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Deliverable 3.3.1: “MED S&C Path Model Benchmarking Method”

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WP3 STUDYING

Activity 3.3

***“Identifying and discussing key areas for development and improvements of
tourism competitiveness in MED area in the target areas”***

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1 Introduction

1.1 BEST MED - (Beyond European Sustainable Tourism MED Path)

BEST MED project is being implemented in eight Mediterranean countries (Spain, Portugal, France, Italy, Croatia, Slovenia, Greece and Montenegro) with the general objective of enhancing Mediterranean Governance, being the main challenges to tackle seasonality and the lack of effective cooperation among main tourism actors, including the citizen active participation on the policies design. It aims to have a new integrated and sustainable tourism planning approach, to contribute to the mitigation of seasonality in the MED area, through the connection between coastal and inland regions, such as a path-route method. A testing phase will allow to build a joint model that will be transferred and capitalised, as well as a toolkit and updates set of data indicators.

BEST MED will follow a strategy of previous approaches and outputs, testing an updated toolkit of data and indicators, contributing to the design of a new Green model (MED S&C Path- Sustainable Path & Cultural Routes Model), focusing on integration of tourism planning into wider development strategies, together with mobilizing key players both at local and specifically at transnational level, creating synergies across MED countries and promoting the awareness of the MED area.

More information about the project [here](#).

1.2 Working Package 3 “Studying phase”

The objective of the Working Package 3 is to develop a framework of knowledge about main project goals through:

- Base information for a network of tourism observatories.
- Information needed to develop a MED Sustainable Path and Cultural Routes Model (MED S&C Path) on the example of the Mitomed+ project “Green Beach Model”, and of other MED projects.

The study will examine existing methodological approaches on tourism data and tourism observatories and analyse previous experiences on tourism data knowledge, finding gaps and needs in data collection management and pinpointing the main results and suggestions from the previous MED projects, to develop adequate policies.

Within WP3, Activity 3.3 “*Identifying and discussing key areas for development and improvements of tourism competitiveness in MED area in the target area*” aims to develop the theoretical “MED Sustainable Path and Cultural Routes Model (MED S&C Path)” and its

implementation framework, as well as organizing a technical workshop followed by the definition of a Road Map of the activities that will lead to the “MED S&C Path”.

Deliverable 3.3.1 develops the theoretical concept of the MED Sustainable Path & Cultural Routes model, on the basis of the literature and past experiences on sustainable tourism monitoring and management. To this end, it is worth noting that the European Institute of Cultural Routes is an Associated Partner of BEST MED and several of the pilot areas to test the model are part of the Programme of Cultural Routes from the Council of Europe.

2 Theoretical Concept of the Model

In this section we shortly recall the importance of cultural heritage to support local sustainable development in particular through tourism products. Tourism is strictly interconnected to the destination’s natural and cultural endowments, as well as with local communities and stakeholders and its impact is far to be only economic, but it concerns also the socio-cultural and environmental dimension as well (Giulietti, Romagosa, Esteve, Domingues, & Schröder, 2016). Therefore, it is essential to assess its sustainability. Considering this assumption, many destinations, institutions and international organisations advance the need for an integrated tool, which allows the monitoring and the evaluation of the tourism impact, assessing all sustainability dimensions (economic, socio-cultural and environmental), to sustain destination managing and planning, as well as policy making (Torres-Delgado & López Palomeque, 2014). Far from being developed and implemented, this comprehensive tool has been approximated through piloting and testing in a number of EU funded projects.

Therefore, after clarifying the scope of the present deliverable, which main target is sustainable tourism development along cultural routes and paths, we perform a review of existing models adopted so far in this geographical as well as thematic settings.

2.1 Between paths, trails and cultural routes, enquiring the role of culture in sustainable development of tourism

The impacts and cause-effects of social dynamics generated by tourism have been studied mainly under an economic or management point of view. Since a shorter time, some of the European programmes, those of the Council of Europe and some initiatives of the European Parliament, have started to think about tourism not only through an economic perspective, but also as a tool for social enhancement and innovation.

Following the EU background policy on tourism¹, one of the roles temporary mobility and tourism should play, is to contribute to the creation of a shared European Cultural Identity.

The main question is then how cultural tourism could be used as a tool to overcome ethnic divisions and discrepancies in cultural heritage values perceptions by communities. Fostering “cross borders” cultural tourism helps in building a common future and identity, giving new values also to contested heritage/history/memory through the visitor’s gaze.

The competitiveness of the European tourism industry is closely linked to its sustainability, as the quality of tourist destinations is strongly influenced by their natural and cultural environment and their integration into the local community. The focus on the building processes of the European identity through tourism, the core of the cultural route’s projects, is therefore strategic for shaping Europe as a unique tourism destination. This is even more important in the time of the pandemic, when limitations to mobility are supporting the rediscovery of nearby destinations and slow tourism.

Cultural routes are defined as new wide ranging cultural assets connecting diverse and homogeneous elements of the tangible and intangible cultural heritage and related to contiguous or far apart territories so as to create a new knowledge system (ICOMOS, 2005). On this basis, over the last years, many local authorities and administrations have aimed at the implementation of thematic routes as strategies for promoting minor tourist destinations, thus helping a growth of themes and destinations whose concrete economic contribution is still uncertain (Mariotti, 2012).

Recent trend towards the endorsement of specific funding policies aimed at cultural routes (especially through European funds or national policies in some European countries), seems to delineate a clear orientation towards economies of scale (or dimensional optimum), in terms of cultural tourism added value enhancement.

These trends are often fostered through innovation and creativity empowerment policies, because of their ability to boost cultural production. Such tools as cultural routes can represent an alternative path to gain, within the international panorama and by means of a “creative culture” oriented approach (OECD 2009), a strong and dynamic cultural identity increasingly oriented towards local communities and visitors’ involvement and participation, as well as towards sustainability and less impacting leisure practices.

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/policy-overview_en

The cultural route concept is, in fact, based on the relationship between tourism and culture, both in terms of cultural assets and touristic use. Cultural route interpretation varies according to the ultimate aim of the organisations promoting it:

- according to the Council of Europe², cultural routes are instruments aimed at demonstrating, through transverse paths other than space and time, that most countries' cultural heritage is, in fact, a mutual one (www.coe.int). They are essentially communication mediums and tools for cultural exchange between nations and cultures, or better still, tools for strengthening European identity. They're also the object of a specific programme launched in 1987 and complete with two further resolutions (1998's n°4 and currently in force 2010's n°52, 2013 n°66 and 67) which define the "Council of Europe Cultural Routes" identification criteria. Since 1997 The European Institute of Cultural Routes has been in charge of carrying out a Council of Europe's programme by supporting the development of already selected routes and coordinating and providing technical support to the routes' partner promoters' networks, specifically in terms of development in central and eastern Europe. Through its programme, the Council of Europe offers a model for transnational cultural and tourism management and allows synergies between national, regional and local authorities and a wide range of associations and socio-economic actors.
- Cultural routes are instead perceived as a means for economic development utilized by Europe that through DG Grow actions (the EU tourism sector mainly depends on) has promoted a series of activities centred around this topic (COSME and EASME actions). Cultural routes were indeed the subject of the European Tourism Day 2010, during which, European institutions offered to help strengthen collaboration towards the promotion of Cultural Routes as driving force behind the establishing of sustainable forms of tourism in rural areas and small centres. More recently, the Council of Europe has signed two joint programs with the DG Grow first and with the DG Regio in 2018 in order to further consolidate the role of the program in the European Territorial Cooperation initiative thanks to its contribution to the macro regional strategies.
- UNESCO too, back in the early 1990's, launched a cultural route related program making way for regional projects as "the slaves' route", "the silk route" or the "route des ksour". The approach used by such International organisation was the connection between migration streams and the way cultural exchanges allowed interaction and amalgam among different societies. According to UNESCO, cultural routes are to be interpreted as "routes made up by tangible elements whose cultural meaning stems from multidimensional dialogues and exchanges among countries and regions, thus outlining

² <https://www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes/about>

people's steady and interactive flows along routes in space and time"³. The detection and development of cultural routes has been entrusted by UNESCO to a Special ICOMOS Committee (CIIC: Cultural Routes International Committee), whose goal is the study and improvement of cultural routes in connection with monuments, buildings, archaeological finds, landscapes and cultural sites valorisation and preservation⁴. CIIC has therefore elaborated the ICOMOS Declaration of Cultural Routes, ratified on the 4th of October 2008 during the sixteenth Council General Assembly. Other than the definition "Cultural Routes", the Declaration features their classification, research methodology, valorisation, preservation, use and correct management.

We might conclude that the role of international or better transnational cooperation in culture and tourism, has been seen by many international stakeholders, as the best possible option in order to support spreading democracy through culture. Tourism being one of the most peaceful forms of mobility forms, it has been identified as the best tool to implement intercultural dialogue.

