GOAT

Garden and Open Space Analysis Tool

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Description & User Guideline

by

IMC University of Applied Sciences Krems

CultTour

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1 Analysis Tool Description

1.1 Introduction

The IMC University of Applied Sciences Krems created a garden and open space analysis tool for European garden and open space heritage sites within the frame of the European INTERREG CultTour project. The CultTour project aims to implement strategies to preserve and valorise cultural garden and open space heritage sites by giving them a contemporary use in tourism and at the same time conserving their "genius loci". The analysis tool is the foundation for developing these strategies, considering the three pillars of ecological, economic and socio-cultural sustainability.

In the following chapters, the analysis tool objectives, its target groups and its development process are explained in detail. The structure of the tool is presented and a guideline with a detailed explanation on how to apply the garden and open space analysis tool is given.

1.2 Analysis Tool Objectives

The analysis tool aims to assess the suitability of cultural garden and open space heritage sites for its use in garden tourism. More specifically, it helps to identify the future development potential of such sites for a unique and sustainable visitor experience. "Development potential" is hereby understood as the difference between a site's actual and target state set in the future of three to four years. This difference (potential) is identified through an indicator analysis tool in Excel, the so called GOAT - garden and open space analysis tool. The objectives are to a) obtain an overview of the current situation of a specific site and b) to assist decision makers in taking decisions regarding the future use of the site.

The analysis tool is generic and can be applied to different garden and open space heritage types, such as defined by the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences in Vienna and the Technical University of Berlin as part of the CultTour project (see Annex). The analysis tool allows tracking the development of specific

sites over time, but no comparisons between different sites or garden and open space heritage types.

1.3 Target Group

The analysis tool serves as a strategic management instrument and therefore targets tourism managers, managers of tourism attractions including a garden, owners/operators of cultural garden or open space heritage sites and consultants. The tool is also a consulting instrument.

1.4 Structure of the Analysis Tool

The analysis tool is based on a model which consists of the following four dimensions:

- Macro environment,
- Micro environment,
- Site management and
- Site characteristics.

The dimensions Micro environment, Site management and Site characteristics are evaluated through the garden and open space analysis tool and are structured according to elements and indicators as outlined in the example below:

- 2. Micro environment (dimension)
- 2.1 Population (element)
- 2.1.1 Population participation (indicator)

The tool, including all dimensions, elements and indicators, is illustrated on the next page.

Figure 1: Structure of the Tool

Macro Environment

Micro Environment

Population
- Population participation
- Attitude of locals towards tourism
- Availability of qualified personnel in the region

Regional Integration
- Strategic fit between site and its business environment
- Cooperation with other tourism providers
- Support of sustainability measures by regional stakeholders

Tourism
- Tourism infrastructure
- Regional tourism theme

Regional Infrastructure
- Public transport/ shuttle service

Site Management

Organization
- Organizational strategy
- Quality management system
- Transparency of decisions
- Employee participation
- Public participation in decisions on change of historic substance

Sustainable Management
- Waste management
- Energy management
- Event management

Marketing & Branding
- Public image
- Public awareness
- Awareness of historical value by stakeholders
- Market reach
- Website
- E-marketing
- Printed material
- Admission fee
- Presence in travel related materials
- Packages

Financial Investment
- Degree of need for investment in infrastructure
- Degree of need for investment in maintenance equipment
- Degree of need for investment in personnel
- Degree of need for investment in marketing

Infrastructure
- Information & Communication Technology
- Maintenance equipment

Human Resources
- Qualification of personnel
- Premiums & incentives
- Personnel development
- Employees from the region
- Volunteers

Site Characteristics

General Aspects
- Design concept for the site
- Guiding theme
- Type of historic design
- Distinctiveness

Accessibility
- Periods of accessibility
- Hours of accessibility
- Accessibility for people with special needs

Site Infrastructure
- Historical value
- Condition of site infrastructure
- Renovation of site infrastructure
- Current use of existing facilities
- Additional use of facilities
- Use of local materials

Garden/Open Space Heritage Site
- Significance of cultural history
- Initial inventory
- Historic planting plan
- Historical garden elements
- Plant inventory

Site Maintenance
- Maintenance condition
- Use of fertilizers & plant protection
- Water conservation
- Recycling of biological waste
- Composting

