

## STAKEHOLDER-BASED EVALUATION OF TOURISM POLICY PRIORITIES: THE CASE OF THE SOUTH BOHEMIAN REGION<sup>1</sup>

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### Abstract

This paper deals with a set of problems related to tourism policy implementation. It emphasises the importance of stakeholder involvement in implementation of tourism policy in tourism destinations. The research is focused on evaluation of tourism policy strategic priorities from the point of view of destination stakeholders in the South Bohemian Region of the Czech Republic. Its objective is to identify key regional stakeholders in the tourism sector and describe their attitudes to co-operation with the South Bohemian Tourism Authority (SBTA) on implementation of the priorities which are described in the tourism development plan. The research uses three-step stakeholder analysis that is based on a three-attribute methodology, and a mix of qualitative and quantitative data gathering techniques. The findings are transformed into a comprehensive graphical output designated for the SBTA and a resulting set of managerial recommendations for better stakeholder involvement in the process of tourism development in the South Bohemian Region. The recommendations point both at involvement of various stakeholder groups by building the relationships between them and the SBTA based on more intensive communication and exchange of information and experience, and engagement of primary stakeholders as intermediaries in a newly established stakeholder network.

**Keywords:** stakeholder, tourism policy, tourism destination, stakeholder analysis

**JEL Classification:** M10, O21, R58

### Introduction

The tourism industry is steadily ranked among sectors with long-term growth. According to the WTO [2014], the international tourist arrivals worldwide are expected to increase by 3.3 % a year from 2010 to 2030 to reach 1.8 billion by 2030. The travel and tourism sector is widely recognised as an important factor for regional development which has a potential to contribute to the development of national and regional economies

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[Alavi & Yasin, 2000; Kozak, 2004; Edgell et al., 2008]. It contributes to stability of economies especially because of its multiplier effect launched by travellers' expenses [Sharma, 2004; Dwyer, Forsyth & Dwyer, 2010; Vanhove, 2011]. The multiplier has a positive effect on creation of various entrepreneurial opportunities and thus it affects the employment rate in a given region [Dwyer, Forsyth & Dwyer, 2010]. Many authors [e.g., Edgell et al., 2008; Hall and Page, 2006; Fredline, Deery & Jago, 2006; Mason, 2008] also emphasise positive impacts of the travel and tourism sector on social and environmental development of regions.

That is why tourism became a subject of interest to supranational, national and regional governments. The OECD [2012, 7] states that "governments are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of tourism as an economic driver and for achieving their stated economic development policies and goals". For this purpose, they usually create a specific tourism policy, which can be described as a goal-oriented effort of a government or its authorities to influence tourism development by specific instruments.

To develop effective tourism policy, there is a need to apply strategic planning, create development plans with clear goals and implement them [OECD, 2012]. To be able to fulfil the implementation task, the national and regional governments usually establish non-profit agencies in the form of purpose-designed tourism bodies or destination management organisations (DMOs), the main purpose of which is to manage tourism by coordinating various stakeholders' interests in tourism development activities [Page, 2013]. Although this assignment is extremely difficult, the importance of stakeholder's involvement in the strategy implementation process is emphasised by a number of authors [e.g., Ritchie & Crouch, 2003; Hall, 2008; Goeldner & Ritchie, 2012; Morrison, 2013]. Moreover, some authors consider this co-operation an essential prerequisite to achieving a sustainable competitive advantage and gaining the benefits of tourism for the destination [Byrd, Cárdenas & Greenwood, 2008; Bahar & Kozak, 2008; Vanhove, 2011].

Although all the Czech regional governments stress the importance of collaboration with regional stakeholders in the tourism development plans, we can see significant differences in this effort in particular regions. The level of collaboration is dependent not only on the existence of regional and local DMOs and their support by the government; it is also influenced by the importance of tourism for the regional economy and the existence of "strong stakeholders" willing to cooperate and participate in tourism development. The government of the South Bohemian Region – one of the most popular tourist destinations in the Czech Republic – has been trying to promote more intensive involvement of regional stakeholders in tourism development in 2016. The regional government has supported the establishment of a network of local actors with a link to the South Bohemia Tourism Authority, which is supposed to support and coordinate development activities of particular stakeholders.

This paper reacts on this situation in the South Bohemian Region. Its objective is to draft and verify a methodology for stakeholder analysis which leads to (a) identification of the key stakeholders willing to collaborate in the tourism development, and (b) description of their attitudes to co-operation with the South Bohemian Tourism Authority on implementation of tourism policy priorities.

This paper is a case study performed in one of the most important Czech tourism destination. It is a preliminary phase of a more extensive research project focused on

evaluation of the effects of tourism policy for destination stakeholders on a regional or micro-regional level. It emphasises a stakeholder view on evaluation of tourism policy priorities which determine formulation of strategic targets and thus tourism development in the economic, social and environmental spheres.

## 1. Theoretical framework

Tourism policy can be considered a specific public policy aimed to support development objectives relevant to tourism established at a local, regional or national level [Chuck, 1997]. Freyer [2001, 269] uses a more precise definition which defines tourism policy as “targeted, organised planning, influencing reality and the future of tourism through various stakeholders (public, private and multinational)”. Goeldner and Ritchie’s [2012] definition emphasises sets of measures in the form of regulations, rules, guidelines and strategies that provide a framework for decisions affecting long-term development of tourism in a destination. Biederman et al. [2007] stress the need to achieve maximum potential economic and social benefits for the positive development of a country, region or local community. Ritchie and Crouch [2003, 148] summarise the main reason for the existence of tourism policy as “creating an environment which provides maximum benefits to regional stakeholders while minimise the negative impacts of tourism”.