2.2 One idea, many shapes

Among the criteria for being recognised as a Cultural Route of the CoE there are a number of priority fields of action. One of them directly addresses the need to develop sustainable tourism products in order to foster sustainable cultural development. Cultural Routes of the CoE are grassroots projects, mainly based on the actions and activities organised by the civil society, thus allowing closer encounters with the members of different communities in lesser-known destinations. As stated by Berti in her PhD thesis, about 90% of the Cultural Routes cross rural areas and agricultural landscapes, allowing visitors to discover off the beaten track destinations (Berti, 2012).

In the step-by-step guide to the Cultural Routes of the CoE (2015), Berti identified also three main geographical shapes of cultural routes:

- **Territorial pattern routes:** This category includes the Cultural Routes that involve territories sharing the theme on which the route is founded, as in the case of the Iter Vitis Route or the Iron Route in the Pyrenees. A series of paths is generally established to propose an exploration of the different parts of the route.
- **Linear pattern routes:** are defined by historical infrastructure, as in land and maritime trade routes. These routes that were used for travel, over the centuries, are now used to

³ <http://whc.unesco.org/archive/routes94.htm>

⁴ <http://www.icomos-ciic.org/CIIC/CIIC.htm>

create relationships between distant territories. The routes in fact structured villages, towns, castles and buildings, which were connected through the presence of the route.

- **Reticular pattern (archipelago) routes:** These routes are composed of individual items or aggregated goods, presenting different scales and connected by a theme. In this case, routes are not characterised by territorial continuity and they may be called “virtual routes”. Sometimes, depending on the theme of the route, linear routes overlap with archipelagos pattern routes.

Independently from their shape, “*Cultural Routes raise travellers’ awareness of the value of cultural resources and landscapes. The responsible and sustainable use of the resources of the Cultural Routes is ensured through environment-friendly formats such as biking and hiking tours. But there are also innovative offers such as culinary tours that promote a slower form of tourism*” (Council of Europe - Route 4U , 2020).

2.3 Pilgrimage trails and other types of itineraries

Despite the fact that BEST MED has been designed in order to address primarily cultural routes as they are conceived by the CoE program, in this model we could not ignore that in the last 10 years’ thematic tourism products and itineraries have been developed also outside this framework. This is the case for example for Italy, where the Ministry of Culture and Tourism has launched in 2016 a year-long initiative on walking trails, the so-called “*Anno dei Cammini*”.

With this definition, the Italian government wanted to boost hiking and slow tourism as a way to valorise the historical, natural, cultural and religious heritage of the peninsula. In the realm of the actions and activities taken to foster local initiatives and connect them at the national and international scale, some research was undertaken in order to distinguish different forms of hiking paths and itineraries. Cardia (2018) in the report on the results of this initiative, proposed a possible classification of cultural itineraries based on:

- The main motivation: pilgrimage, religious, spiritual; trekking, sport, adventure; culture and cultural encounters; commercial.
- Type of assets: natural landscape; history, artistic, cultural.
- Historical background of the itinerary: historical roads Vs recently developed trails.
- Geographical scale: local, regional, national, transnational, transcontinental.
- Legal entity: recognised or not by public institutions.

By approaching the model, we will then use the wider definition of cultural route, also adopted by the Italian Ministry of Culture and Tourism: “*cultural itineraries of particular European and or national importance, pass through on foot or with other forms of sustainable soft*

mobility, and that represent a way of using the widespread natural and cultural heritage, as well as an opportunity to enhance the natural, cultural and territorial attractions". This definition, going beyond the institutional recognition of the CoE, ensures the transferability of the model from the pilot areas to a wider typology of itineraries.

Finally, we will also include pilgrimage trails as a possible form of cultural routes because of the valuable contribution they could make in peripheral areas, combining low environmental impact and sometimes unexploited or hidden local development potentials. Pilgrimage has an often-underestimated power, but has been recently recognised (UNWTO, 2015) as one of the fastest growing segments of the travel industry, with more than 300 million pilgrims per year. This contribution might be even more crucial in the pandemic era, when mass tourism destinations will have to rethink their spaces of social conviviality and since today abandoned or unexploited regions will see a rising interest for their “isolation” assets.

3 Definition of the Model

3.1 What is the objective of the model?

The objective of the Med S&C Path model is to achieve integrated planning and management of cultural routes and other physical or thematic paths in Mediterranean destinations, by following sustainability principles. Through monitoring sustainability, route’s managers and regional policy makers are able to take evidence-based decisions to better manage the routes and the social, economic and environmental impacts related to them.

The aim of the model, besides monitoring sustainability, is to contribute to better governance of routes and paths, achieving greater levels of cooperation between regional authorities, the managers of cultural routes/ paths and other key stakeholders in the territory (such as businesses’ networks, associations, regional parks, research institutions, etc.).

Additional outcomes of applying the model include favouring the connection between coastal and hinterland destinations, helping to redistribute tourist flows to less crowded destinations. In accordance with the results from the Interreg Med Sustainable Tourism Community, tourism planning needs to consider the redistribution of tourism flows in space and time, thanks to promoting hinterland destinations and off-season offers.

Integrated planning can refer not only to geographical integration (like coast and hinterland) but also among different parts of the system that forms the tourism sector and integration of tourism into the overall development policies and plans of a region.

Development suggests progress not only in quantitative terms, such as economic growth, but also in qualitative terms, such as the wellbeing of the local population, taking into consideration the triple bottom line: economic, environmental and social dimensions. These are the “pillars”

of sustainable development, which should involve a development that generates economic benefits that are well distributed, creating equal opportunities, while reducing the negative impacts on the natural resources. This paradigm is the so-called “balanced” approach to sustainable development (Hall, 2011, p. 661). The word sustainability implies the idea of maintaining certain resources for a long period of time. In this regard, Farrell and Twining-Ward remind us that “sustainability must be conceived as a transition, journey or path, rather than an end point or an achievable goal” (2004, p. 275).

The MED S&C Path model is a voluntary monitoring tool, based on self-assessment that routes’ managers can apply together with key stakeholders, sharing the responsibility to manage the route’s impacts and ensuring tourism acts as a socio-economic driver for the stakeholders involved in the route.

The model capitalizes on the experience of the EU funded project, MITOMED Plus, specifically the Green Beach model, applying a similar concept, adapted to cultural routes and paths. The model also builds from the results of other EU funded projects and international initiatives of tourism sustainability measuring and monitoring, as well as the scientific literature on the topic.

3.2 What is a MED Sustainable Path and Cultural Route?

The Med Sustainable Path and Cultural Route model takes as starting point the criteria developed by the Council of Europe for its Cultural Routes, further developing an approach to support the sustainable management of Mediterranean routes and paths.

The Med S&C Path is a cultural route or path that incorporates sustainability principles in its planning and management, achieving sustainable development of socio-cultural and economic activities along the route, while protecting the natural resources. Through monitoring sustainability, route’s managers and regional policy makers are able to make evidence-based decisions to manage the routes and the social, economic and environmental impacts, both positive and negative, related to them.

We will use the wider definition of cultural route, also adopted by the Italian Ministry of Culture and Tourism: “*cultural itineraries of particular European and or national importance, pass through on foot or with other forms of sustainable soft mobility, and that represent a way of using the widespread natural and cultural heritage, as well as an opportunity to enhance the natural, cultural and territorial attractions*”. This definition, going beyond the institutional recognition of the CoE, ensures the transferability of the model from the pilot areas to a wider typology of itineraries.

More concretely, the Med S&C Path is a trail composed by paths, surrounding landscapes, interest points (both natural and cultural like museums, visitor centres, cultural heritage, nature

reserves, scenic points, etc.), and associated services (such as accommodation, restaurants and catering, tourist and cultural attractions, local transportation services, bike rental, etc.), that can be enjoyed by different means of mobility (e.g. walking, cycling, public transport, private vehicle) from an interest point to another one, by interested people and tourists.

BEST MED has developed a series of sustainability criteria that can be used to evaluate a cultural route or path as a “sustainable or green path”. These criteria are divided into 4 main sections:

- Sustainable Management.
- Economic Sustainability.
- Socio-cultural Sustainability.
- Environmental Sustainability.

Each section has several categories with specific criteria to be complied with. In order to implement the model, a toolbox is provided with a step-by-step guide, sustainability criteria and tools such as a self-assessment audit sheet, suggested indicators and an online platform where to measure performance and benchmark (for detail information to implement the model, please see Deliverable 3.3.2, Benchmarking Toolbox).