Visitor Services
- Shop: Availability, regional products, theme, price, presentation
- Café/Restaurant: Availability, regional products, quality of food, price
- Sanitary facilities
- Parking facilities for bikes and vehicles
- Lockers
- Orientation map, signage, interpretation material on site & plants, guided tours, interpretation for people with special needs
- Staff attitude towards visitors
- Seating possibilities
- Availability of facilities for children
- Events
- Educational workshops
- Offers during low seasons
- Safety & security system

Visitor
- Socio-demographic information for visitors
- Feedback systems for visitors

Sustainability
Economic, Socio-cultural, Environmental

Tourism Development Potential for a unique Visitor Experience

Source: Created by the authors

The underlying concepts which are used for the development the analysis tool are outlined in the following paragraphs.

The distinction between internal and external environments, i.e. the macro and micro environment of a site, is based on the concepts of the Identity Model by Gareis and the Tourism System by Bieger (2006, p. 84). The Identity Model describes and analyzes the actual situation of an organization (Gareis, 2005, p.49), i.e. a cultural garden or open space heritage site, by analyzing its internal and external structures. The Tourism System by Bieger likewise describes external environments that have an influence on the overall tourism system and can therefore not be neglected. Such external environments are for example the economy, society or politics of a destination and are represented in the macro environment.

The first dimension therefore aims to assess the site and its macro environment according to certain criteria which have been elaborated by the project team and the experts. The result is a detailed situation analysis about the site and its environment, outlined in factsheets, and valuable for the analysis of the site within the so called garden and open space analysis tool in Excel.

The second dimension, third dimension and fourth dimension are evaluated in the aforementioned garden and open space analysis tool. The dimensions "Site Management" and "Site Characteristics" refer to the actual cultural garden heritage site under observation whereas the dimension "Micro Environment" can be understood as the touristic area into which the site is embedded. The micro environment reflects the immediate social environments through the elements "population", "regional infrastructure", "regional integration" and "tourism". Each element includes a certain number of indicators. "Indicators" are defined as criteria that characterize the elements.

Within the dimensions "Site Management and "Site Characteristics" six respectively seven elements are taken into consideration. They are a combination of management, tourism and sustainability indicators based on the concepts of "Customer Journey", "SERVQUAL", "Experience Design" and the overall approach of a value chain. A customer journey allows outlining the experience throughout a service, such as the

visit of a garden or park, and enables to highlight the most important touch points required for a memorable experience. The concept of SERVQUAL emphasizes the service quality aspects of reliability, assurance, tangibles empathy and responsiveness for provided services. Furthermore, the idea of "Experience Design", which is based on the Experience Economy by Pine and Gilmore (1999) where the aim is to create a lasting experience for visitors, is particularly considered in the site characteristics such as the design concept and the overall guiding theme.

All elements and indicators within the third and fourth dimension are part of the overall value chain of the site which depicts the primary and secondary activities in order to create added value. Including these different sets of indicators serves on the one side to evaluate the viability of the site and on the other side to see how sustainable the site works as sustainability cannot be neglected nowadays and therefore influences all environments.

Each indicator is evaluated on a hierarchical four-stage scale in an Excel spread sheet. As previously mentioned, two states are analyzed by evaluating the indicators in the garden and open space analysis tool: The actual and the target state. The actual state presents the current situation of a site regarding certain indicators. The target state then shows the potential a site has in each indicator – the "development potential". It is defined together with the most important stakeholders taking into account the desired state of the site in three to four years. The overall outcome is the tourism development potential of a site for a sustainable visitor experience. The use of indicators is in line with Hart's (1997 in Miller 2001) definition of indicators as the author describes them as "something that helps you to understand where you are, which way you are going and how far you are from where you want to be." In order to reach the aspired state, a set of follow up activities are developed and proposed by the authors. These activities are described under the section 2.1.5.

It needs to be kept in mind that the garden and open space analysis tool itself is designed as a decision-making instrument which focuses on the perception the managers have of their site. It is not based on an external approach for an objective evaluation as such. On the contrary it is a practice-oriented process carried out internally through self-assessment.

In this way, each site independently sets up its priorities according to its specific environment. The overall result of the analysis points out strategic directions adapted to the context of the site analyzed. As a consequence the aim of the indicators' ranking is not an external but an internal comparison: instead of assessing the site in relation to another one, it highlights differences between the actual state, picture of the current situation, and the target one, reflect of the future goals to reach.

