tourism planning are taken at the higher levels of management, either by the Ministries of Environment and Tourism or the competent departments of regional administrations. Nevertheless, it has become widely recognised that the management of protected sites (such as INHERITURA areas) should include the cooperation and support of local communities. Greek authorities have taken measures to support the deployment of self-regulated and bottom-up approaches that will combine scientific knowledge with local knowledge in order to assess territorial reality and proceed with tailor made solutions that address site-specific priorities and needs. The above is also proved by survey results. Almost, 1 out of 3 participants is aware of at least one bottom-up (self-regulated) initiative implemented by tourism economic actors for the protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites in own territory, while the percentage of those who have been actively involved in such endeavours is even lower.

The factor that can be referred as the most pronounced barrier to bottom-up approaches in Greece is the lack of environmental awareness (63%). Although funding and environmental taxes have been a major problem for Greece, which faces a multi-annual economic crisis, education and environmental awareness is another issue. The country aspires to improve the effectiveness of state actions, policies and initiatives in terms of progress towards sustainability, and raising awareness regarding the most pressing ecological issues, especially for industries, considered to be key drivers of the national economy, and big polluters like tourism. Tourism actors are also primarily concerned about the profitability and financial stability of their operations rather than achieving a good environmental performance. They seem to downplay the significance of preserving and showcasing natural assets, in an integrated tourism product that can attract more visitors and increase the income for local communities. Different mind-sets and lack of alignment around strategic objectives also emerge as substantial constraints for the deployment of collaborative approaches to the protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites.

The above partially explain the situation at hand in Greece. Greece's systemic weaknesses, amplified by financial constraints and low environmental consciousness are largely responsible for protracting the transition to a more sustainable model of tourism development. The country needs to improve the effectiveness of state environmental and tourism policies and regulations, and make the preservation and valorisation of natural heritage sites a key priority for sustainable tourism development. This will help to sensitise local community, increase environmental awareness and most importantly prompt actors to adopt more sustainable modus of operandi, thus minimising their adverse environmental impact. Only 1 out of 3 stakeholders perceive that there is a strong commitment within the tourism

industry to promote sustainability, although, tourism economic operators see the opportunities arisen from the valorisation of natural heritage sites as tourism attractions and potential sources of income. What is also remarkable is that only 2 out of 10 stakeholders perceive that tourism actors could financially support local projects for wildlife protection or social causes by donating a small percentage of their profits.

At first glance, the most impressive evidence drawn from online consultation is that all Greek participants have a positive attitude towards assuming an active role in the administration and management of INHERITURA areas in their territory. More than half (approximately 56%) declare their aspiration to formally participate in the managing authority of INHERITURA areas, as regular members assuming executive and decision making powers. A significant share (45%) is positive to actively participate in consultation and decision making process while less than 35% see their organisation to take a lead role in the implementation of management measures.

5.5.5 Italy

In total, 40 representatives of public and private entities from Italy took part in the online consultation on the formation of the governance and management scheme of INHERITURA areas. This is the highest rate among all partnership countries, accounting for 21% of the total sample. To begin with, only 35% of participants are aware of at least one bottom-up initiative implemented by tourism entities for the protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites in their territory while the percentage of those who have been part of such endeavours is even lower. A top-down approach prevails in the Italian reality, with higher authority figures to determine environmental and tourism development goals, and direct measures at the lowest level. National authorities have stressed the need to leave room for self-regulated actions developed from the grassroots in order to accommodate for site-specific needs and challenges, and respond quickly to changing conditions, so as to achieve the widest possible (positive) impact.

The factor that can be referred as the most pronounced barrier to effective collaboration in Italy is the lack of environmental awareness (68%). Major environmental issues currently facing Italy include air pollution from energy and heating, transportation and industrial sources, polluted inland waters, acid rain, and insufficient industrial waste treatment and disposal programs. The lack of environmental awareness on these issues coupled with the lack of alignment around strategic objectives (63%) and different mind-sets within the industry (53%) have hindered the deployment of bottom-up approaches to the protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites. Overall, the low level of cooperation within the tourism industry (incl. quadruple helix cooperation) together with limited financial incentives provided by public authorities has resulted in a slow introduction of resource efficiency measures in tourism facilities, and low enforcement of environmental legislation.

Italy has long way to go to secure a sustainable model of tourism development, which also questions its readiness to employ participatory schemes for the protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites. According to survey results, the level of public awareness on major environmental issues is still very low while local communities find it difficult to acknowledge the environmental and socioeconomic benefits associated (even in the short-term) with sustainable tourism development. Even though a series of environmental and tourism related regulations have been introduced towards this direction, only a small part of the Italian society believes in public authorities' commitment to decrease seasonal variations of tourism and create new market segments with epicentre the natural heritage. Furthermore, special emphasis should be given to increasing corporate environmental responsibility and convince the sector for the economic benefits that could be generated (for the tourism industry) from the protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites. Only a small share (less than 10%) believes that tourism economic operators are, at present, concerned for the protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites visited by their customers. Tourism actors seem to pay more attention on increasing the diversity and quality of their services. Finally, less than 6% could see local tourism economic actors to financially support local projects on wildlife protection or other social causes by donating a small share of their revenues linked to the utilisation of natural or cultural assets.

The large majority (92%) have been positive towards assuming an active role in the management of INHERITURA areas, either as members of the managing authority or as stakeholders directly involved in the different stages of the management process. Participation as stakeholders in consultation processes emerges as the most attractive role (38%) that participants could see for their organisation in the envisioned management scheme of INHERITURA areas. Participation in the management board is the second most popular choice for Italian stakeholders (35%), followed by participation in decision making processes (33%) and participation in monitoring and evaluation tasks (30%).

5.5.6 Malta

In total, 7 public and private stakeholders from Malta participated in the online consultation. Of those, 4 are aware of bottom-up approaches implemented in the country for the protection and/or valorisation of natural heritage sites, with respondents referring to a handful of relevant initiatives (Din I-Art Helwa, Gaia Foundation, Cleanup-Malta, Merill Eco-tours). Taking into account the population and geographical data of the country, it can be concluded that bottom-up initiatives in the intersection of sustainable tourism and natural heritage in Malta have strong roots (especially since some initiatives date decades of activity). This is true even though Maltese stakeholders perceive that there is a distinct lack of commitment to the protection and valorisation by tourist economic operators.

Survey respondents answered negatively in very high percentages (71%) when asked whether tourism economic operators support local projects and whether they are particularly concerned for the valorisation of natural areas visited by their customers. A possible explanation for this issue could be

the low environmental awareness that tourist economic operators show, which was also identified as a main factor impeding the effective collaboration among tourism economic operators (71%).

In addition to the problem of operators' commitment, respondents identified the absence of effective regulations (addressing tourism industry's involvement and commitment to the protection of natural heritage) as an additional barrier (71%). This finding could be explained through another survey finding: survey respondents perceive the lack of operators' alignment around common strategic objectives as the most important factor hindering the efficient collaboration among the operators in Malta (86%). It is worth noting that this finding is common across countries in this survey; therefore a trend can be observed, that stakeholders consider the cooperation among economic partners a difficult procedure.

Nevertheless, the fact that a) Maltese public authorities have pledged to decrease seasonal variations of tourism, and b) tourism economic operators are taking measures to improve the sustainability of their operations are hopeful indicators for the future; survey respondents agreed with such statements in 71% and 57% respectively.

Adding to the favourable outlook of bottom-up approaches in Malta, 86% of survey participants would want to see their organisations assuming a role as a stakeholder participating in consultation processes of the INHERITURA areas' management. Three equal shares of 43% of participants envisage a role as member of the managing authority, as a stakeholder participating in decision making processes, and as a stakeholder in the implementation processes. To end with, the percentage of stakeholders who are not positive to assume a role in the management of the INHERITURA area is non-negligible, reaching approximately 15%.

5.5.7 Montenegro

In total, 4 public and private stakeholders from Montenegro participated in the online consultation. Of those, 3 are aware of bottom-up approaches implemented in the country for the protection and/or valorisation of natural heritage sites, however the low number of responses does not allow to have a clear image about the extent participatory schemes have been established and are part of country's culture.

For many answers, survey results show conflicted attitudes as stakeholders are equally split among "agree" or "disagree" categories (25% each in many questions) and consequently the "nor agree nor disagree" category in those questions reaches 50%. For example, stakeholders are indecisive regarding a) tourism operators' concern for natural heritage protection, b) tourism industry's commitment to alternative tourism models, and c) local residents' awareness of environmental and socioeconomic benefits associated with the protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites.

However, survey respondents agree that on two issues: tourism economic operators are absent in supporting local projects and do not take measures to improve the sustainability of their operations and

decrease their environmental footprint (both 75%). The fact that the same respondents highlighted (75%) that the main obstacle in collaboration among operators is the lack of environmental awareness, could potentially explain the reasons for operators' slow uptake of environmental measures favourable to natural heritage.

On the other hand, respondents' answers present a more positive outlook for Montenegro's capacity to adopt bottom-up protection approaches. They agree that public authorities have pledged to decrease seasonal variations of tourism demand and attract visitors all year round and that there are regulations that oblige tourism economic operators to minimise their environmental impact. Such a positive regulatory context could definitely assist Montenegro's tourism economic operators to be more open in the future regarding bottom-up approaches.

Regarding the preferences of survey participants on their involvement with future INHERITURA areas, their general stance is closer to a participating role as a stakeholder in the management of the INHERITURA area. In particular, 2 out of 4 participants would see their companies or organisations assuming a role as a stakeholder participating in the consultation procedure while the other aiming at pursuing a role as a stakeholder in the decision making processes.

5.5.8 Portugal

In total, 8 representatives of both public and private organisations from Portugal participated in the online consultation. Of those, 3 are aware of bottom-up approaches implemented in the country for the protection and/or valorisation of natural heritage sites. As respondent's answers show, there is a number of initiatives, currently implemented in the country, for the protection and valorisation of natural heritage, including initiatives for sustainable cultural and natural tourism, and the rewilding of Iberian lynx.

In general, even though the respondents are not aware of many bottom-up approaches taking place in Portugal, they depict the country as a territory quite ready to adopt such approaches. For example, they highlight that tourism economic operators are particularly concerned for the valorisation of natural areas visited by their customers (88%). In addition, survey respondents' answers show that tourism economic operators are taking measures to improve the sustainability of their operations and decrease their environmental footprint, and that there are regulations that oblige tourism economic operators to minimise their environmental impact (both accumulate percentages of up to 75%).

Despite operators' high propensity towards adopting environmentally-friendly measures, survey respondents highlighted a gap existing in the Portuguese tourism industry: operators do not support local projects (in wildlife protection or social causes) nor do they assist them in other, indirect, ways. In addition, lack of alignment around strategic objectives among stakeholders seems to be according to Portuguese participants the main factor impeding the effective collaboration among them; this factor is the most pronounced one by far, selected by 86% of Portuguese stakeholders. Regarding this point,

which is common among respondents from different countries, it could be suggested that it derives from different mentalities, behaviours and attitudes, which usually lead to divergence than convergence.

Regarding the preferences of survey participants on their involvement with future INHERITURA areas, 63% of participants would see their company or organization assuming a role as member of the managing authority of the INHERITURA area. This share compared with results from other countries is relatively higher, considering the responsibility that such a role could bear. The other categories are normally distributed with no great deviations: the role as a stakeholder in the decision making and consultation process is relatively less represented, reaching 50%, while the percentage for the non-participation is 13%, a result congruent with the general trend for this category in the survey but higher compared to other countries.

5.5.9 Slovenia

In total, 7 public and private Slovenian stakeholders participated in the online consultation. Of those, only 1 is aware of bottom-up approaches implemented in the country for the protection and/or valorisation of natural heritage sites. As respondent's answers show, although there are quite a few bottom-up initiatives in the country, stakeholders are mostly unaware of them. For example, local residents work together with parks to inform the society about violations in protected areas and prevent parking in the natural environment; interested NGOs organise clean-up actions and implement the monitoring of litter collected; individuals (residents and/or visitors) help public authorities in removing litter from the coast.