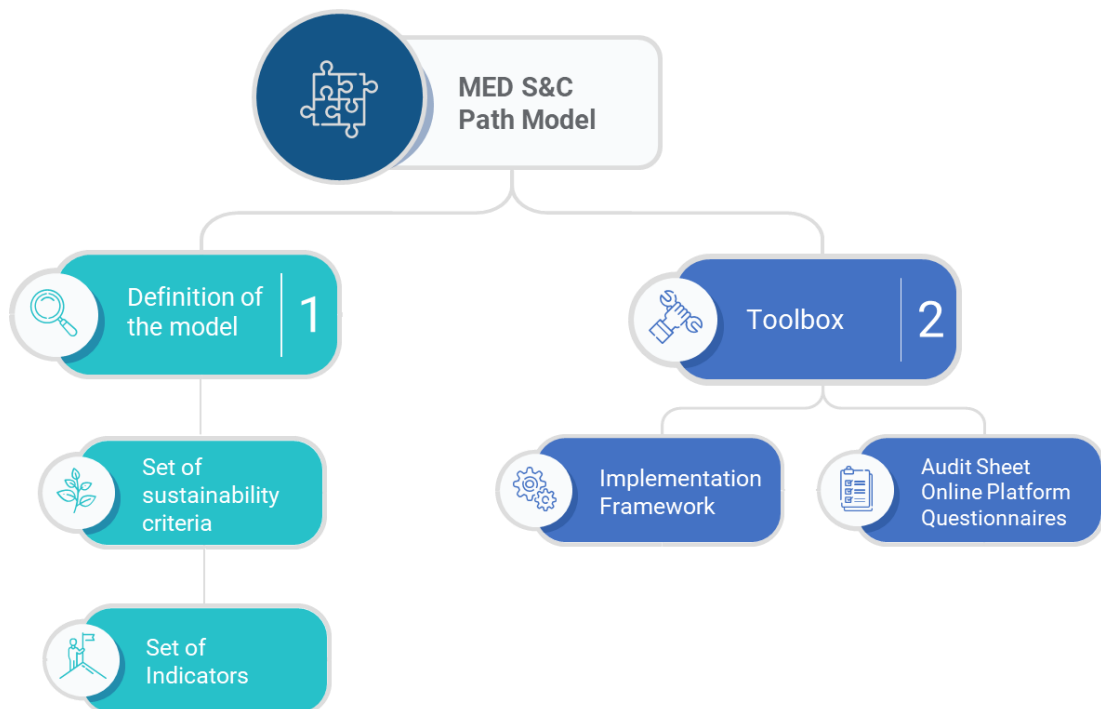


Figure 1 Model Implementation framework

The model and toolbox developed will be used:

- in Work Package 4 Testing Phase, to test its application in the pilot areas of the different countries involved to assess the path's actual level of sustainability,
- to evaluate gaps and needs in the different issues examined,
- in the following phases of the project, to discuss possible improvement of Cultural Paths (management and planning).

This will lead to the proposal of a general model, the "Med S&C Path Model" that will be shared among stakeholders, formally agreed between project's partners in Work Package 6, and proposed as a standard at international level.

The project will also develop methods to evaluate at regional scale the impact of the Med S&C Path Model to stimulate connections between coastal or areas affected by over tourism, to hinterland areas, in order to tackle seasonality of tourism in the Mediterranean.

The expected outcome of Work Package 3 is to establish a framework of proposals for the formal agreement of the model that will be finalized during Work Package 6 (Capitalization phase). Therefore, the goal at this stage is not to establish a definitive framework but to work on ongoing common directions for different actors involved, able to allow further development of the model and its final version at the end of the BEST MED project.

3.3 Target audience of the model

The responsibility of implementing the Med S&C path model is directed to two main target audiences, which will also be the main users of the information that the monitoring exercise will provide:

1. The management structure of the cultural routes (in the case of itineraries from the Council of Europe) or the association/ legal entity in charge of managing other types of itineraries.
2. The Regional Public sector: policy makers at regional level where the section of the cultural route/ path belongs.

This combined responsibility is because the aim of the model, besides monitoring sustainability, is to contribute to better governance of routes and paths, achieving greater levels of cooperation between regional authorities, the managers of cultural routes/ paths and other key stakeholders in the territory (such as businesses' networks, associations, regional parks, research institutions, etc.)

Regions have their strategies, including tourism and sustainability, and routes' strategic plans should be in line with them. At the same time, cultural routes/ paths need support from the regional level in order to adapt their strategies; they also need support to perform monitoring activities to measure the impacts (positive and negative) from the routes. Besides, the regional public sector and the routes' managers have complementary roles for different aspects, such as promotion and infrastructural interventions, therefore they should work together.

As expressed in the report on the impacts of tourism in the itineraries of Italian paths (Università degli Studi di Perugia, 2018), the organizations managing the cultural routes or paths are usually small in structure which implies:

- Limited financial resources and therefore limited ability to pay continuously external experts to carry out the necessary studies and analyses.
- Limited number of human resources that can engage in control and monitoring activities (generally, in fact, such human resources are polyfunctional and non-specialists).

The aim is that regional policy makers can work together with routes' managers to comply with the criteria and indicators, as several aspects regarding the economic and environmental impact of the route are outside the control of routes' managers. Moreover, this exercise could help assess why itineraries face more difficulties in some regions than in others.



Figure 2 Graphical representation of the model

We based our approach on the literature that takes a governance perspective to indicators development and use, recognising that indicators function inside the local governance processes, shaping the relationships of a network of actors including government, businesses and civil society (Holden, 2013; Turnhout, 2009).

The importance of sharing the responsibility for implementing the model is given by the possibility to establish relationships between the several actors working in the destination, to align objectives, resources and work towards common goals. Since the concept of sustainable development and sustainable tourism in particular is often perceived as “too abstract”, the process of discussing its meaning and the implications for the destination helps understanding the concept and making it a more tangible one. This is known as the “conceptual role” of indicators and it is related to the social learning process that results from bringing a broad range of stakeholders together and facilitating conversations among larger communities (Bell et al., 2011; Farrell & Twining-Ward, 2004; Hezri & Dovers, 2006; Lehtonen, Sébastien, & Bauler, 2016).

4 Methodology

In order to define the MED S&C Path model, we first review the literature on existing initiatives that have developed criteria and indicators on sustainable tourism management and cultural routes/ paths. A total of 12 initiatives on sustainable tourism have been analysed and 9 specific initiatives for cultural routes and paths.

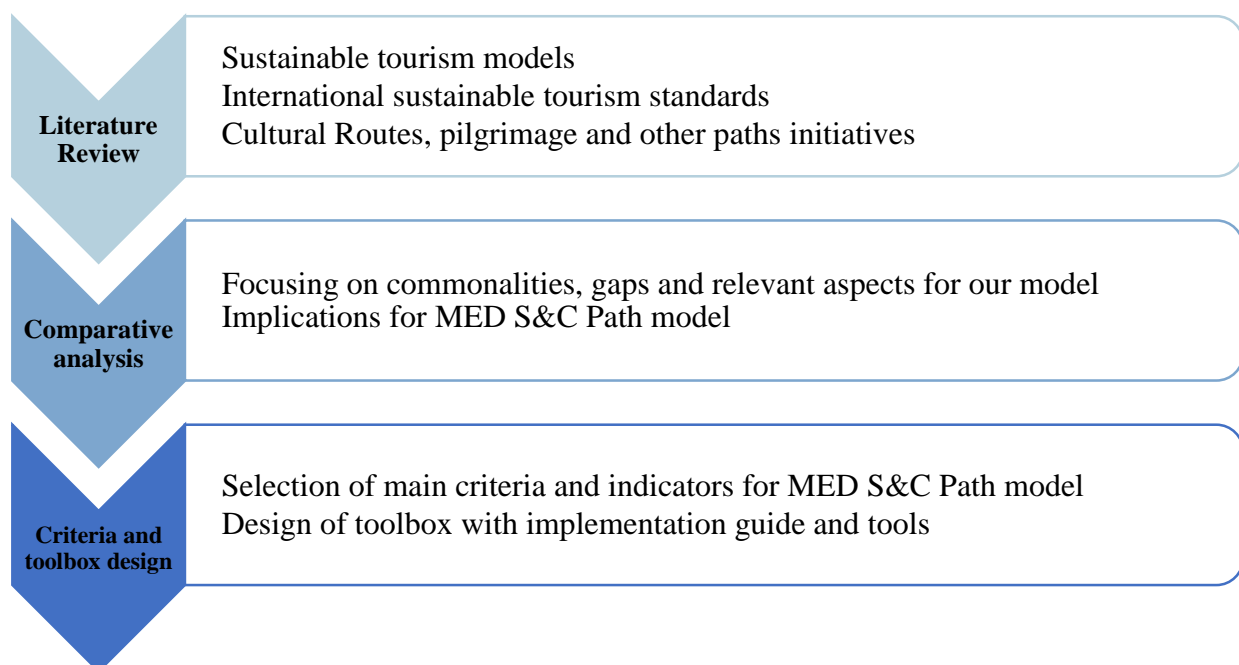


Figure 3 Methodology to define model and toolkit

Based on this analysis, in Deliverable 3.3.2 we propose a set of criteria with suggested indicators and an implementation toolbox that is relevant and feasible for cultural routes and paths to comply with and improve their sustainable management.

