

Measurement at scale: Pilot projects learning report 2024

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At a glance

Three organisations piloted the measurement of landscape level performance change for key sustainability issues.

The pilots were:

- The [Sustainable Fibre Alliance \(SFA\)](#): Developing a biodiversity and nature-focused MEL framework for the Mongolian rangelands
- [CNV Internationaal](#): Monitoring social dialogues and Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA) in the Siak Pelalawan Landscape Project (SPLP), Indonesia
- The [Global Sustainable Tourism Council \(GSTC\)](#): Reappraising Destination Assessments for two popular tourist destinations.

Key reflections in the report

- Reflections on the nuance of a jurisdictional vs. landscape approach
- Mission alignment and scope creep risks as an actor in an expanded multistakeholder process
- Achieving balanced representation in stakeholder engagement at scale
- Balancing comprehensive indicator selection with data availability and quality
- Finding quantitative methods that give an insight into the quality of processes
- Increased importance of effective communication and novel data sources for data collection and verification.



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Overview

From mid-2022 – mid-2024, ISEAL led a stream of work focused on Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) for landscape and jurisdictional approaches. As part of this endeavour, we committed to supporting three sustainability systems and related organisations through pilot project funding. The goal was to explore the practicalities of measuring landscape and jurisdictional level performance improvement to tackle sustainability issues at scale, with a particular focus on biodiversity and nature, human well-being, and human rights.

The three projects were chosen for their unique context, thematic focus, and emphasis on applying the MEL process beyond the production site. For instance, the Sustainable Fibre Alliance (SFA) began developing a biodiversity and nature-focused MEL framework in the rangelands and home-towns of Mongolian goat herders. Meanwhile, CNV Internationaal pursued qualitative and quantitative monitoring of social dialogues and Collective Bargaining agreements (CBAs) in the Siak Pelalawan Landscape Project (SPLP) in Indonesia. Lastly, the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) explored the effectiveness of their Destination Assessments at measuring change over time by reappraising two popular tourist destinations: the City of Dubrovnik, in Croatia, and the Sukhothai Historic Park, in Thailand.

In evaluating the projects several idiosyncratic reflections emerged, shedding light on the complexities and opportunities within sustainable landscape or jurisdictional management initiatives.

SFA, operating within rangelands arbitrarily divided by jurisdictional boundaries, suggested that a landscape approach might be more effective when production activities cross jurisdictional lines. They also discuss the reality of secondary data quality and suitability in an area where authority staff can be as transient as the herders. This underscored the practical

reality of balancing a comprehensive indicator list with what's realistically available in their testing of the Landscape framework.

Approaching the issue from a different angle, CNV Internationaal highlighted the importance of capacity building with unions to ensure longevity and accuracy when addressing workers' rights and conditions. The existing network of union-based representation, offers to Landscape of Jurisdictional Approach (LJA) initiatives a modular system that is both close to the grass-roots and easily integrated into the large-scale multistakeholder platforms that sit at the heart of many LJA initiatives. Through engaging in dialogues themselves and proposing to use participative tools like the [Fair Work Monitor](#), CNV Internationaal show that they can more easily identify the 'paper tiger' mechanisms that are formidable on paper but lack substance or real power in reality. This becomes particularly crucial at the landscape scale, where there is a tendency to prioritise reliance on quantitative data.

In their pilot, GSTC advocated for the establishment of Destination Management Organisations to enhance data collection accuracy and improve local stakeholder comprehension and awareness through education and training. It is also shown to be a crucial mechanism where the monitoring and enforcement of human rights abuses, such as trafficking, requires more local coordination. This insight underscored the benefits of a centralised, multi-stakeholder approach for improving data reliability and accessibility, which is a fundamental aspect of a LJA¹.

Full profiles of each pilot are available below. Through these pilots, we aim to contribute to the body of evidence on implementing LJA approaches in various contexts. Additionally, we hope to provide practitioners less experienced with landscape and jurisdictional approaches with insights into the practicalities and considerations necessary for expanding their MEL systems.