Tourism policy formulation is a responsibility of governments at the national and regional levels [Chuck, 1997; Edgell et al., 2008]. Goeldner and Ritchie [2012] see the main role of tourism policy in its ability to state the right direction for tourism development and define “rules of the game” for all stakeholders. Edgell et al. [2008, 13] have a similar point of view on tourism policy, which “should present a set of guidelines, which, when combined with planning goals, charts a course of action for sound decision-making”. So, defining tourism policy goals is one of the most important steps. The goals determine the future tourism policy and describe the final form of tourism that the government wants to achieve in the economic, social and environmental spheres.

The defined goals are implemented through a planning process, resulting in a set of strategic documents. It means that tourism policy and planning are directly related to each other. They both deal with the future development of tourism and emphasise the strategic dimension of tourism management [Goeldner & Ritchie, 2012]. Tourism policy tends to focus at the macro-level, while strategic planning normally focuses at the micro-level and pays attention to the implementation of a policy [Page & Connell, 2009]. The government embodies the policy priorities in development plans in which it declares what it wishes to achieve in tourism, and identifies objectives for its agencies [Page, 2013]. The agencies can have the form of purpose-designed tourism bodies such as national/regional tourism organisations or destination management organisations.

The OECD [2012, 9] emphasises the role of regionally based destination management organisations (DMOs) which “often co-ordinate government and private sector actors at a sub-national level” and thus “they provide the basis for developing stakeholder networks for policy development”. This effort requires the complex coordination of various stakeholders’ interests [Page, 2013]. Although there are many various definitions in the literature, destination stakeholders can be widely defined as groups or individuals “that have a direct or indirect interest in the management of a destination for tourism”

[Morrison, 2013, 23]. The typical destination stakeholder groups are residents (community), tourists, governments, tourist sector organisations, destination management organisations and development agencies [Buhalis, 2000; Yoon, 2002; Goeldner & Ritchie, 2012; Morrison, 2013].

However, managing tourism with the involvement of regional stakeholders is an extremely difficult and challenging task [Buhalis, 2000]. Aas, Ladkin and Fletcher [2005] summarise a number of challenges such as increased costs of management processes, difficult identification of legitimate stakeholders, and the stakeholders' limited capacity to participate. In addition, tourism is an open, multi-dimensional industry with a fragmented nature. Quite a number of stakeholder groups with various interests, complex mutual relations and different willingness to co-operate on implementation of policy priorities occur in a given destination.

Nevertheless, the DMO should not resign from its key role of leading and coordinating stakeholders' efforts in which the DMO "is the focal organisation for ensuring the appropriate use of all the elements of a destination (attractions, amenities, accessibility, human resources, image and price)" [Morrison 2013, 5]. This is the only way how the DMO can effectively influence the sustainable development of tourism [Buhalis, 2000; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003] and fulfil the policy priorities. Gunn [1994] argues that the success of implementation of the policy priorities embodied in tourism development plans is significantly dependent on the support of key destination stakeholder groups. So, co-operation and collaboration between the DMO and destination stakeholders are very important issues in the planning arena [Aas, Ladkin & Fletcher, 2005].

## 2. Research framework

Our paper emphasises the importance of co-operation between the DMO and destination stakeholders for achieving tourism policy priorities and gaining the benefits of tourism. As the OECD [2012, 30] notes, the co-operation "requires the involvement of all stakeholders who are perceived to have a legitimate 'stake' in the outcome and a legitimate and skilled convener who can bring the stakeholders together". To be able to fulfil its leading and coordinating role, the DMO must know answers to the following questions: (a) *Who are the key stakeholders?* (b) *What are their attitudes to co-operation with the DMO?* (c) *How can the DMO improve the co-operation to be able to develop tourism in a given destination?*

The research concentrates on co-operation on implementation of tourism policy priorities and its evaluation from the point of view of the key destination stakeholders. The main goal of the research is to give the stakeholders an opportunity to express their attitudes to co-operation with regionally based DMO and transform their opinions to a comprehensive graphical output designated for the DMO. The secondary goal is to map the situation in the South Bohemian Region as a basis for future research focused on evaluation of tourism policy benefits for destination stakeholders in the economic, social and environmental spheres.

The research uses a modification of stakeholder analysis based on a mix of qualitative and quantitative data gathering techniques to meet its objective. Stakeholder analysis is one of the methods of strategic analysis. Although the analysis has its origins in the business

sector, nowadays it has become popular with a wide range of organisations in many different fields. In general, it is possible to define this analysis as a process that identifies entities that can be influenced by the activities of a particular organisation, analyses and groups these entities together according to their importance for the organisation and examines the most important ones in greater detail [Reed et al., 2009]. For the purpose of stakeholder analysis, quite a number of methods and procedures for stakeholder mapping and evaluation can be found, as summarised for instance by Bryson [2004], Sheehan [2006], or Reed et al. [2009]. A significant number of techniques use analytical categorisation of stakeholders based on a graphical representation of the stakeholders' attributes in the form of maps or diagrams [Reed et al., 2009].

This paper presents a methodology for three-step stakeholder analysis that is based on the three-attribute methodology described by Mitchell, Agle and Wood [1997], and inspired by the graphical representation of the Stakeholder Circle method developed by Bourne and Walker [2006].

The stakeholder analysis is implemented in the South Bohemian Region. It covers the area of 10,056 km<sup>2</sup>, making it the second-largest region of the Czech Republic. However, it is the least populous Czech region with 637.000 inhabitants and an average population density of 63 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>. This region ranks among the most visited regions in the Czech Republic with more than 1 million guests in various accommodation facilities [CZSO, 2014]. It is a land of well-preserved nature, beautiful old towns and outstanding cultural and historical monuments (two of them are included on the UNESCO World Heritage List). From the point of view of our research, it is important that the South Bohemian Region should be considered a tourist destination. Vanhove [2011, 21] defines a tourist destination as “a specific geographic area under one or more government authorities that draws visitors from a substantial distance away by its attractions and provides paid accommodation facilities”.