1.5 Development Process

The analysis tool is based on a combination of already existing methods as well as new approaches. The criteria and indicators have been developed by the project team of the university and include different management, tourism and sustainability indicators which are considered for a detailed assessment of garden and open space heritage sites. The aim is to depict the overall development potential of a cultural garden and open space heritage site for a sustainable visitor experience.

The following figure illustrates the development process of garden and open space analysis tool.

Figure 2: Development Process of the Analysis Tool
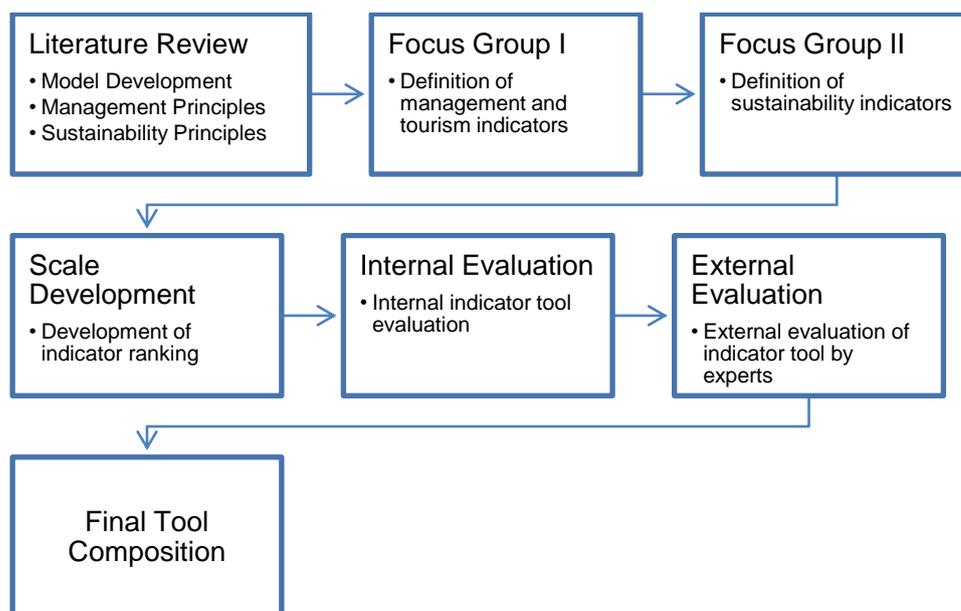
Source: By the authors

The development process of analysis tool included seven steps. At first, the authors conducted a comprehensive literature research. The literature review particularly required a definition of the term model as well as the search for already existing business analysis concepts and sustainability indicators.

The Business Dictionary (2012) outlines three main reasons why models, in the prevailing case tools, are generally developed. These are

- "to facilitate understanding by eliminating unnecessary components,
- to aid in decision making by simulating 'what if' scenarios,
- to explain, control, and predict events on the basis of past observations."

For the analysis tool, the reasons mentioned above apply except for the simulation of scenarios and the prediction of events. The following paragraph provides two definitions of the term "model" which were then considered as the starting point for the development process of the structure of the tool.

Busha & Harter (1980 in Shafique & Mahmood, 2010) describe a model as "an abstraction, a mental framework for analysis of a system. It involves simplified representations of real-world phenomena." A more comprehensive definition by the Business Dictionary (2012) describes a model as a "Graphical, mathematical (symbolic), physical, or verbal representation or simplified version of a concept, phenomenon, relationship, structure, system, or an aspect of the real world."

The literature research was followed by two focus groups. Within the first focus group, the general structure of the tool was established, followed by the development of management and tourism indicators. The majority of these indicators is based on the aforementioned literature research. The second focus group with the team's external expert then served to develop sustainability indicators which are embedded into the overall structure due to the importance of sustainable development. According to the Brundtland definition of Sustainable Development, 'Sustainable Development is a development that fulfils the needs of our generation without restricting the possibility of the next generation to fulfil their own needs'. It is based on the three pillars of ecological, economic and social sustainability as shown in the figure (figure 3) below.