1. See our recent series of [joint position papers](#) for more on what constitutes a company landscape investment or action; making effective company claims about landscape investments and actions; making effective company claims about contributions to landscape outcomes; company responsibilities for supporting landscape monitoring.

Sustainable Fibre Alliance:

Building a MEL system for Mongolian rangelands

Pilot overview:

- **Background & objectives:** This project focuses on developing an environmental assessment of Mongolian pastoral rangelands using a jurisdictional approach (district-level) as part of their own scheme's development.
- **The approach:** Participatory stakeholder workshops for issue identification and prioritisation coupled with indicator selection from the LandScale platform. The project primarily pursued secondary data collection, with the notable exception of water sampling.
- **Key Findings:**
 - **Stakeholder dialogues:** Issues over inclusivity and representativeness of stakeholders; tensions over use of jurisdictional land by “non-resident” herders; ambiguity over ownership of issues and “mission alignment”.
 - **Indicator development and data collection:** Discussion on indicator selection vis a vis effectiveness vs. rigour; discussion on the availability, quality, and suitability of the secondary data collected.
 - **Suggestions for similar projects:**
 - Weigh up the benefits of a jurisdictional vs. landscape approach in relation to project objectives and the extent of production processes.
 - Consider local resources and capacity building as part of similar district-level projects, paying attention to what level of rigour is “good enough”.



Overview

Founded in 2015, the Sustainable Fibre Alliance (SFA) is a global multi-stakeholder initiative with a mission to ensure the long-term viability of the cashmere sector through its SFA Cashmere Standard. In Mongolia the SFA works with nomadic herders to produce cashmere in a way that protects biodiversity and ensures the wellbeing of their animals.

Within this pilot project, the SFA sought to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework to measure progress toward environmental targets in Mongolia's Eastern Steppe region, specifically Bayan-Ovoo soum (district). To do so, the SFA pursued a participatory sustainability assessment of environmental targets, which in turn fed into a monitoring plan that integrates biodiversity targets into land use planning at the jurisdictional level. To date, monitoring and evaluation effects in the Cashmere Standard have been applied to discrete production areas, rather than to larger swathes of the rangeland itself, and have not included environmental indicators chosen in partnership with local stakeholders. By ensuring stakeholder engagement into biodiversity target setting, the results would support an informed and locally relevant environmental monitoring system that worked alongside, rather than at odds with, local government.

The approach

To begin developing a participatory, jurisdictional-level monitoring framework, the SFA team first approached local stakeholders (herders, their families, and local government officials) through participatory workshops to define and rank environmental issues and agree on targets. The SFA team then engaged with the LandScale platform to gain a long list of relevant indicators and worked with the local administration to identify relevant documentation for them. The team relied heavily on secondary data to report against the indicators, due to the presumed availability of quality secondary data in the area as well as cost, though the team did pursue primary data collection for water quality assessments.

Findings and insights

In project-specific findings, the two participatory workshops that were held, revealed local concerns about inclusivity and issue capture, pasture use by herders from neighbouring soums, highlighting tensions over fixed jurisdictional residence within the context of flexible resource use, and local waste management.

These findings led to wider reflections from the SFA team on the appropriateness of a landscape vs. jurisdictional approach. A reflection from the team was that a landscape or jurisdictional approach did not de-facto ensure inclusivity of all

stakeholders. For example, both the project's workshops were held in the town centre and as a result brought together local administrative officials and other residents, many of whom were women who were living in the town to be close to school age children and grandchildren. The majority of herders were away with their herds and dispersed, without the immediate prospect of return due to the long distances involved². The implication was that the voices of those undertaking day-to-day livestock management were absent. The obvious danger of such a situation is potential issue capture by the most represented and vocal groups, leading to a less comprehensive monitoring and evaluation approach.