The regional government established a destination management organisation (the South Bohemian Tourism Authority; SBTA) to manage tourism in coherence with strategic priorities defined in the tourism development plan (Strategy for Tourism Development in the South Bohemian Region). The Strategy analyses the current state in the travel industry, and proposes appropriate steps and actions for tourism development in the medium-term period. It contains the following four main strategic priorities:

- SP1: Supporting the development and improvement of tourism infrastructure;
- SP2: Promoting education and human resource development in tourism;
- SP3: Monitoring and evaluating legislation;
- SP4: Support for the creation of tourism products.

The research considers stakeholders to be organisations that operate in the destination influenced by the strategy, and participate in the fulfilment of tourism policy priorities, or are substantially affected by these priorities. It is a modification of Freeman's definition, who considers a stakeholder as “any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation's objectives” [Freeman, 1984, 46], and the definition by Presenza, Sheehan and Ritchie [2005, 9], who define a stakeholder as “any entity that is influenced by, or that may influence, the achievement of the destination management

activities”. The destination stakeholder groups are compiled based on the approach of Buhalis [2000], Yoon [2002], Presenza, Sheehan and Ritchie [2005], and Morrison [2013] as follows:

- Local government: self-governments of the administrative centres of the South Bohemian districts;
- Destination management organisations: local DMOs with a sphere of activity concentrated in particular geographical areas within the South Bohemian Region;
- Development agencies: regional development agencies established with the aim to support regional or local development;
- Non-profit tourist sector organisations: associations, societies and clubs having some effect on the travel and tourism sector;
- Private sector tourist organisations: entrepreneurs in the travel and tourism sector active in the field of accommodation, boarding, wellness, arrangement of travel services, etc.;
- Universities: faculties of the South Bohemian universities having study programmes focused on tourism.

In general, these stakeholder groups reflect the four characteristics of useful segmentation of stakeholders which were mentioned by Byrd and Gustke [2006, 178]: (a) measurability, (b) accessibility, (c) substantiality, and (d) actionability. The stakeholder groups correspond with the above-mentioned definition; they are active participants in tourism development planning; they are typical of the Czech tourism destinations, and it is possible to identify a sufficient number of particular representatives of the groups within the territory.

## Phase 1

The first step of the research consists of stakeholder mapping. Identification of stakeholders is the first and often critical phase of stakeholder analysis. Medeiros de Araujo and Bramwell [1999, 357] note that “being identified, or conversely, not being identified, as a relevant stakeholder is an essential first step that affects the whole process of involving participants in collaborative planning as well as the likely outcomes of the planning”. The required data are obtained by means of a semi-structured interview with the executive director of the SBTa. The interview uses the standard five-point Likert scale, with one representing a response of ‘strongly disagree’ and five representing ‘strongly agree’, to characterise all five stakeholder groups on the basis of three attributes: (1) Power, (2) Cooperativeness, and (3) Urgency.

The following table summarises the attributes and interconnected evaluation statements. This phase enables the DMO to recognise all the stakeholder groups in the destination and sort them according to their importance (measured by the Stakeholder Index).

**Table 1 | Attributes and evaluation statements (Phase 1)**

Attribute	Adapted from	Evaluation statement
<b>Power</b> This attribute identifies a stakeholder group which is crucial for achievement of the particular strategic priority.	Mitchell, Agle and Wood [1997] Bryson [2004] Sheehan [2006] Bourne, Walker [2006]	This group of stakeholders is crucial for achievement of the tourism policy strategic priority.
<b>Cooperativeness</b> The attribute identifies a stakeholder group which is non-conflict and capable of co-operating in achievement of the particular strategic priority.	Sheehan [2006]	This group of stakeholders is capable of co-operating in achievement of the tourism policy strategic priority.
<b>Urgency</b> The attribute identifies a stakeholder group which is frequently involved in achievement of the particular strategic priority.	Mitchell, Agle and Wood [1997] Bourne and Walker [2006]	This group of stakeholders is frequently involved in achievement of the tourism policy strategic priority.

Source: Authors' own elaboration

## Phase 2

The next phase is focused on representatives of the stakeholder groups with the highest Stakeholder Index score. As Reed et al. [2009] state, it is not possible to include all stakeholders for detailed analysis and a line must be drawn at some point. The aim of this phase is to describe stakeholders' opinions on co-operation with the SBTA on implementation of tourism policy priorities, and to identify, on this basis, the most important stakeholders and the most highly accepted priorities (measured by the value of the Stakeholder Index).

This phase is implemented by means of an on-line survey. Respondents freely express their opinions based on their subjective points of view. To be able to formalise respondents' opinions, the survey uses a combination of five-point and three-point Likert scales, with one representing a response of 'strongly disagree' and five representing 'strongly agree', or else one representing a response of 'disagree' and three representing 'agree'. The following table summarises the attributes and interconnected evaluation statements elaborated into detailed evaluation statements (DES).

For the purpose of the survey, the above attributes are slightly modified into the following set: (1) Capability, (2) Attitude, and (3) Proximity. The detailed evaluation statements enable respondents to express their opinions in a more precise way and enable the researchers to examine the context of their evaluation at the same time.