Figure 3: Sustainable Development
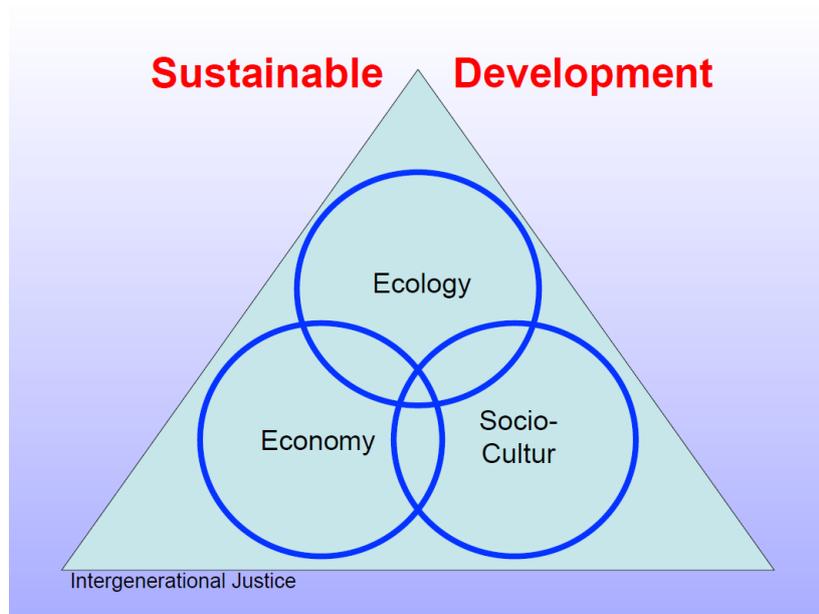
Source: Christian Baumgartner

For the selected sustainability indicators the following criteria (Cooper et al., p.170) were applied:

- "Provide a representative picture of conditions or society's response,
- Be simple, easy to interpret and able to show trends over time,
- Be responsive to changes in the environment and related to human activities,
- Provide a basis for international comparison,
- Be either national in scope or applicable to regional environmental issues or national significance and
- Have a threshold or reference value against which to compare it."

The scale development for each indicator constituted the next important step. Hereby a five scale option was chosen at first. However, after internal discussions on the practicability of the tool, the scale was reduced to four items. The attention during the scale development was particularly on the conformity, which presented a challenge due to the nature of the indicators as some indicators can be classified as quantitative whereas others rather represent qualitative aspects.

In order to assure practicability of the tool, an external validation by garden experts was required. In total five extensive feedback meetings with garden experts from private and public as well as small and large gardens/parks were held. Moreover, feedback from the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, a CultTour project partner, was gathered. The experts were asked to evaluate the developed indicators and rankings according to the following questions:

- Is the indicator comprehensible?
- Is the indicator applicable (to tourism/gardens/parks)?
    - If not, only to your garden/park or in general?
- Is the scaling comprehensible and useful?

The feedback of the experts and the project partner was taken into consideration and the tool presented at the Project Steering Committee Meeting in November 2012. During the meeting, further feedback was given by the partners and the final structure of the analysis tool was set up at the beginning of 2013.