In general, Slovenian participants are not certain on issues of tourism operators' attitudes in relation to natural heritage. The perceptions for the statements are mixed; as far as uncertainty is concerned, it is noteworthy that participants are considerably disorientated. Specifically, 67% of the respondents neither agree or disagree on the existence of regulations that oblige tourism economic operators to minimise their environmental impact and 86% of respondents neither agree nor disagree on the existence of tourism operators' measures to improve the sustainability of their operations – yet none of them received a single positive endorsement (both have 0% in the "agree/strongly agree" choice).

The most important factor hindering the cooperation among tourism economic operators according to the 86% of the participants is the difference in mind-sets. Furthermore, two large shares of 57% consider the lack of alignment around strategic objectives and lack of environmental awareness of operators as impeding facts. Lack of trust is here less represented compared to other countries.

Regarding the willingness of the respondents to participate in INHERITURA areas, 57% of them would like to see their companies or organisations pursuing an important role in the management of the INHERITURA area of their region, and more importantly a role as a stakeholder participating in the implementation of measures and in the monitoring and evaluation processes respectively.

5.5.10 Spain

In total, 35 stakeholders from Spain took part in the online survey, presenting their views on the most efficient management techniques for INHERITURA areas, and assessing their territory's readiness and commitment to engage in participatory schemes for sustainable tourism development. All Spanish participants originate from Murcia Region, which allows for site-specific considerations to emerge.

In Murcia Region, bottom-up is a widely used approach to environmental and tourism planning. Murcia relies on a participative approach to planning in which there is involvement of different categories of stakeholders at all levels; objectives and plans are developed at the lower levels with the participation of individuals and entities actually affected by the decisions to be made, and funnelled up through consecutive levels until they reach higher levels of hierarchy to gain legitimation. The above is evident in survey results where 3 out of 5 stakeholders are aware of at least one bottom-up initiative implemented by tourism entities for the protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites in their territory, or have participated in such endeavours. Indicative examples of bottom-up approaches implemented in Murcia are those reported by survey participants. For example, a Spanish stakeholder referenced the case of "Salinas de Guerandé", in the French Brittany, which is a cooperative society working for the recovery of hundreds of hectares of wetlands in the area, supporting also the revival of the traditional primary sector.

The success of sustainable tourism largely depends on effective collaboration between stakeholders. Despite high levels of participation in bottom-up measures (as indicated above), there is a number of reasons that prohibit more intensive and effective collaboration among tourism actors in Murcia Region. These barriers do not only relate to structural problems including inefficient administration, institutional arrangements, collaboration and industrial structure but they are associated with attitudes and limited capabilities of tourism stakeholders. The factor emerged as the most pronounced barrier to more intensive collaboration and participatory efforts, in the online consultation, is the lack of alignment around common strategic objectives with a percentage that reaches 83%. Tourism actors, primarily interested for their financial sustainability and survival in a high competitive environment, may pursue different objectives mostly focused on how to increase their revenues and customer base rather than achieve higher societal impact through measures targeting environmental protection. Other factors that are regarded by stakeholders as barriers to collaboration for sustainable tourism is the lack of environmental awareness, the existence of different mind-sets and resistance to change with percentages ranging from 69% to 54%.

Spanish stakeholders have a positive outlook for Murcia's capacity and readiness to more intensively adopt bottom-up approaches to sustainable tourism development. They agree that local communities are adequately aware of the environmental issues their region is facing, acknowledging also the range of environmental and socioeconomic benefits associated with the protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites. They also agree that regulations in place that oblige tourism economic operators to

minimise their environmental impact are in the right direction while they praise public authorities' commitment to decrease seasonal variations of tourism demand and develop a tourism product that can attract visitors during the whole year. Still, more efforts should be made to create an environmental culture within the industry, encouraging tourism actors to increase their social responsibility and take measures for the protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites. Tourism actors need to be convinced about the necessity of sustainable tourism, and become incubators of a different tourism paradigm that will relieve pressures in local communities whilst sustaining the same or even higher levels of income for economic operators.

The largest share of participants (22%) would see their company or organization assuming a role as a stakeholder participating in the implementation of measures, while the second larger share stands for having a role as a stakeholder participating in the monitoring and evaluation processes. As in many previous sections these shares are considerably high, while the other categories, as it is apparent in the graph, are uniformly distributed, with not significant deviations observed. Naturally, the latter does not include the answer "no", which, as in every other country survey has been the least selected choice, indicating that way that almost all the participants would see their companies or organizations better inside the management of an INHERITURA area, than out of it.

The most impressive evidence is that 91% of stakeholders from Murcia Region would like to see their companies or organisations pursuing an active role in the administration and management of an INHERITURA area, contributing also to the sustainable development of tourism in the region. Most of them (almost 60%) seem to prefer the role of stakeholder dynamically participating in the implementation of measures and in the monitoring and evaluation processes. In addition, more than half (51%) are positive to assume a more "institutional" role, participating as member in the board of the managing authority.

6 GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT SCHEME

The network of INHERITURA areas will adopt a three-tier management structure consisting of the INHERIT committee, the designation authority and the management agency.

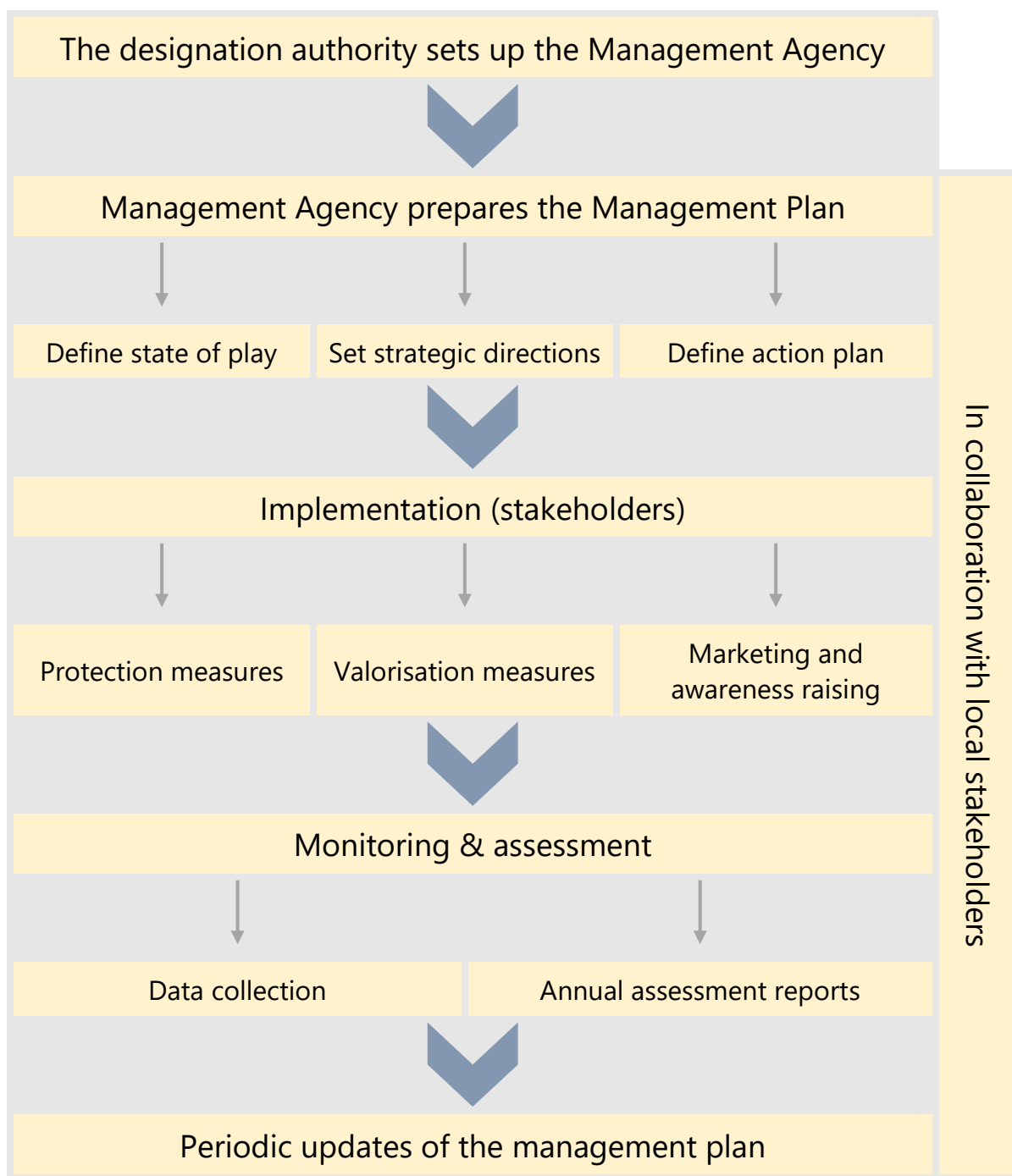
The INHERIT committee carries out the application process for the establishment of the INHERITURA areas, and monitor compliance with programme requirements. In addition, the committee holds a supervisory role related to the management of nominated INHERITURA areas and coordinates communication actions for the promotion of the “INHERITURA” label programme in media and major tourism websites.

The designation authority, in turn, is the regional or local public administration responsible to set aside the protected area according to programme requirements, prepare the submission folder and formally apply for the INHERITURA label. It also appoints the members of the management agency.

The management agency is responsible for the efficient administration, management and sustainable development of an INHERITURA area. It is the body nominated by the designation authority (also approved by the INHERIT committee) to draw up and implement the management and protection plan, in line with the principles of the INHERIT approach.

The 3 bodies are separate; still individuals can serve as a member of more than one body. Besides, the designation authority should be necessarily represented in the board of the management agency by at least one member.

Table 9: The management scheme of INHERITURA areas



6.1 INHERIT COMMITTEE

The INHERIT Committee (IC) is the governing body of the network of INHERITURA areas. It has a coordinating and supervisory role with primary responsibility to award the INHERITURA label to areas that meet the requirements of the programme. The Committee determines the network's overall strategy, promoting the proliferation and upscaling of INHERITURA areas and the INHERIT approach principles across the Mediterranean. The Committee also supervises management agencies in their decisions and operations at local scale. It seeks to assure that all INHERITURA label requirements are fulfilled, INHERITURA areas comply with EU/national/regional regulatory frameworks and that participatory and democratic procedures, being at the heart of the INHERITURA management scheme are fully respected.

6.1.1 Composition

The INHERIT Committee will be composed of 15 board members in total, each INHERIT partner contributing 1 representative. Committee members will be directly appointed by the participating organisations in the INHERIT project. The guiding principle in selecting representatives for the Committee is that individuals need to have a) acknowledged management, research and assessment competencies and particular knowledge in the environmental and/or tourism fields, b) previous experience in managerial positions and c) stature that promotes the interests and strategic objectives of the INHERIT project. Decisions in the Committee will be taken by consensus.

Board members should either belong to or be affiliated with the organisations participating in the INHERIT project. They will serve as volunteers without any compensation. Project partners will have the liberty to substitute their representative on the Committee upon request. To ensure continuity in the IC's strategic outlook, it is recommended that board members' incumbency last for 3 years. The serving period of incumbent board members can be renewed, but their re-appointment should not exceed 3 consecutive services (or in total).

6.1.2 Responsibilities and indicative actions

Based on the results of studying activities of the project and considering ensuing pilot actions, it is recommended that IC will be responsible for the following.