**Table 2 | Attributes and evaluation statements (Phase 2)**

Attribute	Adapted from	Evaluation statement
<b>Capability</b> This attribute identifies stakeholders which have a sufficient capacity of resources for implementation of the strategic priority.	Bryson [2004]	<b>We are able to release enough resources for co-operation in implementation of the strategic priority.</b>
		DES1: We have enough financial resources.
		DES2: We have enough human resources.
		DES3: We have enough experience and knowledge.
		DES4: We have enough time.
<b>Attitude</b> This attribute identifies stakeholders which have a positive approach to co-operation in implementation of the strategic priority.	Bryson [2004] Sheehan [2006] Murray-Webster and Simon [2006]	<b>We positively evaluate co-operation in implementation of the strategic priority.</b>
		DES1: We positively evaluate activity of the SBTA in providing information.
		DES2: We positively evaluate activity of the SBTA in providing consultancy and education.
		DES3: We positively evaluate analytical activity of the SBTA.
		DES4: We positively evaluate gaining and administration of finance by the SBTA.
		DES5: We positively evaluate promotional and marketing activities of the SBTA.
<b>Proximity</b> This attribute identifies stakeholders which have a spirit of initiative and actively co-operate in implementation of the strategic priority.	Sheehan [2006] Murray-Webster and Simon [2006] Bourne and Walker [2006]	<b>We are actively involved in co-operation in implementation of the strategic priority.</b>
		DES1: We actively provide information about opportunities for co-operation to the SBTA.
		DES2: We actively make use of consultancy and education offered by the SBTA.
		DES3: We actively provide analytical data requested by the SBTA.
		DES4: We actively gain financial resources administrated by the SBTA.
		DES5: We actively co-operate with the SBTA on promotional and marketing activities.
		DES6: We actively co-operate with the SBTA on creation of tourism products.

Source: Authors' own elaboration

The Stakeholder Index (SI) allows ranking the subject of evaluation based on a value of its attributes. In this research, the Index is a sum of the values of three attributes (Power = PO, Cooperativeness = CO, Urgency = UR / Capability = CA, Attitude = AT, Proximity=PR). It should be calculated for each stakeholder group (SG; formula 1), stakeholder (ST; formula 2) or strategic priority (SP; formula 3):



$$SI_{SG} = \sum_{i=1}^4 PO_i + \sum_{i=1}^4 CO_i + \sum_{i=1}^4 UR_i ; \quad (1)$$

$$SI_{ST} = \sum_{i=1}^4 CA_i + \sum_{i=1}^4 AT_i + \sum_{i=1}^4 PR_i ; \quad (2)$$

$$SI_{SP} = \sum_{i=1}^{11} CA_i + \sum_{i=1}^{11} AT_i + \sum_{i=1}^{11} PR_i . \quad (3)$$

### Phase 3

The last phase of the research is focused on a proposal of managerial recommendations for the SBTA which should lead to an improvement in its leading and coordinating role. The recommendations summarise the most important findings of the stakeholder analysis and reflect evaluation of the key stakeholders. They allow the South Bohemian Tourism Authority to find the answer to the following questions: *Which stakeholders should primarily be involved in the implementation process of the tourism policy priorities? Which tourism policy priorities are highly acceptable for the stakeholders? How should the stakeholders be involved?*

### 3. Case study: the South Bohemian Region

The following table summarises the results of the first phase of our research, which was focused on stakeholder mapping. The table shows values of the three attributes (Power = PO, Cooperativeness = CO, Urgency = UR) on the pre-defined five-point Likert scale. The attributes are stated for all the strategic priorities (SP1 – SP4) included in the tourism development strategy. Stakeholder groups are sorted in the order of their importance according to the value of the Stakeholder Index ( $SI_{SG}$ ).

**Table 3 | Stakeholder mapping by attributes**

Stakeholder groups	SP1			SP2			SP3			SP4			$SI_{SG}$
	PO	CO	UR	PO	CO	UR	PO	CO	UR	PO	CO	UR	
Local government	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	5	5	58
Local DMOs	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	3	5	5	5	57
Regional development agencies	5	4	4	3	4	3	3	2	2	5	4	4	43
Non-profit tourist sector organisations	5	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	2	5	3	3	37
Universities	1	1	1	2	3	3	1	3	1	1	2	2	21
Private sector tourist organisations	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	2	17

Source: Authors' own elaboration

The most important stakeholder groups are district towns in the South Bohemian Region (local government) and local destination management organisations (local DMOs). These groups are crucial for implementation of all the strategic priorities. Their support is very important for successful tourism development and they help the regional DMO play its coordination and realisation role. Co-operation between these stakeholder groups is regarded as very intensive based on their strong long-term ties and regular meetings. It is positive that both the groups are perceived as non-conflict and they actively co-operate with the SBTA in achievement of the strategic priorities.

Regional development agencies, non-profit tourist sector organisations, and universities are considered to be secondary stakeholders. They are important for achievement of specific strategic priorities which are closely connected to their core activities. Their role in implementation of other priorities is not so intensive. We can say that the co-operation between them and the SBTA takes place rather abruptly in the context of specific projects.