The model and implementation toolbox presented in this report are a first draft that will be further enhanced in successive phases of the project thanks to the inputs of project partners and stakeholders in the testing phase (Work Package 4).

4.1 Review of existing models and initiatives for sustainable planning and management of tourism, cultural routes and paths

The following section examines different initiatives to measure and monitor sustainable tourism. The purpose of this analysis is to build on the lessons learned and make a selection of the most relevant aspects to include in the Med S&C Path model.

First of all, we analyse sustainable tourism models and international standards, and then we examine specific projects and reports for Cultural Routes and Itineraries.

4.1.1 Sustainable Tourism Models and International Standards

These are the results of the previous deliverable 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 where we analysed different initiatives of data collection and management, using criteria and indicators to manage tourism sustainably. Here we highlight the model they propose, the criteria and indicators developed and the implementation methodology.

1. Mitomed Plus - M&C Tourism Management Model.
2. Mitomed Plus - Green Beach Model.
3. Destimed.
4. Co Evolve.
5. Emblematic.
6. MedCycleTour.
7. Sustainable Tourism Programme at World Heritage Sites.
8. GSTC Criteria.
9. Green Destinations.
10. INSTO Observatories.
11. European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas.
12. European Tourism Indicator System – ETIS.

4.1.1.1 MITOMED Plus - Maritime and Coastal Tourism Management Model

Name of Initiative	Brief description	Steps to implement	Criteria/ Indicators	Tools for data collection
Maritime & Coastal Tourism Management Model (EU funded project, Interreg MED)	<p>Management model that aims to improve sustainable and responsible maritime and coastal tourism planning in the Mediterranean area.</p> <p>The Management Model is divided into steps to be taken by the stakeholders of the local tourism destination.</p>	<p>Step 1: Leading a collaborating structure.</p> <p>Step 2: Carry out an Assessment of the destination.</p> <p>Step 3: Developing a Shared Vision with an accompanying Budget and Timeframe.</p> <p>Step 4: Formulation, Consultation and approval of the Sustainable tourism development Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Step 5: Monitoring and evaluating</p>	<p>There is a separate set of indicators defined by the project and an online tool that can be used to assess the destination (Step 2) and perform monitoring (Step 5).</p>	<p>- Set of 33 indicators.</p> <p>- Online platform where to collect indicators and perform benchmarking.</p>

4.1.1.2 MITOMED Plus - Green Beach Model

Name of Initiative	Brief description	Steps to implement	Criteria and/or Indicators	Tools for data collection
Green Beach Model	<p>The model focuses on the sustainable management of beaches. It is a</p>	<p>Step 1: Perform an audit to see the status of the beach and prioritize activities to be done</p>	<p>The model includes 8 categories and 28 criteria. The categories are: Bathing water quality, Beach area</p>	<p>The toolbox includes the explanation of the model, the set of criteria to be used, an audit sheet to</p>

<p>(EU funded project, Interreg MED)</p>	<p>planning tool that helps local authorities and beach operators to make better-informed decisions about managing beaches in a sustainable way, monitoring the environmental, economic and cultural impacts.</p>	<p>to become a green beach (Excel Sheet to perform Audit provided)</p> <p>Step 2: Prepare an action plan for the Beach's "greening" process and bring in all relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>Step 3: Keep a record of the implemented activities and regularly fill in the audit sheet.</p>	<p>quality, Safety, Accessibility, Green Facilities and Eco-furnishing, Sustainability, Management, Information and Education.</p> <p>To evaluate each criterion, they had a scale from 5 (essential) to 1 (low importance). The points system (10 maximum and 0 minimum) for each criterion. This is multiplied with the weighting/ importance scoring to give the final score for each criterion. The total scoring is 850 points, with 550 the minimum to be considered a Green Beach. They proposed 3 levels of "certification" or classification: Gold, Silver and Bronze.</p>	<p>check the compliance with criteria (targeted to municipalities) and questionnaires to measure the level of satisfaction of beach users.</p>
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4.1.1.3 Destimed Project

Name of Initiative	Brief description	Steps to implement	Criteria and/or Indicators	Tools for data collection
<p>MEET Ecotourism Standard</p> <p>Destimed, (EU funded project, Interreg MED)</p>	<p>It is a comprehensive set of criteria and indicators for protected areas and Local Ecotourism Clusters to manage the quality and sustainability of the MEET branded ecotourism products.</p>	<p>Step 1: Establishing a local public-private partnership (Local Ecotourism Cluster - LEC) composed by key local stakeholders, which acts jointly to develop and manage ecotourism packages according to a common vision.</p>	<p>The MEET Ecotourism Standard is composed of 4 pillars, 61 supporting criteria and indicators. These criteria take into account socio-economic, cultural, conservation and environmental considerations.</p> <p>The four pillars are: Enabling conditions, Assessment of product</p>	<p>The criteria and indicators are linked to a monitoring platform that showcases the results as a dashboard. The Standard outlines the criteria while the online monitoring platform provides the tools to ensure compliance with the Standard.</p>

	<p>The criteria are based on ETIS and GSTC and former MEET project and all MEET members and ecotourism products must satisfy these criteria for inclusion in the MEET Guide.</p>	<p>Step 2: Designing ecotourism packages following DestiMED criteria targeting the PA and its territory with a focus on nature and culture, which contributes positively to conservation and the local economy, with a minimal environmental impact.</p> <p>Step 3: Monitoring the quality of the ecotourism packages with package tests by industry experts and assessing their sustainability level.</p>	<p>suppliers, Quality and Sustainability of the product, Quality of the guest experience.</p> <p>The standard aims at measuring the sustainability of ecotourism products (accommodation, meals, activities, transport) as well as their suppliers.</p>	<p>Online Monitoring Platform and Ecotourism Footprint Calculator measures the ecological footprint of the itineraries and products created within MEET.</p> <p>Other tools include Supplier Self-Assessment survey, examples of strategic plans and MEET criteria for ecotourism products.</p>
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4.1.1.4 Co Evolve Project

Name of Initiative	Brief description	Steps to implement	Criteria and/or Indicators	Tools for data collection
<p>Tourism driven Strategic Plan for sustainable development of coastal areas</p> <p>Co Evolve (EU funded project, Interreg MED)</p>	<p>The aim of the guidelines is to offer a step-by-step methodology to construct a tourism driven strategic plan for sustainable development of coastal areas, taking as basis the Integrated Coastal Zone Management approach (UNEP/MAP/PAPRAC ICZM Process, 2012) and the Sustainable Coastal</p>	<p>Step 0: Planning set up (definition of the team, territorial scope, work plan)</p> <p>Step 1: Building knowledge framework. Collect information about the current state of sustainable tourism development.</p> <p>Step 2: Defining goals, vision and objectives: This is the starting point to create an effective strategy for sustainable tourism development.</p>	<p>The Tourism Sustainability toolkit consists of an indicators' system that can assess sustainability in terms of criteria corresponding to the four dimensions of sustainability (ENV, SOC, ECO, GOV). It is a 3-tier system:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) 40 indicators are taken from ETIS as core indicators. 2) Another set of indicators is defined for each destination type 	<p>Tourism Sustainability Toolkit includes an excel sheet to measure the indicators.</p> <p>The starting point for adapting the Toolkit to each destination is a list of priority indicators selected from the Toolkit which regard the most common critical issues and specificities encountered in the Mediterranean coastal tourism destinations. The list</p>

	<p>tourism approach guidelines (UNEP-PAP/RAC, 2009).</p> <p>It offers the opportunity to local and regional administrations at MED scale to use an integrative methodology for planning tourism-driven strategies.</p>	<p>Step 3: Tourism driven strategic planning construction: a feasible “trajectory” of change based on the approved objectives and consisting of concrete actions reported in a comprehensive action plan for its implementation.</p> <p>Step 4: Implementing the plan.</p> <p>Step 5: Reviewing the plan: Monitoring and evaluation.</p>	<p>(beach, urban, cruising, recreational and ecotourism) from other sources like UNWTO, Mitomed, etc.</p> <p>3) Pilot area specific indicators, developed on the basis of area-specific critical issues with linkages to the main threats, enabling factors and governance issues identified in the Mediterranean coastal areas.</p>	<p>is meant to act as a baseline for comparisons among coastal tourism destinations in the Mediterranean.</p> <p>Guidelines to develop action plans are provided</p>
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4.1.1.5 Emblematic Project