Responsibility	Indicative action
Determining the overall strategic direction of the INHERITURA areas and label	<p>IC will provide a roadmap for all INHERITURA sites, an INHERITURA Charter (based on the results of pilot action 4.7), which will communicate INHERITURA objectives, how will they be accomplished, what resources are required, creating a general scheme of how the IC must work and what are its relation to INHERITURA Management Agencies.</p>
Organising, facilitating, and solving problems regarding the application process for candidate INHERITURA areas and awarding the INHERITURA label	<p>Within the framework of pilot action 4.7, IC will simulate application procedures (mock application scenarios) to ensure that it has the capacity to handle the application process, to identify shortcomings and problems in the application procedures. Accordingly, IC should undertake additional, corrective actions (e.g. review performance indicator thresholds for awarding the INHERITURA label) to improve the application procedures in case there will be sufficient reasons to do so (e.g. complaints by applicants).</p> <p>In addition, IC should decide whether to form an 'appeal mechanism' which will treat objections of applicants (candidate INHERITURA areas that were rejected). Upon receipt of the notice of assessment (whether the INHERITURA label has been awarded to a candidate area/site or not), a candidate that disagrees with the assessment may lodge an objection and appeal. Indicatively, such a mechanism should have a time limit (candidates may not object the assessment after a certain period) and candidates should accompany the objection with a letter of argumentation explaining the reasons for appeal. In such cases, IC should be able to request additional information from the candidate.</p>

Responsibility	Indicative action
Organising, facilitating, and solving problems regarding multidestinational INHERITURA itineraries	<p>In pilot action 4.9, IC will set up and test multidestinational tourism itineraries that link many INHERITURA areas based on a common theme akin to MED natural heritage (e.g. sea caving in the MED, inland MED destinations, the prehistory of the MED). Accordingly, IC should undertake additional, corrective actions (e.g. include new itineraries) to improve the itineraries in case there will be sufficient reasons to do so (e.g. inclusion of new INHERITURA areas).</p>
Upscaling the INHERITURA label & mechanism	<p>Within the ensuing activity 6.9, IC will scale up and out the INHERITURA management mechanism and label, improving and mainstreaming its operation. This way, the label and the mechanism will be able to promote, support and welcome applications for protection from more candidate INHERITURA areas. The mechanism will be scaled up and out, through a campaign that will enlist in the mechanism a) national & regional public authorities from INHERIT territories of a higher level, and b) national & regional public authorities from other Mediterranean territories.</p>
Ensuring compliance with INHERITURA label regulations and INHERIT approach principles	<p>The INHERITURA label, once awarded, should be continually implemented by upending its regulations; IC should ensure that existing INHERITURA areas continue to be in line with the label's provisions, and ensure that they are aligned with INHERIT approach principles, especially regarding participatory and democratic procedures (which are the heart of the management scheme endorsed by the INHERIT partnership).</p>

Responsibility	Indicative action
Supervising and advising INHERITURA Management Agencies in their decisions and operations at the local scale	IC will cooperate closely with each INHERITURA Management Agency, directing and taking charge at matters that are of immediate concern to the viability of the INHERITURA label and area, while offering constructive feedback and advice on their operational level (taking into account each time the specificities of each site). In addition, IC should provide tailored recommendations to each INHERITURA area regarding the ways it can improve the valorisation of natural heritage through sustainable tourism.
Communicating results from pilot actions and from INHERITURA areas to stakeholders and the public	IC could produce an annual report on the progress of the INHERITURA areas, including highlights and stakeholders' participation, as well as various issues of INHERITURA interest. In addition, IC could participate in events relevant to sustainable tourism and natural heritage.
Marketing and disseminating the INHERITURA label	Within the pilot action 4.6 the IC will carry out selected dissemination actions in the media and tourism websites, to assess its dissemination capacity to promote the INHERITURA label. In addition, IC could use traditional marketing tactics (e.g. main marketing campaigns), social media, blogs, own networks and associations to create buzz and attract media interest, to continue promoting the label.

6.2 MANAGEMENT AGENCY

6.2.1 Composition

The management agency should be operated by a board that consists of members under public and private law. The board needs to bring together the representatives of institutions and all stakeholders that interact directly or indirectly with the management and/or use of the territory through their decisions and activity (i.e. the sum of natural heritage sites that make up the INHERITURA area). These stakeholders may have long-term commercial or environmental interests in natural heritage sites, can trigger policy changes (for representatives of public authorities) and act as drivers towards a sustainable and environmentally friendly paradigm of tourism development, and may be affected from the implementation of protection and valorisation measures. It is therefore critical that key stakeholders are well represented in the management agency, actively contribute to the definition of strategic objectives and action plans, and have a say on management decisions. The management board should include representatives of:

- National authorities (e.g. Ministry of Tourism or Environment)
- Regional government
- Local government
- Tourism economic operators
- Tourism sector associations and trade unions
- Civic / citizen associations
- Science, academia and research institutes

It is recommended that at least 4 out of 7 categories of stakeholders should be mandatory represented in the management board of an INHERITURA area while the allocation of board seats may be distributed equally to all categories of stakeholders so as to avoid overrepresentation of a specific group.

There is no universal agreement on the optimum size of a board. A large number of members represents a challenge in terms of flexibility and having a meaningful individual participation while a small number entails representation risks. Boards typically have between 7 and 15 members, although some boards have as many as 31 members. In our case, there are not hard requirements on the board size; however it is essential to assure that all categories of stakeholders on the territory concerned are represented.

From a micro-management perspective, having an odd number of board members helps to avoid ending up with a tie in voting procedures (applicable for decisions made with simple majority); a high probability when the boards comprises an even number of members. The size of a management board will be decided by the designation authority in consultation with the INHERIT committee and local stakeholders. It will rely on the size of protected areas, population affected and socioeconomic interests therein.

The members of the board will be appointed by the designation authority while representative(s) of the designation authority will also participate as member(s) in the management board. The selection of

board members should be primarily based on their experience and expertise in environmental and tourism affairs, willingness to work in groups and collaborate with other public and private entities towards a common goal, and previous experience in managerial positions. Other criteria to be taken into consideration include locality, diverse background, social acceptance, and seniority in own organisation. Their term of office (serving period) will be between 2 to 4 years and can be renewed.

6.2.2 Legal status and funding

Given the different legislative frameworks and complexities pertaining in MED countries and in an attempt to avoid time-consuming bureaucracy procedures and endless conversations (within the partnership) in the quest of a common, shareable solution, the selection of the legal status of the management agencies will be a task to be performed by project partners themselves at national level. The present report suggests 2 alternative solutions that can work for INHERITURA areas given their scope and objectives; yet more information on the restrictions imposed and possibilities offered by national legislative frameworks should be retrieved.

To begin with, the organisations charged with the management of the designated INHERITURA areas can be established as **social enterprises**. A social enterprise is a legal entity whose primary objective is to have a positive impact in the society rather than make profits for its owned and shareholders. It operates by providing services or implementing actions for the attainment of specific social objectives (such as environmental protection, work integration, social services, local development of disadvantages areas, research and innovation) that are explicitly defined in its statute, and serve the common good. All social enterprises should be managed in an open and accountable manner, following democratic and participatory approaches that involve all categories of stakeholders and individuals directly or indirectly affected by its activities/operations. There is no single legal form for social enterprises; they can be either established in the form of a social cooperative or registered as private companies. A Social Cooperative Enterprise (SCE) is a civil-law cooperative with a social mission and limited liability for its members, possessing entrepreneurial capacity by law. It is an autonomous association of natural and legal persons came together to combine strengths and resources and provide services that serve local and collective social interests. Social cooperatives can have access to funding provided by national authorities and are eligible under EU support programmes and grants. They may also conclude contracts with the public sector and make profits/revenue from own operations as long as they have a social interest. Funds must be distributed yearly for cooperatives activities (the great share), employees' salaries, and for creating a reserve. For more information on the possibilities offered by this type of corporation and the requirements for establishing a social cooperative, project partners are advised to look for the relevant legislative framework in their country.

An alternative option is to establish management agencies as **working groups** that do not have a legal personality. Management agencies, to be formed as working groups, will be nominated and supervised by designation authorities (i.e. the regional or local authorities that have taken the initiative to designate

the INHERITURA area), being also accountable to them. They should follow applicable regulations (national, regional, local) and all decisions made should be made in conjunction with local stakeholders and bodies authorised by law to implement other plans and programmes relating to the area in question (e.g. managing authorities of NATURA 2000 sites). In this scheme, the management agencies will not be eligible for EU or national programmes; nonetheless the necessary funding can be secured and allocated to relevant valorisation and protection measures through the designation authority, represented also in the management board.

No matter what the legal form of the management agency may be, the members of the management board should pursue funding from the following sources:

- National/regional/local governments budget
- Regional Operation Programmes (ROPs)
- Special Development Programmes
- EU grants provided by EU bodies and programmes such as the European Regional Development Fund, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the European Investment Bank, Horizon 2020, LIFE+, etc.
- Income generating activities in the form of taxes imposed for example on entrance fees in natural heritage sites or on revenues from recreational activities.
- Direct private in the form of in-kind contributions from stakeholders participating in conservation and valorisation activities

6.3 DECISION MAKING

Board meetings will be held regularly (at least once per semester), to discuss progress, address strategic issues and matters of policy direction, and make key decisions. Only strategic decisions will be made at the level of the management board. To increase flexibility and secure the timely implementation of management measures, the board will delegate its authority to make decisions on operational (daily) issues to the working groups. Whatever the case may be, the management board, as a trustee and delegator of the INHERIT approach, through strategic guidelines and plans, will safely guide the decisions made by working groups within the management system (in association with stakeholders), assuring thus compliance with the INHERIT principles.

At this point, it is pertinent to make a distinction between strategic and operational decisions. On the one side, strategic decisions provide the general management direction for the INHERITURA area, determine long-term goals, and refer to arrangements that involve investments. On the other side, operational decisions support the achievement of long-term objectives, relate to implementation actions addressing administrative and work allocation tasks, and generally refer to everyday issues with low risk and minimal consequences.

The INHERIT management scheme makes explicit mention on the need to involve local stakeholders in decision making processes (for both strategic and operational issues) from the very beginning (e.g. preparation of the management plan). The rationale is to transcend the partial interests of individual regional actors, and foster a participatory management model in which all decisions are taken in conjunction with local stakeholders, who can provide, among others, higher resolution local environmental knowledge. What is important is to end up with decisions that compromise diverse interests and views, reflect and strengthen territorial identity, and are socially acceptable. This in turn will contribute to well-designed and effective measures.

The participation of stakeholders in decision making makes it possible to achieve several goals: ensuring local residents' willingness to support and participate in protection and valorisation activities, ironing out differences between conflicting perspectives, building trust and confidence in the society, and fostering proper enforcement of environmental regulations. In addition, it helps to integrate new ideas that may have not been otherwise considered, gives decisions greater legitimacy securing social acceptance, enhances local knowledge and increases corporate social responsibility.

The primary goal is all decisions to be taken unanimously by board members and local stakeholders, who have been invited (either in board meetings or working groups) to state their views and take part in decision making processes. If not possible, the method of qualified majority will be applied. In this case, the INHERITURA management scheme will employ a decision making model with votes. All members of the nominated management board shall have voting rights (one vote each) and the same stands for local stakeholders that represent interested parties. The number of stakeholders with voting

rights should be equal with the half of board members (e.g. 10 board members and 5 stakeholders). For a final decision to be made, a three-fifths majority vote (60%) is required.

6.4 PARTICIPATION OF STAKEHOLDERS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF INHERITURA AREAS

INHERITURA areas are portions of territory in which different environmental and socioeconomic interests coexist and often collide. They encompass a wide range of environmental, social, economic, governance and political factors that need to be approached in a coordinated and directional manner, as part of an integrated management and protection plan. Neither decision makers nor protected area managers can address the diverse management and protection tasks alone. It is therefore particularly important to involve different actors in the management of protected in order to cope with the multifaceted challenges prevailing at the increasingly complex and interrelated landscape of coastal tourist destinations.