The analysis tool is one step of an overall process depicted in an "Re-utilisation Process Model". A description of the re-utilisation process model is available in a separate document.
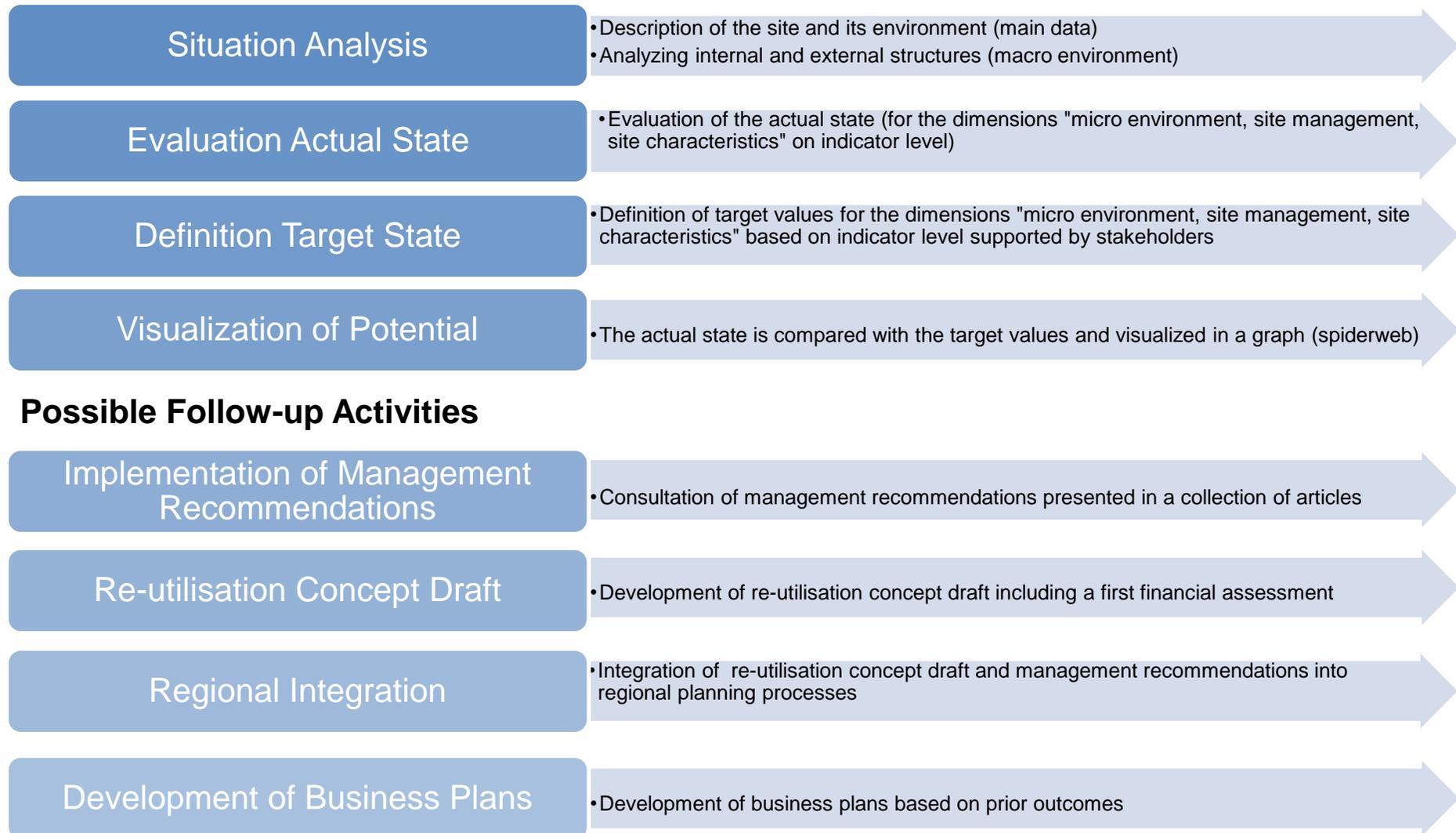
2 Guideline

The guideline in the following section describes how the garden heritage and open space analysis tool is applied.

2.1 Application Process

The figure on the next page (figure 4) summarizes the main steps that are to be taken within the application process of the tool. Thereafter, each step is described in more detail for an accurate application. Possible further follow up activities within the aforementioned re-utilisation process model are moreover outlined.

Figure 4: Guideline

Situation Analysis	• Description of the site and its environment (main data) • Analyzing internal and external structures (macro environment)
Evaluation Actual State	• Evaluation of the actual state (for the dimensions "micro environment, site management, site characteristics" on indicator level)
Definition Target State	• Definition of target values for the dimensions "micro environment, site management, site characteristics" based on indicator level supported by stakeholders
Visualization of Potential	• The actual state is compared with the target values and visualized in a graph (spiderweb)

Possible Follow-up Activities

Implementation of Management Recommendations	• Consultation of management recommendations presented in a collection of articles
Re-utilisation Concept Draft	• Development of re-utilisation concept draft including a first financial assessment
Regional Integration	• Integration of re-utilisation concept draft and management recommendations into regional planning processes
Development of Business Plans	• Development of business plans based on prior outcomes

Source: By the authors

2.1.1 Situation Analysis

The first step within the analysis tool is the situation analysis which aims to obtain a general overview of the most important facts about the cultural garden or open space heritage site. In order to so, different internal and external aspects of the site need to be described. These aspects are compiled in the main data sheet as well as in the macro environment analysis sheet. Within the main data sheet, a drop down list with pre-defined categories regarding e.g. size and age of the site is available. Within the macro analysis sheet, users write their own description.