Name of Initiative	Brief description	Steps to implement	Criteria/ Indicators	Tools for data collection
<p>“Ecojourney Emblematic Mediterranean Mountains” Label</p> <p>Emblematic (EU funded project, Interreg MED)</p>	<p>The project has defined a series of criteria and attributes that an Ecojourney should comply with in order to receive the label. An Eco journey is an ecotourism product consisting in routes of experiential</p>	<p>Step by step guidelines to implement an Eco Journey:</p> <p>Step 1: Involvement of local stakeholders</p> <p>Step 2: Design of the itinerary</p>	<p>The project agreed on 10 common criteria and 30 attributes that the mountain destinations have to comply with to be part of the Network.</p> <p>These criteria characterize the EMbleMatiC dimension common to all mountain territories:</p>	<p>They provide guidelines for the implementation of an Eco journey and the criteria and attributes to comply with to be part of the network, with tips on how to fulfil the requirements.</p> <p>They provide a selection of 10 ETIS indicators for monitoring</p>

	<p>tourism across selected places of each of the nine mountain areas belonging to the Network. These routes should contribute to tackle common challenges such as seasonality and unbalanced tourism flows between coastal areas and hinterland.</p>	<p>Step 3: Implementation of the itinerary on the ground.</p> <p>Step 4: Creation of a tourism product: the eco journeys.</p> <p>Step 5: Continuous improvement and monitoring of the Ecojourneys.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Proud local people: sense of belonging to the territory. -Institutional recognition (WH site, Protect area, etc.). -Reputation. -Legends and myths. -Power of inspiration. -Picturesque landscape. -Particular ecosystem. -Mediterranean cultural identity. -Sustainability and anthropogenic environment. -Historic places. 	<p>and a template for an Action Plan.</p>
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4.1.1.6 MedCycleTour

Name of Initiative	Brief description	Steps to implement	Criteria/ Indicators	Tools for data collection
<p>Transnational Action Plan for the development of an EuroVelo route</p> <p>MedCycleTour (EU funded project, Interreg MED)</p>	<p>The action plan includes monitoring activities and uses as a basis the European Certification Standard (ECS) which is a set of rules developed by the European Cyclist's Federation to certify EuroVelo routes and evaluate their quality. It can also be used to assess the quality of national or regional routes. It can help set up national standards where they do not exist and harmonise the different regulations in the European states.</p>	<p>--</p>	<p>The criteria are divided into the following categories: infrastructure, services and promotion. The criteria are categorized between Essential (must be met along the entire route), Important (Must be met along at least 70% of the route) and Additional (Meeting the criteria is optional and depends on the aspiration level).</p> <p>Criteria on Infrastructure includes continuity, surface and width, signing, public transport, etc.</p> <p>Criteria on Services include accommodation, food & drinks, etc.</p> <p>Criteria on Promotion includes web and print communication.</p>	<p>Transnational Route Evaluation Report: results of the various route surveys carried out in the different partner countries and regions.</p> <p>Online database for exchange of good practices.</p> <p>Euro Velo Usage monitoring guidance: there are some useful guidelines to measure usage of EuroVelo routes, including quantitative and qualitative monitoring.</p> <p>EuroVelo European Certification Standard Handbook for route inspectors.</p>

4.1.1.7 Sustainable Tourism at World Heritage sites programme

Name of Initiative	Brief description	Steps to implement	Criteria/ Indicators	Tools for data collection
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<p>Sustainable Tourism Toolkit</p>	<p>A set of 'How To' guides for World Heritage Site managers and other key stakeholders enable a growing number of World Heritage Site communities to make positive changes to the way they proactively manage tourism.</p> <p>The goal is to stimulate local solutions in communities through capacity-building in best practice.</p>	<p>The series of guides have been structured as a step-by-step process for site managers:</p> <p>-Guides 1-4 establish the basic foundations for sustainable tourism (Understanding tourism, strategy development, governance, local community engagement)</p> <p>-Guides 5-10 are tailored to more specific issues, which will have greater relevance at some sites than at others (communication, Infrastructure, adding value through services, visitor behaviour, securing funding and monitoring).</p>	<p>One of the guides (number 9) is about Monitoring. It provides guidance on establishing benchmarks, assessing results and acting upon them to improve the sustainable management of World Heritage sites.</p> <p>They used benchmarks as equivalent to criteria, but specifying benchmarks should be SMART (specific, measurable, assignable, realistic and time-related).</p>	<p>The guides can be downloaded and additional resources are provided (mainly reports).</p> <p>No tools for data collection are provided.</p>
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4.1.1.8 Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC)

Name of Initiative	Brief description	Steps to implement	Criteria/ Indicators	Tools for data collection
GSTC Criteria for Destinations	The Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) Criteria were created to provide a common understanding of	--	The GSTC Destination Criteria is divided in 4 sections with 41 criteria in total: -Sustainable management: 11 criteria.	The criteria express what needs to be achieved, not how to achieve it.

	<p>sustainable tourism. The GSTC Destinations Criteria are the minimum that any tourism destination should aspire to reach. The criteria were based on existing international monitoring initiatives such as the UNWTO sustainable tourism indicators for destinations and more than 40 other accepted principles and guidelines.</p>		<p>-Socio-economic sustainability: 8 criteria. -Cultural sustainability: 7 criteria. -Environmental sustainability: 12 criteria.</p> <p>Application of the criteria will help a destination to contribute towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Against each of the criteria, one or more of the 17 SDGs is identified, to which it most closely relates.</p>	<p>The GSTC Criteria need to be complemented with a system of concrete indicators to measure to what degree the criteria are being complied to. This need is highlighted in several of the criteria, where it is expected that the destination has a system in place which is consistent with the GSTC and addresses the different environmental, economic and socio-cultural issues.</p> <p>The performance indicators presented with the criteria are designed to provide guidance in measuring compliance with the criteria. They are not intended to be the definitive set or all-inclusive.</p>
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4.1.1.9 Green Destinations Criteria

Name of Initiative	Brief description	Steps to implement	Criteria/ Indicators	Tools for data collection
<p>Green Destinations Criteria</p>	<p>The Green Destinations Standard is a tool to measure, monitor and improve the sustainability profile of destinations and regions. The Green Destinations standard is inspired by internationally recognised standards such as ETIS, ISO 14001, EMAS and the Global Reporting Initiative. The standard is recognised by the Global</p>	<p>Depending on the type of destination, they recommend applying first for an award (Quality Coast Award or Green Destinations Award) and after that apply for certification which</p>	<p>The Green Destinations Standard consists of 100 criteria, covering the following 6 main themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Destination Management: 26 criteria. 2. Nature & Scenery: 8 criteria. 3. Environment & Climate: 20 criteria. 4. Culture & Tradition: 5 criteria. 5. Social Well-being: 22 criteria. 6. Business & Hospitality: 19 criteria. 	<p>Online Platform to upload the information to comply with criteria.</p> <p>Other tools include an Indicators database, Self-assessments, guidance and best practice examples.</p>

	<p>Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC).</p> <p>The Green Destinations standard is applied for Certification and (pre-certification) Award programmes. It is a private initiative developed by 3 organizations: Green Destinations, Coastal & Marine Union – EUCC and European Centre for Eco and Agro Tourism – ECEAT.</p>	<p>is a much more comprehensive process.</p>	<p>The standard has several ‘special’ criteria: Optional, Extra and non-applicable. To comply with the Green Destinations standard, destinations should fulfil every criterion except those marked ‘Optional’ or in case ‘Not Applicable’ is justified.</p>	
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4.1.1.10 INSTO - International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories

Name of Initiative	Brief description	Steps to implement	Criteria/ Indicators	Tools for data collection
<p>INSTO Observatories</p>	<p>The network was launched in 2004 as a way to accelerate the transition of destinations to sustainable practices, through the holistic monitoring of tourism’ impacts. It proposes a participatory approach to measure, monitor and manage information that can be useful for policy makers, tourism managers and relevant stakeholders to formulate sustainable tourism policies and</p>	<p>The members need to follow certain requirements to be part of the network. One of them is the commitment to monitor eleven mandatory issue areas. Another requirement is adopting a participatory approach, which includes raising awareness among local actors, identifying facilitators and forming a stakeholder working group, to guarantee the lasting commitment to monitoring.</p> <p>An annual progress report and monitoring results shall be provided in English to UNWTO by</p>	<p>The eleven mandatory issue areas are: tourism seasonality, employment, destination economic benefits, governance, local satisfaction, energy management, water management, wastewater (sewage) management, solid waste management, accessibility and climate action. Nevertheless, members are free to choose the specific indicators to be used, as long as they respond to the issue areas.</p> <p>Although it is common in many destinations to collect tourism data on an annual basis, INSTO members shall aim for higher frequencies wherever</p>	<p>Tools are not provided by INSTO, leaving the freedom to each observatory to collect the information in its own manner.</p>

	strategies. The network counts with 31 tourism observatories around the world	each observatory. Members accept the obligation to create and maintain a publicly accessible website for their observatory.	possible, relevant and feasible, ideally every two months.	
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4.1.1.11 European Tourism Indicator System (ETIS)