The “bottom-up” approach to site management refers to the concept of participatory tourism planning, which foresees management interventions and tasks developed from the grassroots (stakeholder driven or community based). Participatory approaches to site management are usually more resource and time consuming, compared to the conventional top-down approaches in which the governance body makes the decisions and assigns management, implementation and evaluation tasks to lower levels. However, bottom-up approaches are considered to be more effective and enduring as they have the consensus and social acceptance from local communities and key stakeholders, being the main implementers and beneficiaries of management interventions.

The underlying idea behind participatory planning/management is to bring together actors with diverse socioeconomic interests in the area, to interact, collaborate and come up with commonly accepted practical solutions to preserve natural heritage sites and promote a sustainable tourism development pattern, which respects the nature and the societal needs of local communities, but at the same time maintains high and stable levels of economic growth and employment. Only through involvement can come ownership; only through ownership can come understanding and support.

6.4.1 Whom to involve

One of the fundamental questions to answer when embarking a participatory management plan is “Who are the main stakeholders?” The answer seems rather simple “all those who have a direct or indirect influence on the designated area”. There are 4 priority groups whose engagement in management tasks (either as members of the management board or stakeholders) should be actively sought for INHERITURA areas:

1. Tourism economic operators
2. Public administrations
3. Local residents and civil society

4. Scientists and researchers

Collaborative arrangements and synergies among **tourism economic actors** (owners and executives of tourism establishments such as accommodation service providers, leisure centres, food and beverage, bathing facilities, and tourist guides, etc.) are inherent in the INHERIT approach. In this context, conservation and valorisation activities, developed with SMEs' initiative, should be prioritised and potentiated. In addition, new opportunities for business and local development should be sought as long as they abide by sustainability principles, contribute to INHERITURA areas' strategic and operational management objectives, and no adverse impacts on natural resources and sites are guaranteed. Existing tourism activities or suggested ones, affecting the environmental integrity and visitation of the destination need to be carefully evaluated, planned, and regulated in the management plan. In addition, private bodies need to retain management authorities and have the control over initiatives developed by own initiative.

Public administrations should be incorporated in the management scheme to valuate and manage INHERITURA areas more effectively. Their function/role will be mostly to deliver legitimation and permission to any decision or intervention made, provide easy access to information (e.g. databases, cadastries) and funding, ensure compliance with applicable regulations and action plans, and liaise with governmental bodies for administrative and procedural issues. They may also act as the driving force behind negotiated agreements between the tourism industry and the public, Public Private Partnerships (PPPs), and voluntary schemes in which individual firms and civil society are invited to participate. This category of stakeholders may include local elected representatives, agents and technical officers from regional and local authorities, officers from state institutions (e.g. water agencies), and representatives from public utility companies.

Ensuring social acceptance towards protection and valorisation measures by **civil society** entails not only informing local residents & indigenous population, farmers, hunters, non-governmental organisations, chambers of commerce and other entities on management issues, but also consulting them, making joint decisions, and seeking their input and contribution to carry out management activities and interventions. Volunteering is an effective way to engage local communities into management activities, raise environmental and sustainability awareness and create a sense of co-responsibility.

Finally, management interventions will be undoubtedly more efficient, cost-effective and easily-implemented if they are based on sound **scientific** methods and data, especially when it comes to environment protection measures such as the installation of underground compression bins or erosion control structures (e.g. compost berms, compost filter socks).

6.4.2 Level of participation

Regional stakeholders can be involved in different stages and instances of managing a protected area. The level of participation is variable, mostly depending on the scale of issues that need to be resolved, and the extent local communities are affected by them. Participation may range from receiving information about proposed actions and consulting, to co-deciding and implementing decisions.

The INHERITURA management scheme, will employ an inclusive management scheme, in which regional stakeholders participate in all the stages of the management process. Stakeholders shall not be limited to an advisory role but become part of the decision making process, act upon decisions, and implement management measures.

- **In defining the state of play.** It is important that management plans are based on solid (site specific) evidence rather than opinions and assumptions. All destinations, and in particular coastal and insular areas, have unique features and conditions that must be taken into consideration when setting management objectives and deciding on measures. Defining the current state of play with regards to tourism activity, environmental conditions, and natural heritage sites can help to determine relative strengths and weaknesses and direct management interventions. In this stage, regional stakeholders can contribute by providing territorial information on tourism performance and local economic impact, trends and visitor profile, current tourism offering (tourism facilities and recreational activities taking place in the designated area), natural heritage sites and attractions, environmental impact caused by tourism, built environment and infrastructures.
- **In setting strategic directions.** Having gathered a comprehensive set of evidence that represent territorial reality, this stage includes setting the vision for the designated area and provide a direction for all stakeholders working together. The mission of INHERITURA management plans are to promote and develop quality tourism (coastal) destinations in the Mediterranean through strategies and bottom-up initiatives directed towards increasing the protection of the natural environment, promoting natural heritage sites as tourism attractions that showcase the unique (MED) identity of destinations, and growing the tourism sector in a sustainable manner. Effective site and destination management requires the involvement of all stakeholders in setting priorities, conservation and management objectives through clear communications and transparent decision making. It is very important that key stakeholders have the opportunity to be involved and work together at this stage in order to discuss and consider the evidence, identify and agree with the management board on strategic priorities and set the framework for actions.
- **In deciding on protection and valorisation measures.** The next stage involves crafting action plans to form the basis for implementation. As all actions will need to be carried out by a range of different actors, it is pertinent that they are framed, agreed and co-decided in

conjunction with them. Generally, the identification of actions should be guided by the strategic objectives defined in the previous stage, contribute to their accomplishment, and relate back to them in the way they are framed, selected and prioritised.

- **In implementing protection and valorisation measures.** Regional stakeholders should be considered as the initiators and actual implementers of management measures, devoted to the protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites within the designated area. To secure effective implementation, this stage includes indicating the entities to be involved in specific actions, allocating roles and responsibilities, and securing their commitment and willingness to work together and follow the plan/schedule.
- **In monitoring and evaluating implementation.** Regional stakeholders have also a key role in measuring the progress related to the implementation of management measures. While the responsibility to determine the effectiveness and impact of protection and valorisation measures rests primarily on the designation authority, stakeholders will contribute to the reporting process by providing relevant information/data on the progress and results of particular actions.

Finally, the experience from management schemes with similar to INHERITURA areas management purposes (such as NATURA 2000, destination management) indicates the importance of providing reasons and incentives for local communities and stakeholders to actively participate in the management of protected areas. For instance, local tourism businesses may not have a strong incentive to support and get involved in the planning and management of INHERITURA areas, unless they have been convinced about the emergency to adopt a more sustainable tourism approach and that the foreseen protection and valorisation measures will help them achieve higher productivity, increase revenues and attract more visitors. Similarly, local communities will not endorse such endeavours unless they perceive real improvements to their socio-economic conditions and quality of life.

6.4.3 Participation methods

Several methods can be employed to involve local communities and stakeholders in the management of protected areas. The overriding goal is to establish an effective communication & cooperation scheme that will facilitate consultation, decision making and coordination of protection and valorisation actions, and can work on a large scale with potentially thousands of participants and different categories of stakeholders. Another critical function of this scheme will be to facilitate the initiation of self-regulated actions, coming from the grassroots on initiative of stakeholders, and which should be necessarily aligned with the strategic direction and objectives of the designated area. As mentioned, a cooperation scheme can be deployed in various ways. For the management of the INHERITURA, the methods to be employed (as resulted from the online consultation with stakeholders) include:

- **Focus and working groups.** The management agency needs to schedule regular focus and working groups at each stage of the management process (i.e. define the state of play, set strategic directions, decide measures, implement measures, and monitor implementation) to

promote dialogue and make decisions for the territory concerned. All the categories of local stakeholders involved in managing the area (as defined above) should be represented in focus and working groups. The management board (or representatives) will chain and regulate procedures, participate in discussions and validate stakeholders' conclusions. It is within these groups that the key decisions will be made and the course of management objectives and actions will be formulated.

- **Workshops.** Their role is to enable local stakeholders to discuss in-depth and pilot test proposed management measures. They will help to estimate resource requirements, measure stakeholders' willingness to actively contribute to the implementation, and pre-assess the impact and effectiveness of measures. They can also pave the way for the initiation of bottom-up actions.
- **Online communication.** The management agency is encouraged to use various online communication channels (such as communication platforms, social media, emails) to promote interactions and enhance collaboration among stakeholders. Despite they seem to have an informative function, their primary function is to forge links between participants, respond to questions concerning the management of INHERITURA areas, assess the degree of support and commitment to strategic direction and management objectives and invite people to become part of this endeavour.

7 INHERITURA MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION PLAN

The guide is primarily addressed to the organisations charged (e.g. management agency) with drawing up a management plan for the designated INHERITURA areas. It is a frame of reference aimed to create an effective degree of coherence and integrity between all the management plans to be produced for INHERITURA areas at national level. It provides methodological guidelines, instructions and practical information on how to manage INHERITURA areas, prioritising management measures and identifying stakeholders responsible for their implementation; whilst capturing a holistic view of the surrounding environment affecting sustainability in the area in question (geography, socioeconomic conditions, built environment).

The guide is built on the premises of the INHERIT approach and has been designed to address all aspects of tourism development (i.e. lodging, travelling, and recreational activities) and all types of natural heritage (e.g. remote islands, inland sites, fossil sites). The guide is also relevant to protected areas and destinations, which already have a management and protection plan, and are in process of renewing it or desire to strengthen it by integrating the INHERIT principles.

The guide **outlines the management model** to be employed in INHERITURA areas, and as a frame of reference **needs to be adapted to the characteristics and specificities of the area concerned** (size, types of natural ecosystems, tourism activity, conservation issues). The preparation of an INHERITURA management plan must **involve all the categories of stakeholders having a direct or indirect influence on the designated area**. Their level of participation in each stage of management plan development is outlined in Table 10.

Its structure is inspired by management schemes and plans with similar to the INHERITURA areas scope such as the NATURA 2000 Management Plan, the England's destination management plan, and the Environmental Planning Model for Cultural Heritage Sites in South-eastern Europe, and reflects the views of stakeholders participated in the online consultation preceding its development. The guide is structured as follows.