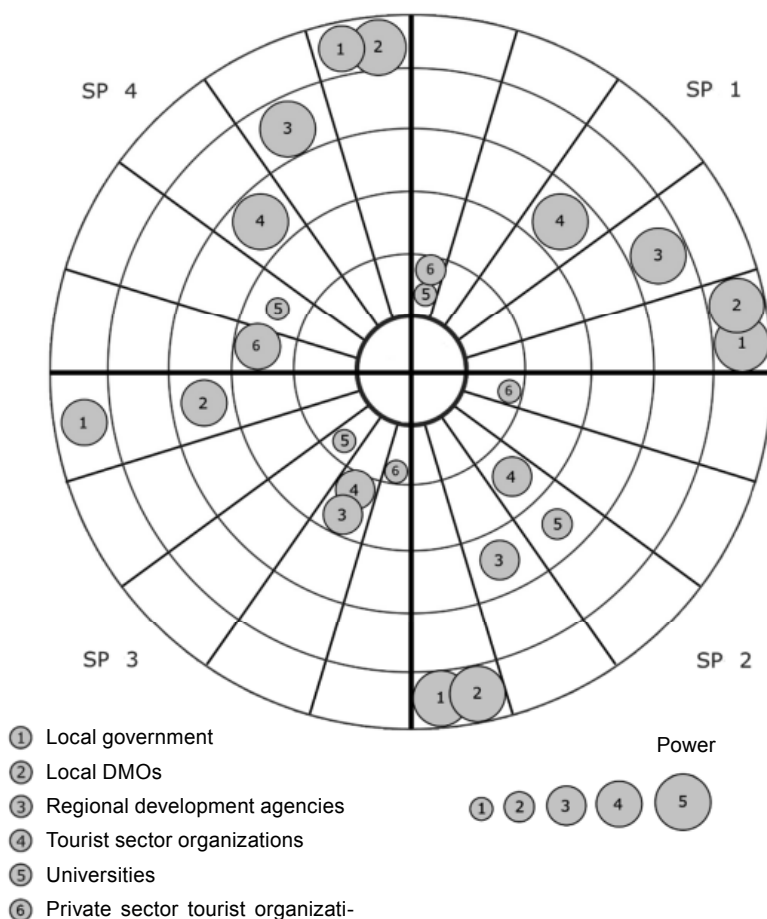
It is evident that the private sector tourist organisations stakeholder group can be ranked among marginal stakeholders. This group is very heterogeneous and it is not easy for the SBTA to involve it in regional tourism development. Its representatives have different interests mostly oriented on their own (business) goals instead of general development goals of the region. This fact gives rise to limited co-operation between this stakeholder group and the SBTA on implementation of tourism policy priorities. The only minimal exception is the priority devoted to creation of tourism products which is related to the stakeholders' core business activities. Thus, they have a raised interest in implementation of this priority.

Figure 1 illustrates the results of the first phase of the research. The figure is divided into four quadrants which represent four strategic priorities (SP1–SP4) of the Strategy for Tourism Development in the South Bohemian Region. Based on the interview results, the stakeholder groups are characterised as follows:

- Power: This attribute is depicted by the size of the circle which indicates the individual stakeholder group;
- Cooperativeness: This attribute is depicted by the distance of the circle from the left axis of the quadrant;
- Urgency: This attribute is depicted by the distance of the circle from the centre of the figure.

The subsequent stakeholder analysis is designed to evaluate the views of key destination stakeholders on co-operation with the SBTA on the implementation of strategic priorities. The on-line survey was conducted with representatives of primary and secondary stakeholder groups. The respondents were selected from the database as is indicated in the following table. In the cities of Cesky Krumlov and Pisek, the survey involved only representatives of local destination management organisations because they have a direct link with the local government.

**Figure 1 | Stakeholder mapping by attributes**



Source: Authors' own elaboration based on Bourne and Walker [2006].

**Table 4 | Respondents of the stakeholder analysis**

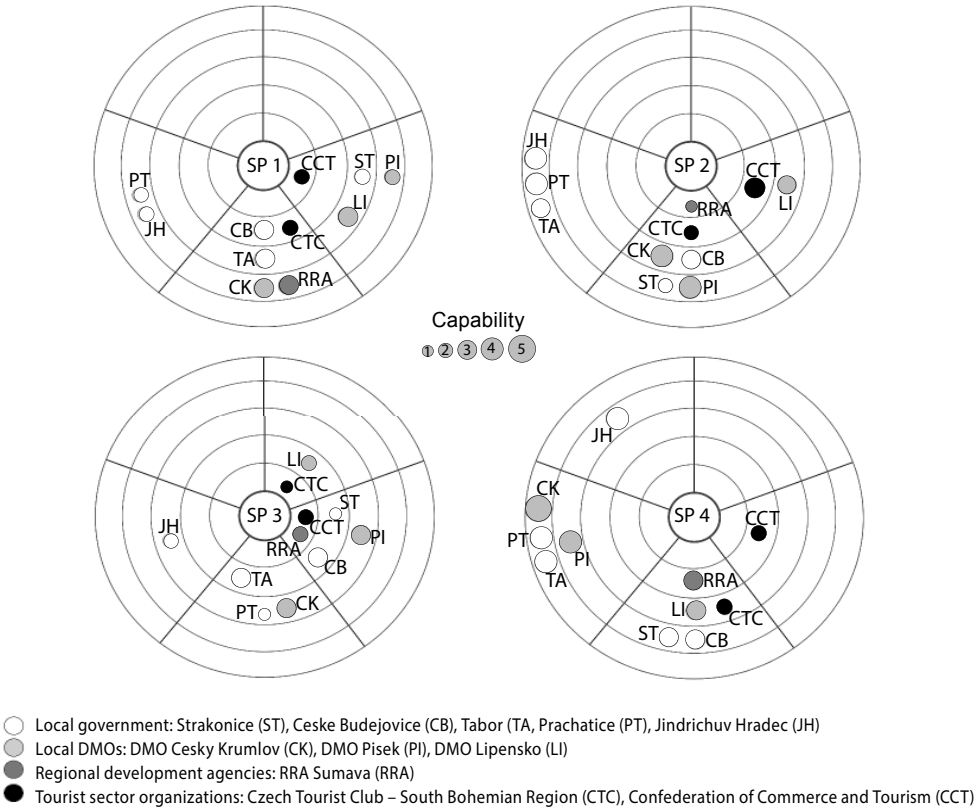
Stakeholder group	Number of stakeholders	Number of respondents	Respondents
Local government	5	5	Ceske Budejovice, Strakonice, Tabor, Prachatice, Jindrichuv Hradec
Local DMOs	3	3	DMO Cesky Krumlov, DMO Pisek, DMO Lipensko
Regional development agencies	2	1	RRA Sumava
Tourist sector organisations	4	2	Czech Tourist Club – South Bohemian Region, Confederation of Commerce and Tourism