Name of Initiative	Brief description	Steps to implement	Criteria/ Indicators	Tools for data collection
European Tourism Indicator System	It is a voluntary management tool launched by the European Commission on the 22 nd February 2013, aimed at helping destinations to measure and monitor the impacts of tourism in a holistic way, allowing them to make informed decisions to develop tourism. Its monitoring results are based on self-assessment, data collection and analysis by the destinations themselves.	<p>Each destination needs to have a “local coordinator” who will usually be part of the local Destination Management Organization (DMO) or tourism office and will be responsible for the coordination of the stakeholders and the planning of the steps to take. 7-step implementation guide:</p> <p>Step 1: Raise awareness among stakeholders.</p> <p>Step 2: Create a destination profile.</p> <p>Step 3: Form a Stakeholder Working Group involving all relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>Step 4: Establish roles and responsibilities among stakeholders.</p> <p>Step 5: Collect and record data using the destination dataset.</p>	<p>Performance-based quantitative indicators.</p> <p>Indicators are divided into 4 main categories: destination management, economic value, social and cultural impact and environmental impact. There are a total of 43 core indicators and a set of supplementary indicators, to be used according to the specific characteristics of the destination: coastal, maritime, cultural routes, etc.</p> <p>Core indicators are those indicators common to most destinations. The system is flexible, and destinations can choose a certain number of indicators, according to their needs and specific sustainability issues. They do not need to apply the 43 core indicators.</p>	<p>The ETIS toolkit includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Implementation manual -Destination data set (excel sheet where to collect and monitor indicators) with detailed explanation of each indicator. -Templates for 4 types of surveys: destination management, tourism businesses, visitors and residents. -Template for an invitation letter for local stakeholders. -Glossary.

		<p>Step 6: Analyse the results, identifying priorities to take action.</p> <p>Step 7: Enable ongoing development and continuous improvement.</p>		
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4.1.1.12 European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas – EUROPARC Federation

Name of Initiative	Brief description	Steps to implement	Criteria/ Indicators	Tools for data collection
European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas	The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas is a practical management tool that enables Protected Areas to develop tourism sustainably. Set up in 1995 by EUROPARC. The core element of the Charter is working in partnership with all relevant stakeholders to develop a common sustainable tourism strategy and an action plan on the basis of a thorough situation analysis.	<p>In Part 1, PAs form a Sustainable Tourism Forum which is made up of representatives from the PA, local government, community organizations, and tourism businesses. The Forum then works collaboratively to create a Strategy and Action Plan which must meet Europarc's requirements. It must include an assessment, objectives, an action plan, and a monitoring plan.</p> <p>Once that is complete, Europarc conducts a verification. If the PA meets all requirements, it is added to the Charter Network. A new verification must be conducted every 5 years.</p> <p>In Part 2, businesses around a PA that is in the Charter Network may become certified as well.</p>	<p>Process- and management-related Criteria.</p> <p>The charter has 5 principles: Giving priority to protection; Contributing to sustainable development; Engaging all stakeholders; Planning sustainable tourism effectively; Pursuing continuous improvement.</p> <p>There are 10 key topics and 31 key actions.</p> <p>Key topics include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Protecting valuable landscapes, biodiversity and cultural heritage 2) Supporting conservation through tourism 3) Reducing carbon footprint, pollution and wasteful resource use 	Guidance is provided to implement an action plan and the criteria to comply with, but no specific tools for data collection are provided.

		<p>In Part 3, tour operators who operate in a PA that is in the Charter Network may become certified as well.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4) Providing safe access, quality facilities and special experiences of the protected area, available to all visitors 5) Effectively communicating the area to visitors 6) Ensuring social cohesion 7) Strengthening prosperity in the local community 8) Providing training and capacity building 9) Monitoring tourism performance and impacts 10) Communicating actions and engaging with the Charter 	
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4.1.2 European Cultural Routes and other itineraries

These are the results on the one hand, of the research performed by BEST MED partners on different initiatives at European level with regards to Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe and other itineraries. On the other hand, this first research was deepened by the CAST team to analyse the characteristics of each initiative and select the most relevant criteria and methods that could be used in the Med S&C Path model.

The initiatives analysed include:

1. Green Pilgrimage Project.
2. Criteria for Cultural Routes certification.
3. Routes4U project.
4. UNESCO Culture for Development Indicators (CDIS) tool.
5. Impact of European Cultural Routes on SMEs innovation and competitiveness report.
6. CERTESS project.
7. CULT-RING Project.
8. University of Perugia Report on Italian Paths.
9. Policy brief on Cultural Routes of Europe.

4.1.2.1 Green Pilgrimage Project

Name of Initiative	Brief description	Criteria/ Indicators	Tools for data collection
<p>Green Pilgrimage Report on Methodologies to measure the economic, social and environmental impact of pilgrimage</p> <p>(EU funded project, Interreg Europe)</p>	<p>The aim of the study is to provide a recommendation of a common methodology (or suite of methodologies) that enables all partners with varying situations to consistently measure the economic, social and environmental value and impact of pilgrimage in their regions, enabling data to be comparable across sites.</p>	<p>The report suggests a set of sustainability indicators, based on the Literature and the Green Pilgrimage Network Sustainability Handbook. Indicators are organized in 10 sustainability areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Greening buildings – For all faith buildings not used for accommodation. Example: % of energy consumption from renewable resources. 2) Greening pilgrim accommodation. Example, energy use per pilgrim per day. 3) Waste Management. Example, % of waste recycled/composted. 4) Energy efficiency. 5) Transport infrastructure. Example, % of pilgrims using different transport modes to arrive at pilgrimage site. 6) Greening water resources. 7) Having greener, kinder food. 8) Green celebrations and festivals. 9) Conserving land, biodiversity and wild places. 	<p>The report provides some options for low-cost data collection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Review what data does exist before deciding on designing primary data collection. -Use the alternative tools suggested to generate estimated figures. -Consider recruiting volunteers or Master level students to undertake data collection through surveys. -Consider online surveys or using an app like Betterpoints where people are incentivised to provide you with data. <p>A summary of recommended methods and tools for valuing green pilgrimage is also provided, including: surveys, statistical models like ORVal Tool (British tool), other assessment tools like MENE (Monitor Engagement with Natural Environment, British tool), HEAT (Health Economic Assessment tool), Valuation methods such as Benefit Transfer and Input-Output analysis.</p> <p>Part of the aim of the project in a second phase (2020-2021) is to create a free-to-access online evaluation tool that will make possible the evaluation of the value of pilgrimage. This tool is expected to provide a baseline measure of the green pilgrimage value of all recognised routes across the entire Interreg Europe Programme Area.</p>

		<p>10) Indirectly contributing to greater awareness of sustainability issues through education, volunteering and partnerships.</p> <p>Other indicators proposed to address the economic and social impacts of pilgrimage: % of local residents employed, seasonality ratio, local satisfaction with tourism, % of return tourists/pilgrims % of attractions that are accessible, etc.</p>	
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4.1.2.2 Criteria for Cultural Routes certification

Name of Initiative	Brief description	Steps to implement	Criteria/ Indicators	Tools for data collection
Cultural Routes Certification process	The "European Institute of Cultural Routes" (EICR) is the central coordinating point for management and implementation of the entire Cultural Routes Programme, including the	<p>Steps towards certification as Cultural Route:</p> <p>Step 1: Definition and description of the subject.</p> <p>Step 2: Description of the priority fields of action (one of them is "Cultural tourism and</p>	<p>For each step of the certification process, a number of criteria have to be met. For instance, the Theme of the cultural routes must satisfy all of the following six eligibility criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The theme must be representative of European values and common to several countries of Europe. 2. The theme must be researched and developed by groups of multidisciplinary experts from different regions of Europe so as to ensure that the activities and projects which illustrate it are based on consensus. 	<p>The European Cultural Routes are evaluated every three years to determine whether they meet the criteria for certification.</p> <p>For this purpose, the European Institute of Cultural Routes provides the "Certification/ evaluation form". In a first step, the certified Cultural Routes are called to make a self-</p>