- Part 1: Presenting the site context
- Part 2: Defining the state of play
- Part 3: Setting strategic directions
- Part 4: Identifying measures (action plan)
- Part 5: Monitoring and evaluating progress

Table 10: Participation of stakeholders in the development of the INHERITURA management plan

Stage	Participation of stakeholders	Method
Gathering evidence to define the state of play	Contribute by providing evidence on tourism performance and local economic impact, trends and visitor profile, current tourism offering, natural heritage sites and attractions, environmental impact caused by tourism, built environment and infrastructures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus groups and working groups • Online communication channels
Setting strategic directives	Work together with the management agency to consider the evidence, identify priorities and formulate strategic and operational objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board meetings • Focus groups and working groups
Identifying measures (action plan)	Agree on actions, roles and responsibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board meetings • Focus groups and working groups
Monitoring and evaluating progress	Contribute to the reporting process by providing insights and data on progress and results achieved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus groups and working groups • Online communication channels

7.1 PRESENTING THE SITE CONTEXT

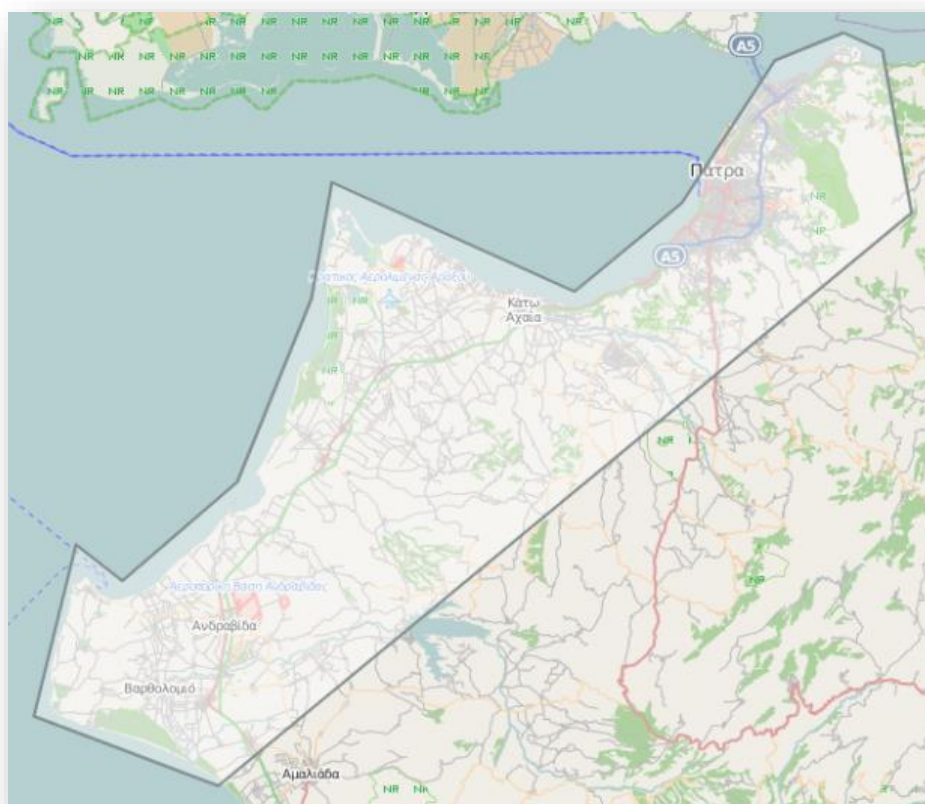
The first chapter aims to **shape the geographical and administrative profile of the designated areas**, providing information on 3 fields: a) geography and administrative data, b) already established protected areas and sites within the designated “INHERITURA” area, and c) planning documents, management working programmes and policies affecting and/or regulating environmental management and tourism activity therein.

7.1.1 Geography and administrative data

The organisation charged with the development of the management and protection plan (hereafter referred to as management planning authority) needs to provide geospatial and administrative data that will shape the geographical profile of the designated INHERITURA area. More precisely, the following information should be provided:

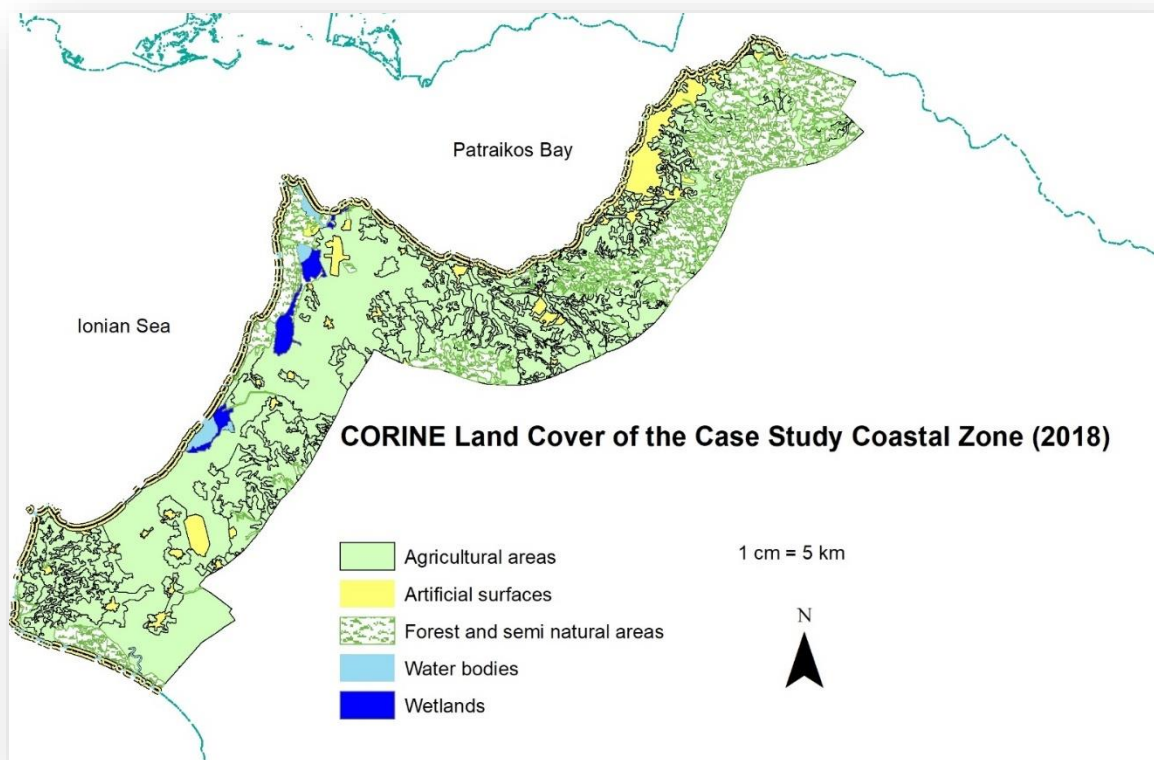
1. The area’s geographic boundaries (incl. decimal degrees and size) including its geographic position at national level.

Figure 2: Proposed INHERITURA area in Greece



2. Share of land covers (artificial surface, agricultural surface, forest and semi-natural areas, wetlands, water bodies, and marine areas). This info should be accompanied by precise mapping that depict the different land covers at spatial scale.

Figure 3: Major Land Covers in a suggested INHERITURA area



3. List of regional and local authorities having administrative and legislative authority in the area.

Regional / Local authority	Administrative boundaries (area)
1.	
2.	

7.1.2 Established protected areas

In this section, the management planning authority should indicate the classifications and inventories (i.e. areas under a protection regime) set aside within the designated area, to protect natural heritage sites and biodiversity. These may include:

- NATURA 2000 sites
- Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)

- Protected natural areas (e.g. natural parks, national natural reserves, hunting and fishing reserves, forest areas)
- Inventories such as Natural Areas of Ecological, Fauna and Flora Interest (ZNIEFF), Important Bird Areas, Wetlands of Major Importance
- Other statuses such as strategic wetlands for water management, wetlands of particular environmental interest, RAMSAR sites, OSPAR or Barcelona sites

7.1.3 Policies, planning documents and management programmes

The management planning authority needs to create a list with all the planning documents and work programmes affecting the area in question, including also all applicable policies regulating environmental management and tourism activity. Relevant planning documents and work programmes include:

- Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) plans
- Maritime Spatial Plans (MSP)
- Land use plans
- Natural reserve management plans
- NATURA 2000 management plans
- Forest management and development plans
- Natural heritage protection plans
- Water Planning and Management Scheme
- Risk prevention plans
- Natural disasters management plans

The plan should provide information on the type of the document (e.g. action plan on tourism development) and the entity responsible for the document or policy (e.g. managing authority of the protected area or Ministry of Environment). In addition, it should briefly explain how these plans and policies relate to and affect the management of the designated INHERITURA area.

Type of document	Competent entity	Relation with INHERITURA area

7.2 DEFINING THE STATE OF PLAY

INHERITURA areas' management and protection plans should rely on solid territorial evidence rather than opinions and assumptions. All destinations, and in particular coastal and insular areas, have unique features and conditions that need to be taken into consideration when setting management objectives and deciding on measures. Defining the current state of play with regards to tourism activity and natural heritage in the area concerned will assist the management authority and stakeholders to identify relative strengths and weaknesses, set priorities, and direct management interventions that will allow to address site-specific needs and challenges. So, the first part of the management plan will focus on the current state of natural heritage sites, and capacity of tourism sector.

7.2.1 Tourism offering

The first section includes to assess the current tourism offer in the designated area so as to gain a clear and comprehensive picture of the value and significance of the tourism industry to the local community. This should include the most up to date annual figures, including any trend information where possible. The tourism sectoral analysis is broken down into 4 sections, as depicted below.

1. Tourism capacity and infrastructures
2. Performance and trends
3. Tourism attractions
4. Socioeconomic appraisal

7.2.1.1 Tourism carrying capacity and facilities

This sub-section aims to showcase the tourism carrying capacity of the designated area. Tourism carrying capacity is defined by the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) as the maximum number of visitors that a destination is able to sustain without causing destruction or adversely affecting the natural and socio-cultural environment. Tourism development is linked and depends on the existence of modern and operational tourism facilities and public support infrastructures. The correlation between tourism development and available infrastructures has been widely documented in the literature. Tourism infrastructure includes a large number of facilities and services, necessary to meet the needs of tourists and increase satisfaction during their stay at a destination. They play a key role in sustaining a critical mass of visitors and utilising existing destination resources, to support local development and secure vital income. To do so, the managing planning authority needs to look into existing registries and cadastres to retrieve the most updated annual figures for the following fields:

- Enterprises in the food and beverage service industry
- Enterprises in the accommodation industry
- Enterprises in the recreation industry
- Accommodation units

- Accommodation service providers with eco-label
- Active Airbnb dwellings
- Beaches with blue flags
- Type of activities offered on the coast
 - o Beach based
 - o Water based
- Public support infrastructures
 - o Ports (Ferry services)
 - o Airports
 - o Marinas
 - o Public transportation

7.2.1.2 Performance and trends

This section will provide information on recent statistics in relation to tourism performance in the designated area. The following figures should be provided:

- The number of domestic and international arrivals
- The share of visitors by sea, air, road carriers
- The share of overnight and same day visitors
- The average length of stay (number of overnight stays)
- The breakdown of visitors by main purpose of trip (leisure, visiting friends and relatives, business)
- The average length of stay (in days)
- The breakdown of foreign overnight visitors by country of origin, so as to identify the top markets of inbound tourism
- Seasonality of tourist arrivals (tourism volume per season or quarter)
- The number of blue flags
- The presence of high value tourism segments (sport tourism, health tourism)

Figure 4: Annual change in visitor volume by quarter in the Isle of Man (Source: Isle of Man – Destination Management Plan 2016-2020)