2.1.2 Evaluation Actual State

After having obtained and clarified general aspects, the actual state of the site according to the different indicators is evaluated in the analysis tool. Hereby users decide on a 4 point hierarchical scale where their garden heritage or open space site is at the moment. The chosen category is selected form a drop down list next to each indicator. In total 88 indicators can be evaluated. However, not every indicator might be applicable to the site and can therefore be neglected. Moreover, if users wish to only evaluate certain dimensions or elements they can also prioritize by selecting only the needed categories in the Excel sheet.

2.1.3 Evaluation Target State

In the second step, the actual state of the site has been evaluated. The goal of the third step is now to define target values that the site wants to reach in the future for each indicator, again within the 4 point hierarchical scale depicted in the drop down list next to each indicator. On this note, a time period of three to four years should be taken into consideration.

During this phase, discussion should be engaged with the individuals or groups that can be influenced or have an impact on the site, so called stakeholders. For a company more specifically, stakeholders are those "that contribute, either voluntarily or involuntarily, to its wealth-creating capacity and activities, and that are therefore its potential beneficiaries and/or risk bearers" (Post, Preston and Sachs, 2002).

The analysis process therefore provides the opportunity to identify the key groups that should be integrated in priority to the decision-making and to consult them

according to their importance for the future of the site. The following figure summarizes the main stakeholders of the tourism industry.

Figure 5: Tourism Stakeholders
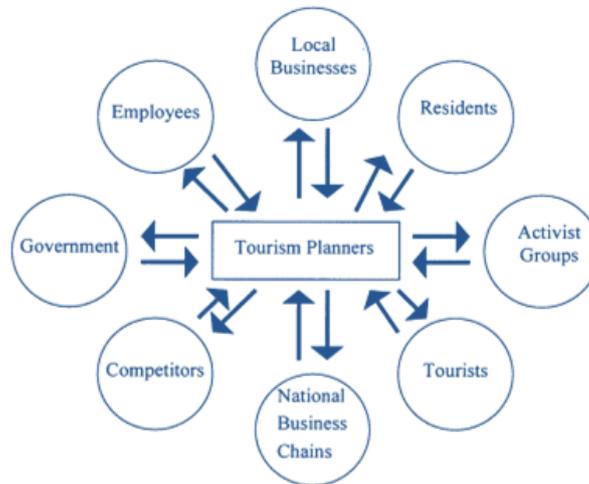
Source: Truly Sautter and Leisen (1999)

It is essential that the target values of the garden heritage and open space analysis tool are defined with the most important stakeholders of the site in order to reach consensus and enable a sustainable strategy.

2.1.4 Visualization of Potential

The actual state is then compared to the target values. This comparison is visualized in the form of a so called spider web in Excel where the two states of the individual indicators are compared (see picture on the next page). The spider web illustrates how much development potential each indicator has. Based on this development potential further activities are proposed and described in next subchapter.