	<p>certification process.</p>	<p>sustainable cultural development").</p> <p>Step 3: Establishing a European network. The network partners can come from different sectors and areas of activity: They may be representatives of politics and government, private companies, educational institutions, tourism organizations, associations, NGOs, etc.</p> <p>Step 4: Creating a common visual identity.</p>	<p>3. The theme must be illustrative of European memory, history and heritage and contribute to an interpretation of the diversity of present-day Europe.</p> <p>4. The theme must lend itself to cultural and educational exchanges for young people and hence be in line with the Council of Europe's ideas and concerns in these fields.</p> <p>5. The theme must permit the development of initiatives and exemplary and innovative projects in the field of cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development.</p> <p>6. The theme must lend itself to the development of tourist products in partnership with tourist agencies and operators aimed at different publics, including school groups.</p>	<p>evaluation based on the checklist: The highest achievable score is 67 points; more than 33 points is a positive judgment.</p> <p>In the form, there are several criteria related to tourism.</p>
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4.1.2.3 Routes4U programme – Council of Europe

Name of Initiative	Brief description	Steps to implement	Criteria/ Indicators	Tools for data collection
<p>Routes4U programme – E learning course</p>	<p>Routes4U aims at strengthening the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe in the Adriatic and Ionian Region, the Alpine Region, the Baltic Sea Region and the Danube Region in line with the objectives of the respective macro-regional strategies. The programme addresses the need for focused training and capacity development for the implementation and management of Cultural Routes.</p>	<p>Among the materials developed by the programme there is a 5-module online course. They have also created a series of Manuals highlighting the benefits that Cultural Routes create in terms of socio-economic development in Europe macro regions. step by step guidance on certification and implementation of Cultural Routes.</p>	<p>The criteria are the one already highlighted above for certification of Cultural Routes.</p> <p>In the Manual, “Policies for the Danube Region”, it is recognised: <i>“the need to improve methodological frameworks to provide better statistics particularly linked to the Cultural Routes performance, including the development of sets of indicators for monitoring and evaluation of the Cultural Routes and assessing their actual and potential economic and social value in a more systematic manner”</i>. To this end, a specific recommendation is: <i>“Agreement and setting up of a joint Danube Cultural Routes Observatory”</i>.</p> <p>A table with a set of possible indicators to measure the impact of cultural routes is provided in the report.</p>	<p>Some of the manuals developed by the programme provide recommendations on useful tools to monitor sustainability in Cultural Routes, such as: ETIS, the European Observation Network for Territorial Development and Cohesion (ESPON), INSTO Observatories, Virtual Tourism Observatory and use of big data.</p>

4.1.2.4 UNESCO Culture for Development Indicators (CDIS) tool

Name of Initiative	Brief description	Steps to implement	Criteria/ Indicators	Tools for data collection
UNESCO Culture for Development Indicators Suite (CDIS)	The Culture for Development Indicators Suite (CDIS) is an advocacy and policy tool that assesses the multidimensional role of culture in development processes through facts and figures.	An Implementation Toolkit is provided with a step-by-step guide: 1) Preparatory Phase: Launching a participatory process: Building the team, methodology, work plan. 2) Data Collection Phase: Building indicators and generating new data. 3) Data Analysis Phase: Bringing data to life. 4) Results sharing and Advocacy Phase: Fostering informed dialogue and policies.	Covering 7 key policy dimensions: Economy, Education, Governance, Social participation, Gender, Communication and Heritage/ The 22 CDIS indicators: -Demonstrate with data how culture and development interact and enrich one another. -Assess the environment in place for sustaining and enhancing cultural assets and processes for development. -Offer a global overview of national challenges and opportunities, informing cultural policies and development strategies to fully profit from culture's potential.	CDIS: A Methodological Tool. The CDIS has been conceived as a pragmatic and effective methodological tool that guides the construction and analysis of indicators for policy purposes in low and middle-income countries. It offers an opportunity to strengthen the case for culture's inclusion in development strategies and agendas as it provides an empirical demonstration of culture's contribution to sustainable development, economic growth and social progress.

4.1.2.5 Impact of European Cultural Routes on SMEs innovation and competitiveness report

Name of Initiative	Brief description	Criteria/ Indicators	Tools for data collection
Impact of European Cultural	The objective of the report is to provide	Among the main issues recognised and recommendations provided in the report are the " <i>design of quality and sustainable tourism development criteria</i> "	-Visitors surveys (businesses that benefit from

<p>Routes on SMEs innovation and competitiveness report – Council of Europe</p>	<p>insights into the effects produced by the transnational Cultural Routes – such as those certified by the Council of Europe – on SMEs’ performance, innovation capacity, and network and cluster development, especially in rural areas and less known destinations.</p>	<p><i>throughout the Cultural Routes in close consultation with their local stakeholders and taking into account specific geographical, environmental, political, social, cultural and economic characteristics of Cultural Route destinations”;</i></p> <p><i>“Most routes are not gathering the data needed to measure the economic impact of their activities”.</i> Some have set up their own standards (for example, the Mozart Ways, or the Hansa Route).</p> <p><i>“Data need to be captured at a much lower level if the impact of Cultural Routes is to be measured, as most of the destinations involved in the Routes consist of small geographic areas – below the level at which national and regional data on tourism numbers, firms, cluster activity and measures of innovation are generally reported or captured”.</i></p> <p>Generally, the basic standards/criteria applicable to all routes could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – provision of a product that is related to the tourism industry, based on the Cultural Route. – participation in the overall sustainability strategy of the region/destination and compatible operation with it. – involvement in a tourism forum/participation in a network related to the regional development process. – adoption of a feedback system to gather information about clients’ demands and visitor expectations. – development of relevant products and services for visitors and the local community. – provision of adequate information to visitors. 	<p>the cultural routes could assist on this and be incentivized providing access to the results for example).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Businesses surveys. -Participant evaluations. -Encourage Routes to build the costs of evaluation and economic impact measurement into all new funding proposals.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – regular review of sustainable management in the business’ operation. – provision of the best customer service possible through ongoing staff training. <p>Practical issues when developing indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the data must be available. – the organisation must have the resources required to collect the data. – the indicators should allow for comparability across different points of time and different locations. - the indicator should allow for data to be collected at the appropriate level. <p>-Economic modelling approaches using multipliers: The concept is based on the premise that initial expenditure by visitors will permeate through the rest of the economy.</p> <p>Economic impact of tourism = Number of tourists x average spending per visitor x multiplier.</p> <p>Local Multiplier 3 (LM3) to measure local economic impact. Adding up the 3 rounds of income generated from the direct income related to the routes, divided by the initial (direct) income and this gives the LM3, which can then be used for the above formula.</p> <p>Sectoral employment multipliers provide average estimates of the income required to generate a new job in a specific sector.</p>	
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4.1.2.6 CERTESS project

Name of Initiative	Brief description	Steps to implement	Criteria/ Indicators	Tools for data collection
<p>CERTESS “Cultural European Routes. Transferring Experience, Sharing Solutions” Toolkit</p> <p>(EU funded project, Interreg Europe)</p>	<p>CERTESS project deals with the building-up of a methodological framework on how to develop and manage Cultural Routes (CRs) by making use of route development best practices and governance instruments targeted to foster sustainable cultural tourism.</p>	<p>The process for the development of new cultural routes has 4 main sections:</p> <p>A. Route Start up: defining the theme, identifying the stakeholders to be involved and setting up the legal entity.</p> <p>B. Route Development: identifying the routes and its facilities, services along the route (hospitality, F&B, tourist services), and mapping the points of interests or attractions.</p> <p>C. Route Action design and planning: strategy, action plan, costs and other resource estimates, priority setting, timing</p> <p>D. Route Implementation, management and promotion: capacity building, local governance, day to day management, monitoring and control, cross border cooperation, route promotion.</p>	<p>The Route organization shall set up the procedures for identifying and estimating a limited but effective set of indicators on a regular basis.</p> <p>To this end, ETIS is recommended.</p>	<p>No specific tools are provided, only recommendations.</p> <p>Route Implementation Plans have been developed by the partners of the project, which include some strategic priorities.</p>

4.1.2.7 CULT-RING Project

Name of Initiative	Brief description	Criteria/ Indicators	Tools for data collection
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<p>CULT-RING Cultural Routes as Investments for Growth and Jobs</p> <p>(EU funded project, Interreg Europe)</p>	<p>The overall objective of the Cult-RinG project is to highlight the value of investments in European Cultural Routes, in terms of their contribution to Growth & Jobs, with capitalisation of good practices, policy learning, policy implementation, development of new Cultural Routes, monitoring and capacity building.</p> <p>The beneficiaries are regional authorities looking to capture the benefits of CRs, both existing ones with greater visibility and new ones, NGOs, European Networks, EU institutions, international organisations and stakeholders.</p>	<p>Main outputs are action plans on CR development and upgrading, with implementation and monitoring of improved policy instruments in 6 regions, communication and dissemination tools for policy learning and capacity building, contribution to EU policies and EU2020 targets.</p>	<p>As part of the project, each partner developed an Action Plan for Cultural Routes development and upgrading.</p> <p>The project partners assessed the contribution of six existing Cultural Routes in achieving socio-economic objectives and have developed new routes.</p>
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4.1.2.8 Report from University of Perugia on monitoring the impacts of visitors as part of the project “Italian paths”