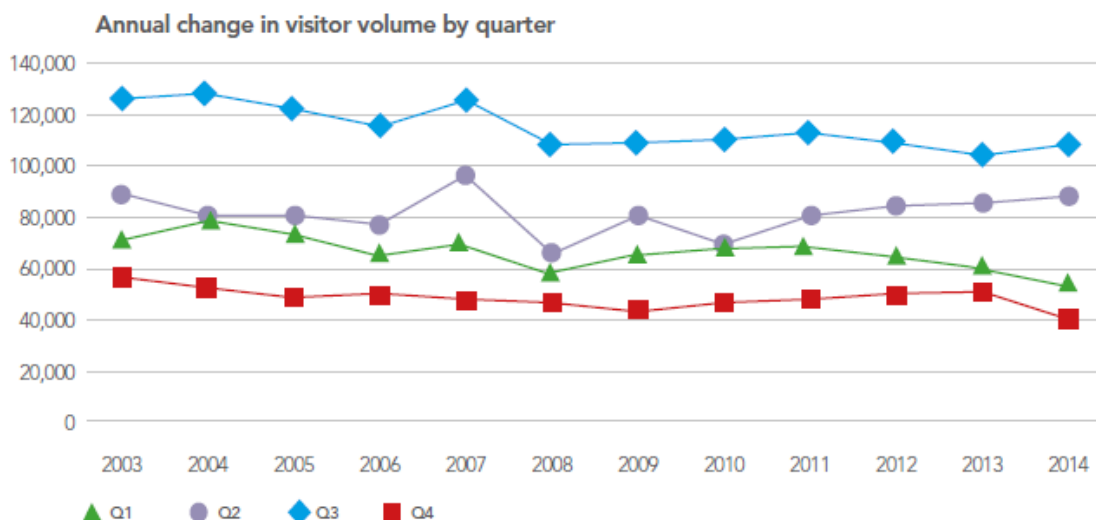
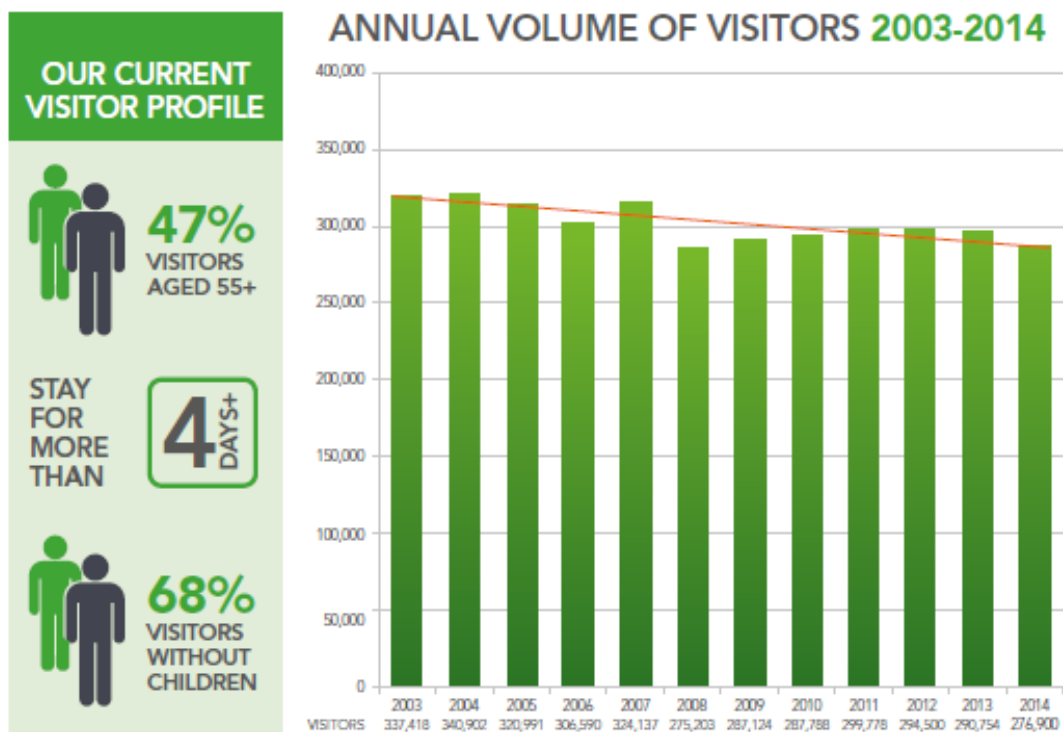


Figure 5: Annual volume of visitors & current visitors' profile in the Isle of Man (Source: Isle of Man – Destination Management Plan 2016-2020)



7.2.1.3 Tourism attractions

This section includes listing the main tourist attractions (i.e. natural heritage sites) which are located within the designated area, strengthen the destination's identity and branding, and differentiate it from other destinations. The management planning authority needs also to provide annual information on visitor volumes at these sites.

Tourist attractions	Annual number of visitors
1.	
2.	
3.	

7.2.1.4 Socioeconomic appraisal

This sub-section includes a socioeconomic appraisal of the different tourism segments; accommodation, food and beverage, recreation, assessing also their effects on local communities. The socioeconomic assessment allows to identify the extent to which local communities are reliant to tourism activity, as well as the significance and impact of the different tourism segments, and the tourism industry as a whole, on communities' social fabric.

Figure 6: Form to be completed for the accommodation segment

Type of effect	Extent of impact	Metric/Measure
Contribution to community income	<input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High	- Nominal income from accommodation services - Contribution to GDP
Contribution to local employment	<input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High	- Number of jobs in the accommodation service industry - Contribution to local employment
Seasonality of employment	<input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High	- Jobs in 1 st quarter of the year - Jobs in 2 nd quarter of the year - Jobs in 3 rd quarter of the year - Jobs in 4 th quarter of the year
Contribution to area's branding and identity	<input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High	- Image of the industry within the area - Reputation (linked with the quality of services offered)

Type of effect	Extent of impact	Metric/Measure
Promotion of local resources	<input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High	- Local resources (products, services, events) promoted by the accommodation service industry
Links with other economic activities and industries	<input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High	- Economic activities and industries positively affected by the accommodation service industry

7.2.2 Natural heritage and ecology

The inventory and mapping of the natural heritage sites and species of community interest which are endemic at these sites, lie at the core of defining the situation at hand in the management and protection plan of an INHERITURA area. The first step is to draw up a list with all the natural heritage sites with existing or potential touristic interest on the area, explaining how these sites are being used in the context of the local tourism offering (e.g. attractions, biodiversity hotspots, recreational activities, and sightseeing) and presenting the main threats associated with natural hazards and ongoing tourism activities. The following table presents the different types of natural heritage sites that can be found in the Mediterranean macro-region.

Table 11: Types of natural heritage sites

Coastal and maritime environments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lagoons - Posidonia beds - Estuaries - Reefs - Tidal zones - Salt flats - Large shallow inlets and bays - Sand dunes Freshwater ecosystems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Natural eutrophic lakes - Dystrophic lakes - Temporary ponds - Artificial lakes - Constantly flowing rivers 	Forests <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deciduous forests - Sclerophyllous forests - Mountainous coniferous forests Rocky sites and caves <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Caves - Volcanoes - Fields of lava - Submerged or partly submerged sea caves Other sites of touristic interest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lighthouses - Coastal shipwrecks - Underwater shipwrecks & archaeological sites - Remote islands - Pre-historic, fossil sites
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The following figure presents an example of describing a natural heritage site with all the necessary information in an INHERITURA management and protection plan.

Figure 7: Site description form - Example for Limnothalassa Kotychi - Brinia

Site name	Limnothalassa Kotychi - Brinia
Type	Lagoon
Size (km²)	87.84 km ²
Location (decimal degrees)	Longitude: 21.298611 Latitude: 38.003611
Administrative authority	Ministry of Environment and Energy
Site description	Kotychi (or Neophytos) is a brackish coastal lagoon situated some kilometres to the north of the cape of Kyllini. It is the largest lagoon remaining in the western Peloponnisos after the drainage of the Agoulinitsa lagoon. Its surface presents strong seasonal fluctuations depending on the annual rainfall. Kotychi is a shallow lagoon with a depth of 30-40cm. It is fed by considerable quantities of fresh water input from several small streams and torrents, the largest of these being Brantzeleiko, Gouvos, Sykias and Trikokkia. Although agricultural activity has been intensified around the Kotychi wetland, the wetland habitats themselves have not been significantly affected by such work. The area features a sandy beach, which is a nesting destination For Caretta Caretta with about 20 nest per km per breeding season.
Site protection status	Natural Reserve
Body responsible for the site management	Management body of Ygrotopoi Kotychiou-Dasous Strofylas
Management plan	No
Use in the context of local tourism offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attraction - Biodiversity hotspot - Sightseeing - Recreational activities
Annual number of visitors	Not available
Threats associated with natural hazards, tourism and other economic activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agricultural cultivation - Grazing - Fertilisation - Hunting - Climate change - Waste disposal (associated with tourism)

The next stage includes creating a list with the species of community interest (endangered, vulnerable or rare), which are endemic in the natural heritage sites of the designated area, stating their population and conservation status, which, in conjunction with the pressures exerted by unsustainable tourism activity, justify the uptake of protection measures.

Scientific name	Site(s) found	Population	Status ¹

¹ Critically endangered (CR), Endangered (EN), Vulnerable (VU), Near Threatened (NT), Rare (R)

7.3 SETTING STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Having established a clear picture about the performance of the tourism industry in the designated area, as well as the type, features and significance of natural heritage sites therein, this stage is about reflecting on these evidence to set the vision and identify priority areas over the forthcoming period.

The first step is to set the direction towards which public authorities, tourism and visitor economy businesses and environmental organisations will work together to achieve the desired results. The challenge, as prescribed by the INHERIT approach, is to promote a sustainable mode of tourism development in MED coastal areas which will rely on the protection and valorisation of natural heritage sites, while special emphasis is placed upon sustainable tourism development through bottom-up approaches and collaborative, participatory efforts of local stakeholders. This should be the vision statement for all INHERITURA areas.

The next step is to set up the priority areas for natural heritage protection and tourism development in the area. This step is particularly important provided that the strategic sustainable development objectives for the area and the operational objectives of the Management Plan, together with measurable targets will be defined on the basis of this prioritisation. Priority areas to consider may include to:

- Address seasonal variation in tourism activity and extend the tourism season outside of the traditional summer and spring seasons when tourist arrivals reach their peak. This can also help create longer-lasting employment in the sector.
- Address excesses in specific sites and destinations' (within the designated area) carrying capacity by re-orienting tourists from overcrowded places to under-valorised sites with lower influx of visitors.
- Improve sites' carrying capacity by stimulating investments in modernising existing infrastructures and services, filling gaps or pursuing new development.
- Increase the level of tourism spending retained locally, for example through local supply chains, and the provision of complementary tourism services and products.
- Attract new visitor profiles such as families, naturalists and pensioners, particularly interested in combining leisure, nature and local products, also concerned about environmental sustainability and the protection of fragile natural heritage sites.
- Enhance area's identity, branding and distinctiveness through marketing activities focused on the valorisation and promotion of natural assets.
- Develop new market segments (e.g. wine tourism, natural heritage tourism, cycling routes).
- Raise environmental awareness within the tourism industry.
- Improve stakeholder engagement and joint working for the protection and valorisation of the natural heritage, through better participatory and collaboration structures and communication.

The next step includes setting strategic objectives by reflecting on strategic directions and priorities defined. These, in turn, will provide the framework for specific actions and management measures. The strategic objectives should be developed:

- In accordance with the principles and objectives of the INHRITURA network.
- Self-coherent, and consistent with the conservation and sustainable development objectives defined in any existing plans or programmes relating to the area concerned, including policies for sustainable tourism development
- In compliance with any regulation applying to the designated area and affect its management.

Strategic objectives should be driven by an element of realism and attainability over the time period foreseen by the plan. The plan also needs to secure a balanced mix of objectives covering all the three pillars of the INHERIT approach. At a next stage, the translation of strategic objectives (expressed in a more generic way) into operational goals conveyed as targets, will pave the way for the definition of specific measures to be put in place for their attainment. To effectively support the monitoring process, operational objectives should relate to outcomes, and be created using the SMART philosophy, meaning that they are **Specific** (clearly defined), **Measurable** (expressed in measurable terms, results can be calculated and compared with similar datasets), **Achievable** (realistic), **Relevant** (designed to support the attainment of strategic objectives) and **Time-constrained** (measured at a given temporal scale – time interval). Operational objectives can be both qualitative and quantitative.

Priority	Strategic objective	Operational objective
Improve area's identity and branding	Promote the area's distinctive image and offering to attract new growth market and visitor profiles	Define 4 new target markets (e.g. families, naturalists) and run marketing campaigns for the entire period of the plan to enhance the area's profile in the marketplace as a destination rich in natural heritage and for all seasons, with the aim to reach 1,000,000 individuals.

7.4 DEFINING MANAGEMENT MEASURES

The next section involves defining the course of management measures (action plans) to be implemented throughout the plan lifecycle, to support the attainment of strategic and operational objectives that have been identified following the completion of the previous stages; namely area assessment (state of play) and issue prioritisation. Actions should not only relate to strategic objectives but also need to be guided by them, to ensure relevance and consistency. Ongoing actions can be also included in the management plan, as long as they contribute to core management objectives, either simply as they are or modified/improved to better address INHERITURA areas' protection and valorisation needs. The plan can help in flagging them up and bringing them forward, ensuring the continuity of relevant actions having or currently being implemented in the area in question.

The management plan should define for each measure: a) its importance to the achievement of the objective it serves, b) the timing for the measure, c) indicative cost and resources required, d) responsible body and stakeholders to be involved, and e) funding source(s). Timescales will vary from site to site (within the designated area), depending on the complexity of the issues that require resolution.