Source: Authors' own elaboration

The next four figures graphically represent the result of the survey. Each figure describes one strategic priority. The analysis uses three attributes which are modifications of the previous set. The way the attributes are depicted is the same as in Figure 1:

- Capability: This attribute is depicted by the size of the circle which indicates the individual stakeholder;
- Attitude: This attribute is depicted by the distance of the circle from upper vertical axis of the figure;
- Proximity: This attribute is depicted by the distance of the circle from the centre of the figure.

**Figure 2–5 | Stakeholder Analysis by their Attributes**



Source: Authors' own elaboration based on Bourne and Walker [2006].

The following table shows a more detailed evaluation of the three attributes (Capability, Attitude, and Proximity). The narratives of the detailed evaluation statements (DES) can be found in Table 2. The shade of grey indicates the severity of stakeholders' answers measured by the three-point Likert scale. This evaluation gives the researcher a better chance to propose recommendations for an improvement in the collaboration between the SBTa and the destination stakeholders.

**Table 5 | Detailed stakeholder analysis**

Evaluation statement / stakeholders	ST	CB	TA	PT	JH	CK	PI	LI	RRA	CTC	CCT
<b>SP1: Supporting the development and improvement of tourism infrastructure</b>											
<b>Capability</b>											
DES1	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1
DES2	2	3	2	2	3	3	2	2	3	3	2
DES3	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	2
DES4	1	2	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	1	1
<b>Attitude</b>											
DES1	2	3	3	2	2	2	1	2	2	3	1
DES2	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	1	3	2	1
DES3	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	2	3
DES4	2	2	2	3	3	2	3	1	3	2	1
DES5	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	3	3
DES6	1	3	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2
<b>Proximity</b>											
DES1	3	1	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	2
DES2	1	1	1	2	1	3	3	2	-	1	-
DES3	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	1	1
DES4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	2
DES5	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	-	-	-
DES6	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	-	-	-
<b>SP2: Promoting education and human resource development in tourism</b>											
<b>Capability</b>											
DES1	2	3	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	1	2
DES2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	1	2
DES3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	3
DES4	2	3	3	3	2	2	3	2	1	2	3
<b>Attitude</b>											
DES1	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	2
DES2	1	3	3	3	3	3	2	1	3	2	2
DES3	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	1	1
DES4	3	2	2	3	3	2	3	1	3	2	1
DES5	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2
DES6	1	1	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2
<b>Proximity</b>											
DES1	1	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	1	1	3
DES2	1	1	1	3	3	3	1	2	1	1	3
DES3	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	-	-	2
DES4	1	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	-	-	2
DES5	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	2	-	-	1
DES6	1	2	2	2	3	2	2	-	-	2	3

*Pokračování na straně 16*

Evaluation state- ment / stakeholders	ST	CB	TA	PT	JH	CK	PI	LI	RRA	CTC	CCT
<b>SP3: Monitoring and evaluating legislation</b>											
<b>Capability</b>											
DES1	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	2
DES2	1	2	2	1	2	2	3	2	1	1	3
DES3	2	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	2	1	3
DES4	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	1
<b>Attitude</b>											
DES1	2	1	1	2	3	2	2	1	2	2	3
DES2	1	1	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2
DES3	-	2	-	2	2	-	-	1	-	-	-
DES4	-	1	-	2	3	2	2	1	-	2	2
DES5	-	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	2	-
DES6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Proximity</b>											
DES1	1	3	2	3	2	3	2	2	1	1	2
DES2	1	1	-	3	3	3	1	1	-	-	2
DES3	-	2	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-
DES4	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
DES5	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
DES6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>SP4: Support for the creation of tourism products</b>											
<b>Capability</b>											
DES1	2	3	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2
DES2	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	2
DES3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3
DES4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	1
<b>Attitude</b>											
DES1	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	2
DES2	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	1
DES3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	3
DES4	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1
DES5	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2
DES6	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	1	2
<b>Proximity</b>											
DES1	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	2	1	3	2
DES2	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	1	-
DES3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	3
DES4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	-	1	2
DES5	2	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	-	-	-
DES6	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	2	1	1	3

Source: Authors' own elaboration

## 4. Summary and recommendations

The final step of the stakeholder analysis is focused on summarising the results and consequently proposing managerial recommendations to the SBTA. It should lead to an improvement in the co-operation process with the destination stakeholders, and thus it should increase the chances for gaining the positive effects of tourism.

The following table shows an aggregate evaluation of the destination stakeholders and strategic priorities on the basis of the three attributes (Capability = CA; Attitude = AT; Proximity = PR) and the Stakeholder Index score.