One of the other key concerns coming from the Bayan-Ovoo workshops was that herders from neighbouring soums were exploiting temporary resource abundance in the summer months by moving their animals to a soum where they are not formally registered. Because pasture tax is linked to the soum where the herder is "permanently" resident, not where the grazing land is located, these visiting herders are not legally required to pay the pasture tax. This can lead to tensions with herders formally registered in the soum and who are obligated to pay this tax. The project team found that the arbitrariness of the boundaries in a jurisdictional approach (i.e. local soum borders) only seemed more illogical when applied to the large-scale pastoral setting of a rangeland. The jurisdictional approach also does not necessarily lend itself to identifying certain conditions such as the fragmentation of roaming land due to privatisation. If the point of scaling is to focus on regions of production, the SFA team reflect that, put simply, a jurisdictional approach seems most suitable when the majority of production occurs within the jurisdiction.

During stakeholder engagement, "municipal" waste management was identified as a high priority issue. Regarding this, the SFA reflected that, strictly-speaking, this was beyond their immediate mandate though they were leading the project, and the local authorities did not have the capacity to address the issue either. Through similar occurrences of "mission (mis)-alignment", such findings have the possibility to lead to either scope creep amongst the involved partners, or alternately raised and dashed hopes amongst the local stakeholders. The question that was foregrounded by the Bayan-Ovoo project for the SFA was, what changes in the relationship between stakeholders when the stakes are no longer about a commodity but a jurisdiction?

Regarding the usefulness of the Landscale platform for the Bayan-Ovoo project, results were mixed. The SFA found access to a comprehensive list of indicators was invaluable, yet completing the assessment demanded significant time, budget and know-how, which particularly with language barriers was challenging in practice.

2. The distances separating autumn, winter, spring and summer grazing range from 10-30km, however in times of adverse weather livestock keepers may travel upwards of 200-300km, often bringing them into neighbouring soums.



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Landscape's broad approach wasn't found to prioritise indicator selection, instead focusing on completeness, making it difficult for the team to arrange effective and efficient collection. This led to a balancing act for the SFA between constructing a rigorous indicator list and ensuring the sustainability of any derivative MEL system.

In reviewing the project's data collection process, several key insights emerged. Firstly, due to budget constraints and the high costs associated with primary data collection, much of the assessment relied on secondary data. However, this approach faced challenges, including limited accessibility to international academic publications due to language barriers. Additionally, secondary data often lacked the granularity required for soum-level monitoring, highlighting the need for more localised information. Despite these challenges, GIS mapping proved valuable for remote analysis, offering insights into specific issues at a smaller scale.

Furthermore, specific indicators revealed both strengths and weaknesses in the project's assessment. For instance, the evaluation of land degradation highlighted the complexity of defining and measuring degradation in Mongolian rangelands, emphasising the need for longer-term research to provide a balanced perspective. Similarly, the identification of indicator species lacked rigorous justification, while indicators related to land tenure were absent, reflecting challenges in meeting with local officials and assessing governance issues.

Finally, data on livestock productivity proved challenging to obtain at the soum level, underscoring the limitations of national-level data for assessing extensive production systems. These insights emphasise the importance of addressing data accessibility, granularity and methodological rigour in future assessments, particularly within the context of jurisdictional approaches where local administration capacity can significantly impact project success.

CNV-Internationaal

Measuring Social Dialogues in the Siak and Pelalawan landscape programme, Indonesia

Pilot overview:

- **Background & objectives:** This project focuses on the effectiveness of measurement efforts for improving labour rights using Social Dialogues and Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) within the Siak Pelalawan Landscape Programme (SPLP) in Indonesia.
- **The approach:** CNV-I conducted a baseline assessment on Social Dialogues in 2021, which it used to develop a suite of activities aimed at improving practices within the SPLP. In March 2024, an external evaluator conducted an outcome harvesting evaluation of the activities. CNV-I complemented this by providing reflections on the relevant measurement tools and methods available for this area of work.
- **Key Findings:**
 - The Outcome Harvesting Evaluation found that the development of social dialogue platforms, particularly the LKS Bipartite and Gender Committees, led to improved dialogue amongst stakeholders. However, the evaluation emphasises the need to strengthen the quality aspect of dialogues.
 - The evaluation also highlights the importance of women's representation in LKS Bipartite, recommending substantive engagement of women workers' rights and connecting Gender Committees with LKS Bipartite to effectively address this issue.