In general, 3 broad categories of measures address the objectives of the INHERITURA network. They resemble at a large extent the requirements that an area should meet to receive the INHERITURA label. The designated INHERITURA areas, however, should go in more depth, to address their particular goals and achieve the desired results. Please note that the measures described below should be used as a reference framework and useful guidelines. The identification of measures for each INHERITURA area must be tailored to the needs, features, and specificities of the area concerned, and follow a bottom-up approach.

7.4.1 Environmental management and protection measures

This category contains measures set out to preserve natural landscapes and biodiversity, promote the sustainable use and conservation of natural resources, foster sustainable waste management and green transportation, monitor environmental degradation and pollution, and achieve high bathing water quality.

Prevent and/or reduce the pollution in natural heritage sites. The plan should foresee the implementation of actions targeting to decrease pollution in natural heritage sites. These include but not limited to:

- Organising forest, beach and underwater clean-ups
- Reducing the amount of rubbish generated in recreation and tourism activities
- Promoting segmentation of waste at source in tourism facilities
- Implementing efficient and sustainable wastewater services (e.g. treatment systems)

- Disapproving the consumption of single-use plastics
- Promoting responsible recreational activities on the water and land

Maintain beaches and marinas litter free and ensure they comply with applicable water quality requirements. The plan should specify sampling points in potential sources of pollution (e.g. near streams, rivers, storm water outlets) for local authorities and stakeholders to measure the quality of water and provide evidence that tourism activities do not affect the quality of bathing water in beaches and marinas. Tourism economic operators (e.g. beach bars and restaurants) should strengthen efforts to ensure that bathing waters meet good quality standards. Indicatively, the major sources of pollution for bathing waters are:

- Insufficiently treated or untreated wastewater due to outdated sewage systems or (biological) systems with limited capacity to cope with massive inflow of tourists during summer.
- The deliberate release by tourism facilities of sewage into bathing waters or streams that discharge close to beaches and marinas,
- Unsustainable boating activity, associated with sewage disposal and a lot of substances that can pollute sea water and alter water's chemistry such as oil and fuel, litter, and contaminated bilge waters.

Implement investments to promote environmental protection in natural heritage sites. The plan should prescribe specific investments (small-scale infrastructures) to promote environmental protection in natural heritage sites. These investments are meant to sustain biodiversity and eco-system services, increase eco-system's vulnerability to natural hazards and other environmental pressures (e.g. climate change, invasive alien species), prevent pollution and littering and enhance the aesthetic value of landscapes. Indicative examples of improvements on natural heritage sites are:

- The installation of underground gradual compression bins, to facilitate waste collection in destinations with rich natural heritage. The underground bins compress a large volume of waste and can thus improve the attractiveness of natural heritage by reducing the need to have many waste bins. They also lower the costs of waste management by reducing the frequency of waste collection.
- Erosion control investments consisting indicatively of compost berms, compost filter socks, and silt fences to be used in major coastal tourism destinations to tackle erosion and desertification caused by tourism activities.
- Toilet facilities with controlled sewage disposal that reflect the average number of site visitors during the peak season, the geographical size of the natural heritage site and the number and location of major access points. Facilities must be easy to locate through signage.

Promote sustainable mobility at the destination, including public transportation and low-emission transportation solutions. The plan needs to prescribe measures with the view to offering

smart low-carbon transport solutions for tourists and residents through innovation and cooperation with key stakeholders. The purpose is to preserve the natural environment by decreasing carbon emissions and energy consumption, increase the environmental quality of destinations, improve rural accessibility, and contribute to behavioural and attitudes change about the importance of sustainable mobility for recreation and tourist purposes. Relevant actions may be to:

- Encourage public and collective transport.
- Improve public transportation services, addressing routes and timetable adjustments, ticket procedures, bike transportation on buses.
- Encourage bicycling and bike renting, as well as economy-sharing driven mobility solutions for travellers.
- Create walking and cycling routes.
- Develop smart information applications/services to inform travellers of the main tourist attractions and how to get to these attractions using sustainable modes of transport.
- Promote the uptake of green vehicles by fleet operators (e.g. car rentals).

Furthermore, natural heritage sites and surrounding areas, including routes, facilities and parking areas should be clean and maintained at all times. Trash, bags, litter or other waste shall not be allowed to accumulate causing these areas to become unsightly or hazardous. Tourism facilities, on their own initiative and/or in cooperation with local authorities, can work together to place garbage bins in natural heritage sites, to keep them clean and in pristine condition. Signs aimed at encouraging visitors to make proper use of the bins and dispose of their waste in a responsible manner can be also placed in selected spots. Broadly speaking, there should be an adequate number of bins and containers; and they should all be regularly maintained, well secured, and spaced appropriately. It is also recommended to substitute or supplement existing containers with recycling bins for different waste streams (e.g. plastic, paper, metal, glass) to promote recycling and waste separation at source.

Forbid or regulate any type of economic activity that disturbs the natural environment in natural heritage sites, including dumping and unauthorised camping. INHERITURA areas should have a precautionary approach to environmental challenges and promote greater environmental responsibility. In this context, any economic activity that can potentially disturb the natural environment including dumping and unauthorized camping, should be prohibited or restricted in INHERITURA areas. The plan should prescribe measures for the regulation and limitation of such activities in natural heritage sites. Information about these restrictions should be displayed at the entrance points of natural heritage sites and circulated within local communities to prevent the initiation of unsustainable and unwanted economic activities.

7.4.2 Measures for the valorisation of natural heritage sites as tourism assets

Natural heritage represents a capital of irreplaceable cultural, social, environmental and economic value, and is regarded as a key driver for socio-economic development and growth of coastal areas. The sustainable valorisation and promotion of natural assets can help strengthen the identity of local communities, improve destinations' branding and attract investors and travellers, create employment opportunities, improve the quality of life for residents, and prolong touristic season.

Design site-specific thematic routes to highlight aspects of natural heritage sites. INHERITURA areas should implement actions to promote natural heritage tourism and at the same time contribute to managing natural resources in a sustainable and eco-friendly way. For instance, the designation of site-specific thematic routes can essentially serve this purpose as they can combine leisure and sightseeing with targeted conservation actions. Thematic routes are carefully designed routes that connect natural attractions and/or cultural and historical assets on the basis of a certain theme, which harmonise and co-exist in a certain geographical scale and can be reached through different means of transport. Thematic routes offer opportunities for education and entertainment at the same time, raising interest about environmental quality and local traditions and contributing to environmental preservation. Tourism routes can be broadly categorised according to a) geographical scale (local, regional, national), b) thematic focus (natural trails, cultural assets, specific interests), and c) means of transport (cycling, sailing, horse, hiking routes) used to experience nature. Tourism entities, in cooperation with local authorities and/or on their own initiative, should designate site-specific thematic routes in natural heritage sites, to showcase the Mediterranean characteristics of the destination and promote environmental protection. To conclude, the plan should prescribe the designation of different site-specific routes such as:

- Natural trails aimed to highlight environmental quality.
- Special interest routes focused on a specific activity such as wine production, farming, and sports.
- Cycling routes, combining athletic activity and exploration, which encapsulate different natural, historical and religious in an enlightening and interesting way.
- Sailing routes in sea caves and remote islands.

Develop and promote artificial reefs/systems to strengthen coastal destinations' identity and enhance marine environmental protection. INHERITURA management and protection plan need to promote the creation of artificial reefs in marine environments to increase coastal area's recognition and branding and promote environmental management. Artificial Reefs (ARs) can be viewed as biodiversity conservation tools and underwater eco-tourism sites that promote a destination's branding and promote (marine) environmental management and restoration. They are manmade structures deployed on the seabed to mimic the main functions and characteristics of a natural reef. Submerged shipwrecks are the most common form of artificial reef while oil & gas platforms, bridges, lighthouses, and other abandoned

offshore structures can be also used to form artificial reefs. The plan should also encourage local tourism operators to create tourism packages that combine accommodation and recreational activities in artificial reefs (e.g. diving, fishing). Overall, artificial reefs have the potential to contribute to destination's branding by:

- Creating interesting diving locations
- Improving the quality of beaches and bathing waters
- Providing a diverse range of recreational activities such as snorkelling, angling, yachting and moorings
- Enhancing professional and recreational fisheries
- Generating reef-related economic activities to coastal communities
- Enhancing biodiversity and marine resources
- Attracting media attention

Create opportunities to experience biodiversity and wildlife in natural heritage sites. Natural heritage sites usually have a relatively high biodiversity value. They might have especially large numbers of endemic (native) species that may experience habitat loss by human activity or other environmental pressures (e.g. climate change, biological invasions). INHERITURA management and protection plans need to prescribe measures for the designation of nature based activities that will provide visitors with the opportunity to explore area's biological treasure troves in a sustainable and eco-friendly way. Nature based activities should be organised and guided by local tourism professionals, who are familiar with local eco-systems and committed to conservation principles, and making as little impact as possible. When implemented responsibly, they can promote a destination's branding and serve as a driving force behind conservation efforts. Indicative ways to explore biodiversity and wildlife in natural heritage sites are:

- River cruises and canoeing in wetlands
- Hiking through forests
- Waterfall trekking
- Scuba diving in underwater hotspots (e.g. reefs) and submerged caves
- Tree climbing and bird watching

Implement investments to leverage the visibility of natural heritage landmarks. INHERITURA management and protection plans need to prescribe investments (mostly small scale infrastructures) to leverage the visibility of significant landmarks and improve destination's branding. Relevant investments are meant to a) improve accessibility to (hard to reach) natural heritage sites (e.g. gorges, caves, inaccessible inland locations with aesthetic value), and b) improve labelling in natural heritage sites and inform tourists about protection measures and INHERIT sustainable tourism activities therein. Indicative examples of improvements in natural heritage sites are:

- The development and/or repairing of walking paths in natural heritage sites to facilitate the proliferation of sustainable tourism activities.

- The instalment of maritime floating docks and ramps that will allow tourists to reach by boat key attractions that cannot be easily reached by car or other means.
- The instalment of platforms (well-protected and safe for visitors) or other structures that offer breath-taking views of natural heritage attractions (e.g. shipwreck beach in Zakynthos, Greece).
- The development of a sustainable tourism activities' signage system, consisting of information boards, to guide visitors in going around the natural heritage sites.

Promote, in association with other INHERITURA areas, the creation of multi-destination itineraries in MED coastal areas to valorise natural heritage sites and prolong touristic season.

INHERITURA management and protection plans should prescribe measures for the creation of multi-destination itineraries in MED coastal areas with similar geospatial characteristics, in association with other INHERITURA areas. The purpose is to diversify the dominant MED tourism offering by reorienting tourists from overcrowded places to under-valorised sites (but rich in biodiversity and environmental quality) and increase tourism flows in low/medium seasons, thus extending the touristic season. Multi-destination itineraries are usually organised around a specific theme like environmentally friendly tourism, athletic tourism, food and wine tourism, health and wellbeing tourism, nature tourism. The INHERITURA network promotes the creation of multi-destination (transnational) itineraries to connect a selection of MED coastal areas around a common theme akin to natural heritage (e.g. islands itineraries in the Adriatic Ionian Sea and biodiversity itineraries in MED natural 2000 sites). The emphasis should be on conserving, valorising and highlighting the unique characteristics of the Mediterranean natural heritage; yet encouraging tourists to engage more fully with communities along their trip. Relevant efforts towards this direction can be to:

- Assess the feasibility of forming and applying such itineraries.
- Join synergetic schemes working on multi-destination itineraries.
- Participate in EU projects focused on the creation of sustainable transnational tourism products (especially in the field of natural heritage).
- Participate in collaborative schemes (e.g. networks, associations, platforms) that strengthen transnational cooperation in sustainable tourism.
- Encourage greater involvement in sustainable tourism for small tourism enterprises and local authorities.