**Table 6 | Aggregate stakeholder analysis**

Stakeholder	SP1			SP2			SP3			SP4			Total			SI <sub>ST</sub>
	CA	AT	PR	CA	AT	PR	CA	AT	PR	CA	AT	PR	CA	AT	PR	
ST	2	2	3	2	3	4	1	2	2	3	3	4	8	10	13	31
CB	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	4	12	11	11	34
TA	3	3	3	3	4	5	3	3	2	4	4	5	13	14	15	42
PR	2	4	4	4	4	5	1	3	3	4	4	5	11	15	17	43
JH	2	4	4	4	4	5	2	4	3	4	5	4	12	17	16	45
Total	12	16	16	16	18	22	10	14	12	18	19	22				
Total II	44			56			36			59						
CK	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	5	4	5	15	13	15	43
PI	2	2	4	4	3	4	3	2	3	4	4	4	13	11	15	39
LI	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	1	2	3	3	3	11	8	11	30
Total	8	7	11	11	8	10	8	6	8	12	11	12				
Total II	26			29			22			35						
RRA	3	3	4	1	3	1	2	2	1	3	3	2	9	11	8	28
Total	3	3	4	1	3	1	2	2	1	3	3	2				
Total II	10			5			5			8						
CTC	2	3	2	2	3	2	1	1	1	2	3	3	7	10	8	25
CCT	2	2	1	3	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	9	8	6	23
Total	4	5	3	5	5	4	3	3	2	4	5	5				
Total II	12			14			8			14						
SI <sub>SP</sub>	92			104			71			116						

Source: Authors' own elaboration

It is evident that the most important stakeholder groups are comprised by representatives of local governments and local DMOs. However, these two key stakeholder groups are not homogenous in terms of their attitudes to co-operation. The most severe critic is the destination management organisation Lipensko. The SBTA must pay attention to this stakeholder because of the importance of the Lipensko Region to the tourism sector in the South Bohemian Region. The survey results indicate that

the cause of such a different approach to co-operation should lie in poor communication between the SBTA and the DMO Lipensko. It has a feeling that the SBTA pays attention rather to local governments or organisations closely connected with local governments (e.g., DMO Cesky Krumlov, DMO Pisek), and thus its needs are not reflected in the implementation process. The Lipensko Region is quite a large area with specific needs which are probably different from the needs of the municipalities in the South Bohemian Region. The SBTA should take these facts into consideration. It should try to engage this stakeholder in the co-operation process by building the relationship on mutual trust and support based on more intensive communication and exchange of information and experience during regular formal or casual meetings.

The city of Strakonice – a stakeholder in the local government group – plays a similar role. The reason for its peripheral position should lie in relatively short time for which the co-operation has existed. Another important reason is probably the lack of resources needed for implementation of the strategic priorities, which makes the co-operation process difficult. That is why the city of Strakonice is not a typical marginal stakeholder; it can be characterised rather as a newcomer. The SBTA should draw Strakonice into the implementation process and pay more attention to this stakeholder. The second and fourth strategic priorities can be felicitous for a more intensive engagement of Strakonice because of its high level of Attitude and Proximity. The city can be engaged by participation in trade shows, training courses, and workshops. It can gain some experience there and get an opportunity to come to know other destination stakeholders in the South Bohemian Region. This is how the SBTA can show that it counts on Strakonice as a partner in development of tourism, even though its importance is not great yet.

The management of the SBTA should not concentrate exclusively on less engaged stakeholders. The active ones with positive attitudes – the cities of Jindrichuv Hradec, Prachatice, Tabor and DMO Cesky Krumlov – deserve the same amount of attention. In spite of the fact that these stakeholders have some minor reproofs for quality of co-operation, they belong to problem-free partners of the SBTA. So, it is in the SBTA's best interest to maintain this state or make it stronger. It is possible to find inspiration in the mutual relationship between the SBTA and the city of Jindrichuv Hradec, which is the most satisfied stakeholder from the point of view of all the strategic priorities. Jindrichuv Hradec is planning to establish a local DMO, which will make the relationship with the SBTA even stronger. The SBTA should assist other cities in a similar process of establishing local DMOs. These organisations are usually well-equipped with resources; thus, they are able to play a very important role in tourism development. We can find a very good example in the destination management organisation Cesky Krumlov. It is the official tourism authority that is responsible for tourism development in the UNESCO city of Cesky Krumlov. It is managed by professionals who closely co-operate with the municipal authority and local stakeholders on the one hand and the South Bohemian Tourism Authority on the other hand.

Although the other two stakeholder groups are not so important for implementation of the regional tourism development strategy, the SBTA should not ignore them. It should co-operate with them on specific projects focused on tourism development and create proper conditions for this kind of co-operation. In fact, the representatives of these groups are not strictly focused on the travel and tourism sector; they have a broader portfolio of



activities. That is why they play a rather supporting role for tourism development in the South Bohemian Region.

From the point of view of particular strategic priorities, it is evident that the stakeholders do not have sufficient resources needed for implementation of the first strategic priority. Tourism infrastructure is predominantly funded by a mix of EU development funds, national, and internal resources. However, only a limited number of stakeholders is able to gain financial resources from the European Union or the national government; the others are thrown back on their own (limited) resources. Moreover, implementation of this priority seems to be very time-consuming and demanding for human resources. This fact could make trouble mainly to small cities and tourist sector organisations. Despite these findings, the stakeholders are relatively satisfied with their cooperation with the SBTA and try to actively gain resources and cooperate on other development activities. The cities of Prachatice and Jindřichův Hradec have the most positive approach. On the other hand, more strict stakeholders are representatives of the DMO Písecko, DMO Lipensko, Confederation of Commerce and Tourism (CCT), and the city of Strakonice. The stakeholders with a positive approach are the most pro-active ones. The marginal stakeholder is the CCT, which is focused on specific supporting activities aimed at a broader spectrum of enterprises.

