

SASTDes destination tool. Purpose and workings

SASTDes WP7.1-7.4 Report

SASTDes – Smart Assessment Sustainable Tourist Destinations

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Contents

1	Introduction	2
1.1	Project SASTDes	2
1.2	Objective for this report	2
2	SASTDes Tool	3
2.1	Databases used	3
2.2	Purpose of the SASTDes tool	3
2.3	Contact details	3

1 Introduction

1.1 Project SASTDes

Project SASTDes aims to resolve key issues in the sustainability assessment process of tourism destinations, with the objective to reduce the costs of assessments both in time and money, and to use the results of assessments for destination branding and marketing. The project's core research question is: *'How can sustainability assessments effectively and efficiently contribute to the sustainable development of tourism destinations and tourism products?'*

The large growth in tourism not only brings economic progress, but also causes negative effects on destinations and beyond, environmentally, socio-culturally, and economically. The tourism industry has responded with a number of sustainable tourism initiatives. A much-used method is to subject tourism products to a sustainability assessment, frequently leading to a label. The goal here is to motivate destinations to perform more sustainably and to stimulate consumers to make more sustainable touristic choices. Until now, participation in sustainability assessments in tourism is limited. Hence the effect on consumer choices is also small.

Most assessments suffer from limited participation and interest from tourism businesses. Conducting assessments is too costly for them, costing too much time, and the added value is unclear to them. Moreover, the assessments hardly lead to behaviour changes among the relatively small group of end users interested in sustainability. Finally, there is a problem with the content of the assessments: the impacts from transport to destinations is not accounted for, whereas these are often of great importance when determining the environmental impact of tourism trips.

1.2 Objective for this report

The objective of Work Package (WP) 7 is to develop the algorithms and models based on the results of WP3 and WP4 that form the basis of the SASTDes destination tool. The main algorithms link the WENR database with the 12 sustainability themes, link the activity risk factors with the WENR database, and link the aforementioned algorithms with personal characteristics and travel behaviour (elicited in the WP4 survey). To request further details of these algorithms (WP7.1-7.3), please contact Martijn Lindeman (contact details in section 2.3). The main purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the workings and purpose of the SASTDes tool, which will be developed by Martijn Lindeman of Follow.

2 SASTDes Tool

2.1 Databases used

- The WENR database for all municipalities in Europe providing 271 parameters of which 194 POIs/suitability parameters and the remainder data about environment, ecosystems, population, land-use, etc.
- The survey results: this database provides information about the interest in all 130 activities and couples this to socio-economic data, travel behaviour and preferences and a list of willingness to take part in behavioural change with respect to sustainable behaviour.
- A risk table coupling 130 activities to 12 sustainability categories
- A suitability table coupling suitability of 130 activities to 271 parameters

2.2 Purpose of the SASTDes tool

- Destinations that are interested to see how they score on environmental sustainability in comparison with other destinations
- Destinations that want to change their offering of activities and see the environmental impact of this change
- Destinations that have a zoning plan in mind and want to see the effects on environmental sustainability
- Destinations that want to know what tourist segments they need to target for certain activities

2.3 Contact details

The reports generated by the SASTDes tool provide a good starting point for discussions and decision making for any destination that is looking to include localized specific sustainability data in their planning and strategies.

For more information or to request a report, destinations can contact Martijn Lindeman (sastdes@follow.academy).



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