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- On measurement methods, it's shown that CNV-I's current approach focuses more on quantitative improvements rather than qualitative aspects. To enhance the quality of Social Dialogue, a structured and measurable framework, along with a clear Theory of Change (ToC), is recommended to guide social partners in the improvement process.
- Several relevant tools are outlined for use on Social Dialogues including: Theory of Change; the Fair Work Monitor; Outcome Harvesting; the CBA database; and the After-Action Review method.

• Suggestions for similar projects:

- Consider adopting a robust Theory of Change specific to Social Dialogues or labour rights at the outset of a landscape or jurisdictional project. Build a structured and measurable framework around this.
- Invest in central platforms to facilitate and improve dialogue amongst stakeholders, paying special attention to underrepresented groups such as women by considering developing standalone committees.
- Consider adopting and implementing off-the-shelf tools such as those created by CNV-I, which prioritise accuracy and relevance, before considering developing proprietary solutions.

Overview

CNV-Internationaal (CNV-I) is a Dutch non-profit organisation, aligned to the Dutch trade union CNV, that focuses on workers' rights and social justice globally. They work to improve working conditions, promote fair wages, and support workers to have a voice in their workplaces. Through partnerships with local organisations and trade unions, CNV Internationaal supports capacity building, advocacy, and policy development to create sustainable change in labour practices worldwide.

CNV-I shared that until recently landscape programmes have predominantly focused on addressing environmental impact, and much of the available impact measurement methodology is not applicable to the topic of human or labour rights. In recent years, next to the environmental challenges in the palm oil sector, the labour challenges on the palm oil plantations have increasingly been on the agenda. With Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD) initiatives and legislation upcoming, some of the landscape programmes have started to focus on human and labour rights in addition to the environmental impact and are now pioneering how to measure their progress on these topics.

Since 2021, CNV-I has been working within two landscape programmes in Indonesia (Siak Pelalawan Landscape Programme

(SPLP) with Proforest, and in Central Kalimantan with Kaleka) on setting up and improving Social Dialogue³ (SD) practices with the ultimate objective to improve labour rights standards. Setting up meaningful Social Dialogue and working closely with local labour unions, is the most sustainable way to improve labour conditions, and is enshrined as such in Indonesian law. Labour Unions on the ground are very well aware of the labour issues at stake, by means of SD and negotiating Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs), labour conditions can be uplifted.

This pilot project aimed to evaluate the impact thus far through the SPLP and to evaluate the effectiveness of the measurement tools that are currently available to measure the impact in these areas.

The approach

In 2021, CNV-I conducted a baseline assessment of the existing level of Social Dialogues, using its findings to shape and develop the activities for this pilot project. The baseline assessment report was shared with stakeholders to demonstrate project relevance and garner active involvement. With stakeholders on board, activities commenced, with the ultimate aim of moving from dispute-centred to constructive-oriented Social Dialogues. These activities included forming an informal Social Dialogue Forum at the district level; providing training and technical assistance for LKS Bipartite⁴; capacity development for independent unions; training and technical assistance for Gender Committees; conducting research, analysis and trainings around Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs); and studying daily casual workers.

In March 2024 CNV-I conducted an outcome harvesting evaluation on the Social Dialogue component of SPLP. It aimed at analysing social dialogue development in the palm oil industries in the area and whether CNV-I has contributed to the development. The evaluation was conducted by an external evaluator, while CNV-I provided a complementary review of the available measurement tools and methods, many developed recently by CNV-I.

Findings and insights

Outcome harvesting evaluation findings

The outcome harvesting evaluation found that CNV-Internationaal (CNV-I) contributed significantly to enhancing social dialogue in the palm oil industry in the Siak and Pelalawan Districts. The development of social dialogue platforms, particularly the LKS Bipartite and Gender Committees, led to improved dialogue among stakeholders such as unions, management, employer associations, and government offices.

3. Social Dialogue involves information exchange, consultation, and negotiation among industrial relations actors. It goes beyond one-way communication, like issuing instructions, and is also the exercise of Freedom of Association (FoA), a fundamental Human Right, exercising Freedom of Association. Effective social dialogue aims to prevent disputes, improve working conditions through Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs), and align with International Labour Organisation (ILO) standards.