Figure 6: Micro Environment - Development Potential
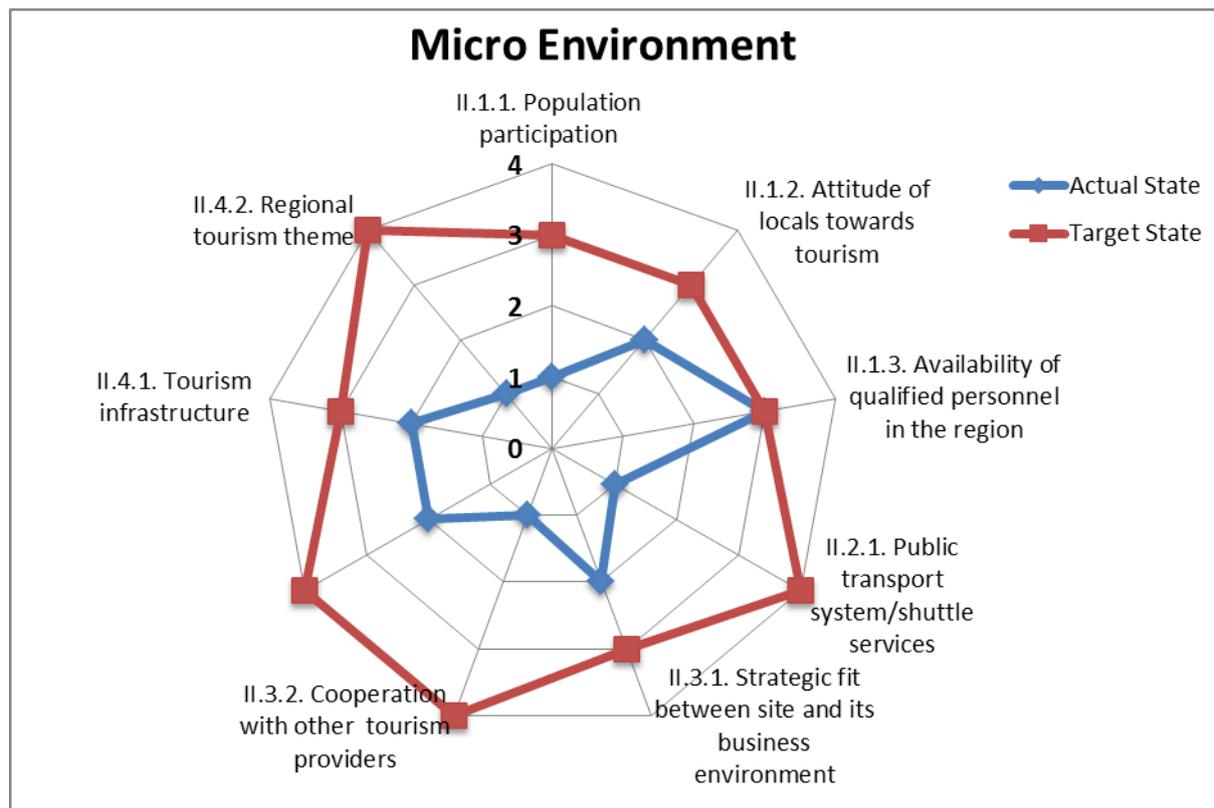
Source: IMC University of Applied Sciences Krems

2.1.5 Follow up Activities

In order to reach defined target values and to use the development potential, generic management recommendations can be consulted after having evaluated the actual and the target state. Presented in a collection of articles on the website, the management recommendations give an overview of important management areas from the tourism industry and recommend further literature in the specific field. They are either provided for each indicator. The sum of the selected recommendations can be considered as the development activities to carry out in the site in order to implement the overall strategy and drafted in a re-utilization concept draft. This concept draft summarises the most relevant information from the all prior activities within the holistic re-utilisation process model. Further follow up activities include the integration of re-utilisation concept draft into regional planning processes and the development of business plans.

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APPENDIX

Table1: Typology of Garden and Open Space Sites

Park, Garden
- Park   - Palace and castle garden   - Villa and country house garden   - Residential garden   - Private garden   - Rooftop garden   - Institutional garden   - Forest park
Other Public Site
- Square or promenade   - Memorial   - Sports ground   - Transport and infrastructural open space or route
Productive Garden
- Peasant or farmer garden   - Allotment garden
Site for Exhibition and Collection
- Botanic garden   - Zoological garden   - Museum garden (includes open air museums)   - Artist garden   - Flower garden   - Flower show   - Archaeological park   - Dendrological park   - Thematic garden (e.g. Japanese garden, Rockery, Rosary, Flower garden, Tree collection (arboretum))
Spiritual Site
- Monastery courtyard   - Mosque courtyard   - Synagogue courtyard   - Temple garden   - Churchyard (cemetery)   - Other spiritual place

Cultural Landscape

- landscape designed and created intentionally by man (garden and parkland landscapes constructed for aesthetic reasons)
- organically evolved, relict landscape (landscape in which an evolutionary process came to an end at some time in the past, either abruptly or over a period of time. Its significant distinguishing features are, however, still visible in material form (e.g. strip mining reclamation area, industrial heritage landscape, relict traditional landscape))
- organically evolved, continuing landscape (landscape which retains an active social role in contemporary society closely associated with the traditional way of life, and in which the evolutionary process is still in progress. At the same time, it exhibits significant material evidence of its evolution over time (e.g. monastic landscapes, continuing traditional landscape))
- associative cultural landscape (powerful religious, artistic, or cultural associations of the natural element rather than material cultural evidence which may be insignificant or even absent (e.g. holy mountains))

Source: University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna & the Berlin University of Technology