7.4.3 Marketing and awareness raising measures

This category includes measures intended to increase public awareness on sustainable tourism development and natural heritage protection and market the destination in the marketplace. What differentiates them from valorisation and promotional activities is that measures under this category have exclusively an informative scope. They comprise communication actions that serve a dual purpose; firstly to build environmental consciousness within the local community and promote a code of conduct

for visitors and secondly to showcase the area's distinctive character and strengthen its position in the marketplace so as to attract new growth markets. They do not relate with the creation of new tourism offerings (e.g. thematic routes) nor investments in small-scale infrastructures.

Promote the area's distinctive image in the marketplace and attract new growth markets.

INHERITURA management and protection plans need to prescribe a course of actions to promote the designated area in the marketplace as a destination for all seasons with rich natural heritage and high quality tourism services that abides by sustainability principles and respect the natural environment. The purpose is to develop and market a strong brand identity for the designated area and create an impact on the marketplace that will allow to stimulate visits, attract visitors with environmental consciousness, and prolong touristic season. This is about defining and communicating the distinctive essence of the area that distinguishes it from other destinations. The area should be linked to and advertise the unique and distinguishing features of its Mediterranean landscape, the sites with rich natural and cultural heritage (incl. biodiversity), the range of relaxation and leisure opportunities offered by tourism providers, and most importantly the sustainable model of tourism development (endorsed by everyone involved in tourism industry). Creating a shared story for the designated area and conveying messages about what makes it unique and special should be an integral part of the area's branding and marketing programme. Relevant measures may include to:

- Determine growth market targets (i.e. visitor profiles) and identify niche market opportunities (e.g. multi-destination itineraries, thematic routes)
- Develop a consistent, strategically coordinated destination branding programme.
- Add content to public authorities and tourism providers' website to promote storytelling and optimise visibility on search engines.
- Launch digital marketing campaigns through social media platforms, emails and SMS.
- Participate in international tourism events and fora.
- Build strategic marketing partnerships with tourism entities and other INHERITURA areas.

Implement awareness raising activities on sustainable tourism development and natural heritage protection.

The plan should prescribe a number of awareness-raising activities to create an environmental culture within the society, increase public awareness (incl. travellers and locals) on the importance of natural heritage protection and sustainable tourism, foster sustainable environmental and resource management in tourism facilities, encourage the participation of local stakeholders in environmental protection measures, and stimulate the emergence of eco-tourism businesses that will gradually replace those facilities relying on mass tourism. Educational and communication activities must be relevant to the strategic objectives of the designated area, and addressed to both tourism entities and local residents. The different types of awareness raising activities can be divided into 5 categories:

1. Activities for passive participation: Workshops, information days, exhibitions, debates, lectures and presentations by experts, conferences, etc.

2. Activities for active participation: Guided tours, educational games, cleaning days, diving and snorkelling, forest and beach inspections, nature conservation projects, etc.
3. Training and education: Training sessions in tourism facilities, educational activities for management bodies or/and staff in beaches and marinas, special classes in schools, etc.
4. Publications: The production and distribution of brochures, leaflets, newsletter, stickers, postcards, T-shirts, bags, and magazines.
5. Media appearance: Articles and advertisements in newspapers, magazines and journals, TV and radio broadcasts (incl. interviews).
6. Social media activity and email campaigns.

Display information relating to natural heritage sites in central spots of the designated area.

The plan should assure that information about natural heritage sites (e.g. environmental elements, protection measures implemented, and sustainable tourism activities offered) are displayed in central spots of the designated area. The objective is to inform visitors and locals about natural assets, sensitive areas and their importance to the local community so that they are encouraged to learn more about, experience the environmental in a responsible and sustainable way and potentially participate in protection activities. The information must include details about the natural area, a map of the site and a code of conduct for visitors. Natural area details should include:

- Site description
- Site location (decimal degrees) and size/surface
- Ecological information
 - o Natural habitat types of community interest present on the site
 - o Animal and plant species of community interest on the site
- Threats, pressures and tourism activities with adverse impact on the natural heritage
- Protection status (e.g. NATURA 2000)
- Body responsible for the site management
- Sustainable tourism activities offered on the site (e.g. thematic routes, bird watching)
- Main tourism economic operators

Information on natural heritage sites can be displayed in different spots and locations of the destination such as at the entrance points of natural heritage sites, in tourism information offices, public buildings, airports, ports, and bus stations. Relevant environmental information could furthermore be published in tourist brochures, local newspapers or pamphlets created specifically for this purpose.

Communicate a code of conduct for visitors to natural heritage sites that reflects sustainability principles and complies with environmental regulations.

The plan should prescribe measures for the development and dissemination of a code of conduct for visitors (both tourists and local residents) to the natural heritage sites, with the aim to prevent environmental damage, address

potential risks and sustain the destination's environmental quality. Tourism activities have adverse environmental side-effects. Safeguards, such as codes of conduct, can prevent this from happening and at the same time can encourage tourists to visit the site and experience the natural heritage in a responsible way. The codes of conduct should address the activities carried out in natural heritage sites and include (indicative) rules about noise, equipment used, rubbish disposal and management, the use of vehicles, camping, fires, diving, fishing, hunting, etc. They shall comply with all applicable environmental legislation and should be displayed (obligatory) at the major entrance points of natural heritage sites, near to relevant tourism activities (e.g. "No diving" sign on a pier near a wetland or lake) or as information at the stores and offices of tourism service providers that offer eco-tourism activities.

7.4.4 Allocating roles and responsibilities

As the partnership has chosen to employ a participatory scheme for the governance and management of INHERITURA areas with emphasis on bottom-up initiatives (relevant argumentation has been thoroughly displayed in previous sections), the implementation of action plans and identified measures relies heavily on the participation and commitment of local stakeholders. For this reason, it is not only significant that the course of actions is decided in concert with stakeholders but coupled with specific roles and responsibilities for each action, so as to avoid confusion and ensure a smooth collaboration for all entities involved. The table below some of the different kind of authorities/bodies to be involved in the implementation and the roles best suited for them.

Stakeholders	Role
Public authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Secure and allocate funding for management measures. - Regulate economic activities taking place in natural heritage sites. - Ensure compliance with applicable regulation and existing planning documents and management plans. - Ensure public health and safety. - Intervene to resolve conflicts of socioeconomic interests. - Create strategic marketing partnerships to strengthen area's profile in the marketplace. - In charge of transport planning and upgrading of public infrastructures.
Tourism economic operators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure high quality tourism services & provide lasting memories to visitors by providing opportunities to experience nature & engage in conservation activities. - Eco-business development and identification of new market niches. - Implement investments to promote environmental protection, leverage visibility of natural heritage landmarks and facilitate accessibility. - Engage in sustainable waste management and promote resource efficiency in own site. - Run marketing campaigns to promote area's storytelling and advertise natural heritage sites and tourism attractions. - Display information relating to natural heritage sites in own facilities and communicate the code of conduct to customers.
Scientific community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide scientific input for the conservation of local biodiversity and natural heritage sites. - Suggest protection measures and oversight their implementation. - Provide technical knowledge for the deployment and installation of infrastructures.

Stakeholders	Role
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor environmental performance. - Business and staff training
Civil society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase public awareness on the need to promote environmental protection and adopt a sustainable model of tourism development. - Promote recycling and engage in sustainable waste management. - Encourage local residents' participation in protection and conservation activities. - Organise clean-ups in natural heritage sites.

7.5 MONITORING AND EVALUATING PROGRESS

Managing a protection site or area is a dynamic process where conditions and priorities may change over time and objectives need to be re-orientated. This implies that the management plan should be regarded as a living entity that need to be kept relevant and up-to-date. Similarly, all actors involved need to be able to witness changes and progressions, and be readily available to adjust and respond to changing conditions and conservation needs in a timely fashion. The above requires a process of monitoring and reporting progress, a scheme to measure effectiveness and assess impact, and a programme of review that will allow to reorient strategic objectives and renew work programme.

Monitoring can be defined as a continuous procedure of supervising actions and measures in progress to assure that they are on-course and on-schedule in meeting the objectives and performance targets set in the planning stage. The purpose is to measure progress, identify possible deviations from the initial plan, make improvements when necessary, and react to changing conditions. Monitoring requires a dynamic reporting process which involves regular data collection on the progress and implementation of individual actions. In assessing the progress made, all actors involved (tourism actors, local residents, scientific community and the members of the managing authority) in the management of the area in question, should contribute by providing relevant data. The level of participation in data collection activities for the different categories of stakeholders will be determined on the basis of activity's scope and objectives. For instance, for measures targeting to minimise waste generation in tourism facilities located nearby beaches and marinas, the selection of sampling points and conduct of water quality audits by tourism actors may provide false information and data on the quality of the water environment, as a result of conflicting interests. To assure objectivity and reliability, the management agencies may consider to sub-contract an independent third-party or external experts to lead data collection and reporting activities. In all cases, the entities to take part in data collection and reporting need to deliver all relevant measurements and data to the designation authority, which holds sole responsibility (based on consultation with stakeholders) to determine the effectiveness and impact of protection and valorisation measures. Monitoring processes may include amongst others:

- Recording of actions and responses
- Field surveys and audits to observe changes on the status of natural heritage sites
- Technical reports concerning infrastructure development
- Feedback from stakeholders
- Visitor surveys
- Business surveys

The monitoring system should be based on a system of performance indicators that will be used to measure changes and assess work program's effectiveness. From the planning stage, the managing authority needs to select performance indicators for measuring and evaluating progress towards the attainment of strategic and operational goals. A Key Performance Indicator (KPI) can be defined as a

measurable value that enables an organisation to track and monitor progress on pre-defined goals and gauge performance in a particular activity over time. The use of performance indicators is a convenient way not only to specify the desired level of performance, but also to evaluate results and assure compliance with technical and resource requirements. Performance indicators may be linked to objectives, targets and individual actions, and they can be regarded as benchmarks for minimum acceptable performance. They constitute measurable metrics that reflect actors' performance, in the context of implementing the management measures foreseen in the planning document. They derive from an analysis of the desired impact that management measures need to have on conservation status, natural heritage sites and conservation of the social and economic fabric of local communities, and may relate to factors determining the effectiveness of protection and valorisation measures, or/and the overall state of tourism in the designated area such as volume, value, seasonality and environmental footprint.

INHERITURA management and protection plans need to contain different categories of performance indicators to address all the dimensions of the planning, management and implementation process.

- **Indicators of resources:** These indicators provide information about financial, human, material, and organisational resources consumed to implement management measures. For example, the amount allocated for the deployment and installation of maritime floating docks and ramps.
- **Achievement indicators:** These indicators provide information about the degree of implementation of each measure. For example, the number of recycling bins (compared to the total number foreseen in the management plan) placed on natural heritage sites for a given reporting period.
- **Result indicators:** These indicators relate to the direct effects of the actions carried out. For example, the number of multi-destinational itineraries or thematic routes created during the lifecycle of the management plan.
- **Impact indicators:** These indicators describe the long term effects of the implemented measures, and are mostly linked to strategic objectives. For example, the decrease rate of seasonal variations of tourist arrivals.

Each year, the management agency needs to compile the information and data reported by stakeholders to summarise and present what has been carried out and the results achieved, both positive and negative, for the measures foreseen for the given reporting period. The **annual assessment report** should provide an overview of situation at hand highlighting changing conditions, new requirements and liabilities, describe actions taken and analyse the state of progress of the management measures, assess results against defined targets and performance indicators, and establish the stage of overall progress towards the implementation of the management Plan. The evaluation must eventually lead to concrete conclusions on whether it is necessary to a) reorient priorities and reformulate strategic objectives or

continue unchanged, b) make amendments in the course of actions foreseen, accelerate the implementation of some of them or introduce new measures, and c) allocate more resources and increase participation in planning and implementation activities, so as to keep the plan up-to-date and make it more relevant to the situation at hand.

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