4. "LKS Bipartite" in Indonesia refers to Bipartite Cooperation Institution between labour unions and employers' organisations at the company or enterprise level. It is a form of Social Dialogue platform.



However, CNV-I emphasises the need to strengthen the quality aspect of social dialogue, including increasing the capacity of social partners and fostering a commitment to constructive dialogue, especially among company management. It also highlights the importance of women's representation in LKS Bipartite, recommending substantive engagement of women workers' rights and connecting Gender Committees with LKS Bipartite to effectively address this issue.

Regarding measurement methods, the report suggests that CNV-I's current approach focuses more on quantitative improvements rather than qualitative aspects. To enhance the quality of social dialogue, a structured and measurable framework, along with a clear Theory of Change (ToC), is recommended to guide social partners in the improvement process. However, developing such a ToC and outlining how activities contribute to the desired changes requires a long-term commitment. CNV-I's existing ToC, which includes strengthening unions' organisational capacity and negotiation skills, is seen as a foundation for improving Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) and working conditions. The report suggests applying the ToC at the company-level bipartite structures, breaking down the steps for clearer monitoring and evaluation.

Reflections on measurement tools and methods

As mentioned, landscape programmes traditionally focus on environmental impact, leaving a gap in applicable impact measurement methods for social issues. The [Fair Work Monitor \(FWM\)](#), an online survey tool by CNV-I, was found to play a crucial role in gathering real-time data on working conditions. Initially designed for Latin America's sugarcane and mining sectors and later expanded to Cambodia's textile industry, it now extends to Indonesia's palm oil sector. This tool, managed by local trade unions due to their direct contact with workers, enables data collection on labour rights gaps, aids CBA negotiations, and informs strategies to reach vulnerable worker groups. For project implementation, the FWM offers insights for baseline assessments, progress monitoring, and final impact assessments, proving beneficial for grassroots perspectives and narrative reporting.

Outcome harvesting, a qualitative evaluation approach, provides a backward-looking analysis of observable changes resulting from project interventions. This method focuses on behaviour, actions, policies, or relationships influenced by the project, including unexpected outcomes. This is useful for programmes without clear M&E guidelines as it allows the inclusion of diverse stakeholders, offering insights beyond predefined impact areas.

[The CBA Database](#), developed by CNV-I, promotes transparency in labour rights by rating CBAs based on quality, alignment with national and international standards, and bipartite structures. While beneficial for union negotiation positions and progress tracking, CNV-I suggest it may not be immediately suitable for projects in early Social Dialogue stages. However, it supports long-term improvements and potential use in financial sector feasibility studies.

Finally, CNV-I's developed framework, based on Social Dialogue guidelines, aims to measure compliance with labour rights standards, a vital step toward improving labour conditions. While the FWM can be used to measure at the impact level, this measurement framework aims to measure whether social dialogue is practiced in compliance with the international labour rights standards and good governance principles. CNV-I plans to test the framework in landscape projects over the next year. After testing, CNV-I expects that the framework can be gradually used by social partners themselves, to self-assess social dialogue practices they participate in.

Testing and refining these frameworks is crucial for future project self-assessment and effective use in landscape initiatives. These diverse measurement tools offer multifaceted approaches to outcome measurement, catering to varied project goals, and providing insights at different project stages, from baseline assessments to final impact evaluations. Ultimately, a structured approach combining these methods enhances the understanding and effectiveness of human and labour rights programmes within landscape initiatives.

Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC):

Re-appraising impact monitoring in Destination Assessments

Pilot overview:

- **Background & objectives:** This project focuses on re-assessing two tourist destinations' sustainability performance using the GSTC Destination Assessment to understand changes over time. The pilots used the GSTC Destination Criteria to re-assess the performance of the City of Dubrovnik, Croatia, and Sukhothai Historical Park, Thailand.
- **The approach:** GSTC pursued desk research to undertake the initial re-assessment, supplemented by field work (1-2-1 and focus group interviews) to gain additional insights through primary and secondary data.
- **Key Findings:**
 - The City of Dubrovnik increased their sustainability performance through a centralised approach by pro-active awareness raising and increasing resources for initiatives.
 - For the city, effective communication and stakeholder engagement were crucial to high-quality information sharing. Where data was missing, misleading, or of questionable quality, verification was achieved through comparison with similar data sources, cross-checking with independent parties, and triangulation using novel sources, such as social media.
- In Sukhothai Historical Park there was an evident need for a reliable data system to address the limitations of the ubiquitous simple survey methods being used. The park has proposed a context-specific system that integrates the GSTC Criteria into operational indicators, promising transparent data collection and storage.
- Sukhothai has also opted to create a Destination Management Organisation (DMO), resulting in improved local stakeholder comprehension and sustainability training. This initiative highlights the benefits of a centralised organisation for improving data reliability and accessibility, supporting the case for centralising landscape initiatives' data management efforts for more effective monitoring and measurement.
- **Suggestions for similar projects:**
 - Advocate for a centralised landscape or jurisdictional measurement plan and implementing body alongside a centralised landscape governance body. Invest in building strong communication channels alongside this.



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- Consider indicators that have the capacity to evolve and measure policy adoption over time, consistently raising the bar and following the trajectory of relevant jurisdictions.
- Where data quality is uncertain, verify data through independent review, comparison with similar data points or triangulation using novel sources, or review of data through establishing feedback loops with relevant stakeholders.

Overview

The Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) establishes and manages global sustainable standards, known as the GSTC Criteria. There are two sets: [Destination Criteria](#) for public policy-makers and destination managers, and [Industry Criteria](#) for any tourism business but with specific performance indicators for hotels and tour operators. The GSTC Criteria forms the foundation for Accreditation of Certification Bodies that certify hotels, accommodation, tour operators, and destinations as having sustainable policies and practices in place.

The Destination assessments that are used to assess the Destination Criteria, often represent a single moment in time view of a destination and are not often repeated. For this pilot, GSTC therefore revisited two very different destinations to reassess their performance over time and understand how GSTC's own assessments could better capture this. The two regions assessed were Sukhothai Historical Park in Thailand and the City of Dubrovnik in Croatia. Both UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Sukhothai attracts visitors for its ancient ruins, temples and rural atmosphere, Dubrovnik appeals to those interested in medieval architecture, views of the Adriatic Sea, and the Game of Throne series, having served as one of its primary filming location.

The approach

Within this pilot GSTC aimed to evaluate changes within the destinations, using previous destination assessments as a baseline. Additionally, GSTC sought to refine the data verification process and reappraise the indicators for each criterion for forthcoming destination assessments. Complementing this effort, GSTC conducted a qualitative assessment to capture the stories and perspectives of those engaged in the regions' sustainability journey.

To do so, GSTC conducted a thorough desk review of the initial destination assessments, pinpointing areas ripe for enhancement. Subsequently, the core team engaged in stakeholder mapping to identify pivotal contacts at these destinations for further data inquiries. In response to the review findings, an additional questionnaire was crafted to delve deeper into the identified improvement areas. These questionnaires were further enriched by focus group interviews with seasoned destination assessors, fostering discussions on alternative solutions and enhancing data verification procedures.

Findings and insights

GSTC's experience shows that for a more data-verified process a few improvements are needed. In the first instance, improvements in more quantitative and objective indicators allowed for more reliable and quality data to be collected, leading to superior and direct measurement of performance. The use of these indicators helped to overcome instances of incomplete knowledge of stakeholders or the context and helped to circumvent language barriers. However, timely and well-executed stakeholder engagement with "data holders" within destination entities was still considered an essential element that could be improved for example, through gathering feedback from stakeholders and participants directly after a destination assessment to verify and enhance data reliability. GSTC also found that for continuous improvement to be operationalised, a monitoring tool for post-assessment is needed for destinations.

It should be noted that while simply having the indicators is important, understanding "how to use" and manage the indicators is vital. Understanding how to do this throughout the process of a destination assessment is what creates deep knowledge and makes these assessments different from a simple checklist.