The second strategic priority has an even better position. The majority of stakeholders have enough non-financial resources (human resources, time and experience); most cities and DMOs have enough financial resources too. The cities of Prachatice and Jindřichův Hradec, and the DMO Český Krumlov and DMO Písek can be ranked among those stakeholders. Education and human resource development seems not to be so resource-demanding and the stakeholders probably have better access to external funding. This situation is reflected by the positive attitude of the local governments and DMOs with the small exception of the DMO Lipensko, the expectations of which are not completely satisfied by the SBTA. The cities of Tabor, Prachatice and Jindřichův Hradec are the most satisfied and active stakeholders at the same time. The most inactive stakeholder is the RRA Šumava, which has no interest in educating its staff in the field of tourism.

The third strategic priority is focused on monitoring and evaluating legislation, which is quite unusual when compared with the typical orientation of strategic priorities in regional strategies in the Czech Republic. That is why the priority is not completely understandable to the stakeholders and they do not see a reason for using their resources for its implementation. According to their opinion, the priority implementation should be an activity for the regional government or the SBTA. Although they have enough experience and sometimes employees with knowledge of the Czech legal system, most of the stakeholders are willing to use these resources in a limited way. The unusual orientation of the priority is reflected in the two remaining attributes too. It is obvious that the stakeholders declare the highest level of dissatisfaction and passivity (mainly the representatives of the Czech Tourist Club, the RRA Šumava, the Confederation of Commerce and Tourism, and the DMO Lipensko). The only exception is the city of Jindřichův Hradec, which has the most positive approach.

The fourth strategic priority seems to be the most attractive one. Almost all the stakeholders declare enough capacity of resources needed for its implementation. Only the representatives of the tourist sector organisations have an opposite point of view. The stakeholders' overall satisfaction reaches the highest level. The co-operation is going

on without any serious problems, which is reflected by the score of the Attitude attribute. As always, the regional agency of the CCT is the most severe critic of the co-operation. On the contrary, the city of Jindřichuv Hradec represents the most satisfied stakeholder of all. The correlation between stakeholders' satisfaction and activity is still valid. The most pro-active stakeholders are representatives of local governments and local DMOs; the most passive ones are the RRA Sumava and the CCT. It is obvious that this strategic priority meets all evaluation criteria at the highest level and thus it can be considered a kind of benchmark for the SBTA in the process of implementation of tourism policy priorities.

## Conclusion

Our research has fulfilled its main objective. It has successfully verified the stakeholder analysis methodology in the real conditions of the South Bohemian Region. The analysis has shown that each of the stakeholders examined has its own different interests, needs and issues. The role of the SBTA should be to coordinate these interests and be ready to seek a compromise within the implementation process of the tourism development strategy in such a way as to be beneficial for all the involved parties.

The importance of local governments and destination management organisations for tourism development is emphasised by the OECD [2012] and Page [2013]. The research confirmed this fact; the SBTA is aware of the importance of these two stakeholder groups. These groups are crucial for successful implementation of the strategic priorities of tourism policy in the South Bohemian Region. Nevertheless, the SBTA should also pay attention to other groups of stakeholders. As Buhalis [2000] and Aas, Ladkin and Fletcher [2005] noted, this task is very demanding because of difficult identification of legitimate stakeholders, and the stakeholders' limited capacity to participate. The research has confirmed these findings too. The SBTA is not able to map all the stakeholders with a legitimate stake in tourism policy implementation, and enhance their attitudes to pro-active cooperation on tourism development. Stakeholders' interests are often focused on their own goals or – under the best conditions – on local development, which results in a low willingness to enhance co-operation with the SBTA. Besides that, stakeholders declare lack of financial capacity and time for active participation in tourism development. It is obvious that the existing efforts of the SBTA have not had the full anticipated positive effect yet. This fact is a challenge for future activities of the SBTA. To be successful in its leading and coordinating role – which is emphasised by Morrison [2013] – the SBTA must find an answer to the question how to activate secondary and marginal stakeholders and promote their activities contributing to fulfilment of tourism policy priorities.

The answer can be the establishment of a stakeholder network consisting of all stakeholder groups, and having links which will reflect local conditions forming relationships among stakeholders. The SBTA should work as an umbrella organisation which will coordinate stakeholders' activities and provide them with necessary financial and intangible resources. The SBTA should concentrate its efforts on activities which are appreciated by stakeholders – e.g., providing them with information, enhancing their skills and knowledge, and supporting their activities by special-purpose financial grants.

The SBTA may activate stakeholders through a vertical cooperation network *SBTA – local DMOs – local key stakeholders*. The important role of intermediaries between the SBTA and other stakeholder groups should be played by local DMOs, or local governments. These stakeholders are familiar with the local environment, and thus they are able to identify key local stakeholders with a legitimate stake, their needs and demands. With the help of these primary stakeholders, the SBTA will be able to improve targeting of its cooperative effort taking into consideration the impact of particular stakeholders' activities on tourism development at the regional and local level. Involvement of the DMOs as intermediaries enables the SBTA to set clear rules and principles for successful partnership with local stakeholders based on better understanding of their operational areas and resulting needs. In such a way, they should arrive at a reasonable consensus when formulating a tourism policy which will be beneficial for all the stakeholders and will meet their expectations concerning tourism policy benefits in the economic, social and environmental spheres. Moreover, this network should significantly contribute to local stakeholders' better understanding of tourism policy priorities and activities of regional destination management organisations focused on tourism policy implementation.

Although the research has met its main objective, the researchers will continue their efforts. They will elaborate the research methodology in such a way as to be able to examine stakeholders' opinions in depth. The researchers will try to find a way to analyse stakeholders on the basis of their evaluation of the effects of tourism policy on their activities. This attitude research should be a useful complement to the previous research, enabling the researchers to find more effective managerial recommendations for the destination management organisations.

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