Name of Initiative	Brief description	Steps to implement	Criteria/ Indicators	Tools for data collection
<p>Report: Linee guida per l'adozione di strumenti e modelli condivisi di rilevazione dell'impatto economico, sociale ed ambientale dei flussi turistici relativi ai percorsi previsti dal progetto nazionale dei Cammini d'Italia</p>	<p>This report aims to provide cognitive and operational tools to policy makers regarding the evaluation of economic, social and environmental impacts of tourism linked to these routes. The report covers the 46 paths included in the “Atlas of Paths”.</p> <p>The report concludes that for a monitoring system of this kind to be implemented, it first has to be tested in a small number of pilot areas, to evaluate the problems and concerns regarding the implementation. Then an important amount of training will be needed to make sure route/ path managers are able to implement the monitoring system. Once the system has been tested and route's</p>	<p>5 dimensions are used in the study to analyse the factors and resources of a touristic territory:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attractiveness. 2. Accessibility. 3. Hospitality. 4. Environmental (natural and built). 5. Cultural and social openness of the local population and tourists. 	<p>There is a series of criteria that have been defined to select the “paths” that are part of the “Atlas of Paths”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Linear and usable physical paths. - Presence of horizontal and / or vertical signs for each stage. - Route usable in safety. - Percentage of paved roads not exceeding 40%. - Stops equipped with all the support services for the walker. - Online description of each stage on the reference site. - Accommodation and catering services within 5 km from the path. - Presence of a 'governing body' of the path. - Ensure the surveillance and maintenance of the route. - Geo-referencing of the route. 	<p>Evaluations are usually made by informal interviews to route's managers and contact points and guides, or through surveys to tourists during their stay or after (to measure satisfaction).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Standard questionnaires to be administered during the visit. - Qualitative surveys (such as focus groups) involving tourists during the visit. - Research activities such as netnography should be implemented aimed at listening to comments and information conveyed on the Internet, both in textual and audio/ video modality.

	<p>managers trained, then it can be adopted by different paths and become a powerful governance tool, potentially capable of making a significant qualitative improvement in management processes.</p>		<p>- Website constantly updated.</p> <p>The most relevant monitoring elements are impact measurement on number of presences, visitors' satisfaction, destination's image, economic impact.</p> <p>The study proposed a number of indicators divided in 3 dimensions: economic, social and environmental impact.</p> <p>A set of indicators to evaluate the impact of paths is provided in page 227 of the report</p>	
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4.1.2.9 Policy brief on Cultural Routes in Europe

Name of Initiative	Brief description	Challenges	Recommendations
<p>Policy brief on Cultural Routes in Europe – Interreg Europe</p>	<p>This policy brief presents the Council of Europe’s Cultural Routes Programme, the EU’s policies on Cultural Routes, as well as lessons from interregional learning and exchange on the topic. It discusses the obstacles to further develop, maintain and promote Cultural Routes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governance: lack of coordination or dialogue between institutions. -Lack of appreciation of the potential of Cultural Routes for regional development. -Lack of funds for their maintenance and promotion. -Lack of expertise in network management. -Lack of performance evaluation tools. -Weak brand image and marketing strategies. - Insufficient use of ICTs. -Low degree of good practice exchange. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Stakeholders involvement: Engaging a broad range of stakeholders with diverse interests requires creativity and innovative techniques to identify and work with the appropriate people. Regions and cities are still facing problems in this regard. -Governance: overcoming differences in legal frameworks and policy mandates/powers at and between all levels of governance responsible for the territory(ies) concerned by the route. -Digitalization: digital tools require not only technical knowledge but also organisational capacity and an appreciation of their potential to enhance Cultural Routes. Regions and cities need to take advantage of the opportunities that digital tools provide to improve access to heritage assets and audience engagement.

4.2 Conclusions and implications for MED S&C Path model

A total of 21 initiatives have been revised in order to select the main criteria and draw first conclusions to apply to the MED S&C Path model. Initiatives range from international standards, EU funded projects and programmes, study reports and policy briefs dealing with the topics of sustainable tourism monitoring and cultural routes management.

The review of these existing initiatives allowed us to preselect 53 criteria, divided into 4 dimensions and 12 categories, together with a number of suggested indicators (Deliverable 3.3.2). These will be discussed and evaluated in a first phase with BEST MED partners to adjust the number of criteria and indicators, and in a second phase, with stakeholders in the testing phase of the project, to test its relevance and feasibility.

Firstly, criteria were selected taking into consideration sustainable tourism initiatives, to include the main dimensions of sustainability and the aspects that must be considered regardless of the type of destination, to understand main positive and negative impacts. To this end, we have adopted the division on four main sections adopted by GSTC (sustainable management, economic, socio-cultural and environmental sustainability), complementing it with criteria from other international initiatives such as Green Destinations and ETIS. Several of the EU funded projects that were analysed were built from the ETIS experience, so these criteria were automatically incorporated.

Particularly relevant for our project is the INSTO Framework (the network of sustainable tourism observatories established by UNWTO) since BEST MED aims at advancing the cooperation between tourism observatories at Mediterranean level. Accordingly, when selecting the criteria for our model, we ensured the inclusion of the eleven mandatory areas that INSTO requires to monitor, namely: tourism seasonality, employment, destination economic benefits, governance, local satisfaction, energy management, water management, wastewater (sewage) management, solid waste management, accessibility and climate action.

After considering the general aspects of sustainability measuring, we focused on Cultural Routes, Pilgrimage and other types of itineraries, as they are the target of the model and present specific characteristics that differentiate them from single destinations. Thanks to the literature revised on cultural routes projects, programmes and other reports and initiatives, we were able to adapt the criteria and indicators for destinations to be relevant for this particular “type of destinations”, recognizing that some aspects of sustainability monitoring are out of the control of route’s managers and therefore cooperation with other stakeholders (namely regional policy makers, among others) is needed in order to perform the monitoring.

All of the initiatives analysed highlight the importance of adopting a participatory approach to sustainability monitoring, as it is clearly impossible for one actor to be able to access all the needed information to comply with criteria. This aspect for us is key as the BEST MED project

intends to contribute to a better governance at regional and transnational level, therefore cooperation between different stakeholders at different levels is of particular importance.

The review of initiatives had also the scope of comparing different models that are used to implement sustainability at destination level, in order to build our model on the basis of existing and proven knowledge. To this regard, we have seen that the most common approach is to design a step-by-step methodology, usually starting by forming a working group with key stakeholders, followed by establishing a baseline of the current situation, setting the priorities, collecting data and performing continuous monitoring.

On this basis, we have defined a general step by step methodology that will be refined in successive stages together with the project partners. The importance of the step-by-step implementation framework is given by the possibility of shaping relationships between the several actors working in the destination. By sharing the responsibilities for data collection and analysis, stakeholders benefit from a social learning process, facilitating the understanding of complex policy problems such as sustainable development. This is known as the “conceptual role” of indicators, that is a precondition for their instrumental role (their direct use in policy making processes).

With regards to the tools used for data gathering, online platforms and excel data sheets are the most common tools, since they enable the calculation of quantitative results as well as the comparisons with other destinations. In terms of data collection, surveys seem to be the most useful tools, although they can be costly and time-consuming. Consequently, it is recommended to perform this type of analysis in partnership with Universities, in order to reduce costs while providing relevant field research experience for students, which is a win-win situation. To perform the surveys, a number of the reports and toolkits reviewed present examples and guidelines that will be taken into consideration to design the questionnaires for the MED S&C toolbox.

Besides selecting the main relevant criteria for the MED S&C Path model, a number of suggested core and optional indicators were selected and included in the toolbox (see Deliverable 3.3.2) as a way to provide additional guidance to measure the exact level of compliance with the criteria. The selected indicators are meant only as a guide for stakeholders, they are not an exhaustive list. Stakeholders are free to monitor the ones they consider useful and in combination with the indicators included in the BEST MED online platform.

Finally, several of the reports regarding cultural routes stress as one of the key challenges the need to improve the monitoring and evaluation methods to assess the actual and potential impacts routes have on the economy and social tissue of territories, particularly less known and rural areas. This represents an outstanding opportunity for the MED S&C Path model to provide a much-needed tool to measure the impact of routes, pilgrimage and other types of paths generated in Mediterranean regions.

The aim of deliverables 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 is to provide a starting point, a draft model and a benchmarking toolbox to discuss among project partners, test in the pilot areas and further improve to have a definitive model at the end of the project.

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