These findings will be integrated into GSTC's revision of its Destination Criteria next year.

City of Dubrovnik

In terms of environmental sustainability, since the last assessment GSTC found that Dubrovnik had moved from simply having laws on environmental issues such as the protection of sensitive environment, protection on threatened species and limits on trading flora and fauna internationally, to socialising practices among the city population through incentives and education campaigns. Some of these include actively protecting sensitive environment, removing waste and reducing the use of plastic bags. The city had also built and was running a freshwater purification plant and refurbished the main water supply tunnel with more water supply projects in the construction phases.

When it came to socio-cultural sustainability, the city had moved from a decentralised approach, which was deemed necessary to pursue certification, to a more centralised approach to sustainability initiatives and campaigns (e.g. the Respect the City project). With this centralised approach had come a pooling and increase of resources for improvement that enabled a more top-down, and far-reaching, approach to sustainability initiatives.

During the Dubrovnik assessment, daily discussions with the destination liaison were highly engaging, facilitating information sharing on key matters. Communication proved productive, especially with NGOs, universities, and public organisations leading city improvement projects, yielding high-quality results.



Efforts behind the scenes to enhance data quality were evident. However, the language barrier posed challenges in verifying information, particularly in written statements. Interviews with stakeholders were conducted extensively, with site visits to engage key individuals and foster open dialogues.

In the reassessment, limited evidence prompted material evaluations and requests for additional information. Ongoing discussions with specific groups and stakeholders, including online meetings, ensured diverse sources for data verification. Evidence from social media, destination uploads, and the Mayor's network was cross-checked with independent sources, bolstering the verification process.

Sukhothai Historical Park

In relation to Sukhothai's environmental performance, the region had developed from having no management system to monitor environmental impacts and protect ecosystems to a demonstrable motivation towards conservation of biodiversity. Where there had previously been no sustainability assessment regarding water and no system to monitor water resources, there were now processes to ensure efficient water stewardship with the provincial waterworks authority.

As for socio-cultural elements, the destination had advanced from having a committee with few stakeholders and a low level of interaction, to the establishment of a central organisation to raise awareness of sustainability. The Destination Management Organisation (DMO) was strengthened to educate and raise awareness of sustainability of sustainability and sustainable standards. It is composed of local authorities, the private sector and representatives from the local community. This initiative aims to promote a collaborative approach and secure the enduring integration and prioritisation of sustainability concerns going forward and is, in many ways, analogous to a central landscape governance body.

Regular DMO meetings have facilitated the development of monitoring systems, enhancing the historical park's ecosystem management and visitor security measures.

This systematic approach has not only ensured consistent and quality data on biodiversity and park security but also raised local authorities' sustainability awareness.

However, there was little evidence of a system that enabled or encouraged enterprises, visitors, and the public to contribute to the community and their sustainability initiatives. Similarly, "access for all", where facilities and infrastructure are required for all peoples, including those with disabilities, were still not well established. This was due to the low level of awareness, as well as financial constraints, and therefore not considered a necessity. Even so, where human rights were concerned, such as preventing exploitation, human trafficking, and discrimination, the area now follows a stepwise programme of measures which local authorities (police) are charged with implementing and the provincial office is responsible for monitoring and reporting compliance against.

In Sukhothai, the need for a reliable data system integrating quantitative and qualitative assessments was highlighted. The simple survey methods that were often used can compromise data quality, necessitating more advanced tools. A proposed data system, tailored to Sukhothai's context, aims to address this gap by integrating the GSTC Criteria into operational indicators. This system will be built into software where all data collected, data source, data collectors, and collection dates will be saved. This system promises transparent data collection, storage, and access, benefiting all stakeholders.

The project also showed that centralised organisations improve data reliability and accessibility of destination data. While this is not a revolutionary finding in and of itself, it does strengthen the argument for a centralised data management scheme within the centralised bodies that many landscape initiatives now operate under. To date, monitoring and measurement of such initiatives has been project based and there is ample value to be found in centralising and consolidating these efforts.



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