



# Territorial Assessment CESBA Alps

## Recommendations for Technical Experts



# CESBA Alps - Territorial Assessment

## Recommendations for Technical Experts

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### Preface

This booklet sums up the results of the EU Interreg Alpine Space project “CESBA Alps”. It is directed towards technical experts in administrations and the built environment sector.



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## Evaluating Territories – Completion of the CESBA assessment approach

Based on experiences in assessing the levels “buildings” and “neighborhoods” the CESBA Network has developed an assessment scheme for territories.

The CESBA STT based on common key performance indicators (KPI) steers public and private efforts to increase the sustainability of a territory. The CESBA STT package consists of the CESBA Passport, CESBA Atlas, CESBA STT online-tool and the CESBA STT training.

Within the project CESBA Alps a valuable guidance for politicians and administrations at regional and local level has been created and is ready for broad implementation.

**Jacopo Chiara**  
Regione Piemonte  
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## A territorial sustainability assessment system

We cannot talk about sustainable development without inflecting it at the local level. At the same time the local level has to be in compliance with the sustainable objectives defined at national and European level.

Within the CESBA Alps project, the first tool for the sustainable development assessment of territories has been generated, using a common methodology. With a list of 280 Indicators, it could be contextualized at local level and used for setting a scoring/rating system. This tool allows to reflect local standards and degrees in the sustainability field defining for each assessment criterion a territorial performance scale.

Moreover 18 KPIs in line with the UN 2030 Agenda and EUSALP strategy goals have been defined to assess the sustainability territories performance at transnational level: they are the core of CESBA Passport that allows to compare territories performance in absolute terms.

The CESBA Alps tools will support the sustainability assessment of a territory, the definition of objective performance targets and the decision making in territorial planning processes.

# Executive Summary



## CESBA

CESBA (Common European Sustainable Built Environment Assessment) is a bottom-up developed concept aiming at creating a common framework for measuring the sustainability level of the built environment in different areas and at different territorial scales.

During the last 20 years, a huge variety of different assessment concepts for the state of the sustainability of the built environment had emerged all over Europe - from buildings to territories.

This is why sustainability experts, during the course of a number of meetings and preparatory projects, formed a network creating a common assessment framework based on the experiences on the local level.

Common indicators would allow benchmarking between the different assessed entities and make it easier to keep the big picture in mind, thus contributing to achieving the goals of important strategic programmes, like the UN Sustainable Development Goals or the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region.

So far, those findings were mainly applicable to single buildings or small-scale urban areas, though. This proved not to be sufficient for many places in the Alpine Space, which are characterized by low population and building density and interdependences that span over larger distances, over whole municipalities or even small regions.

This is why the CESBA Sustainable Territories project (CESBA Alps) was developed. It aimed at finding ways on harmonizing sustainability indicators on a regional level in different parts of the rural Alpine Space, at the same time adapting the principles from former CESBA projects to the new concept.



## 11 Partners and 21 Observers

Besides a total of 21 observers from a variety of different aspects of sustainability in the built environment, a group of 11 project partners from Italy, France, Germany, Slovenia, Austria and Liechtenstein successfully applied for an Interreg Alpine Space project with a total budget of 2.60 mio. EUR, out of which 2.21 mio. EUR are co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) of the European Union under priority 2 – low carbon Alpine Space.

The project started in December 2015 and ends in June 2019. The Lead Partner role was taken over by the Environment and Territorial Government Directorate of Piedmont Region in Italy.

In a first step, all project partners compared the indicators used by them in their own regions to assess the sustainability of the built environment. It proved that the way that sustainability was assessed hugely varied between the project partners.

This is why CESBA Alps decided to create a common generic framework for future sustainability assessments. Under this framework, the sustainability of territories may be assessed in a way which makes the results comparable among each other but at the same time the assessment may be contextualized to the local situation.

## The generic framework

The generic framework consists of a list of 352 criteria describing various aspects of sustainability. They offer an opportunity for local contextualization. For comparability, though, it is important to agree on a shorter and operative list of criteria that needs to be assessed by everybody. This is why the project partners, after a series of workshops and after pilot testing in nine Alpine regions, agreed on 18 mandatory and 11 recommended so-called Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The KPIs all come from the generic framework module “territorial performance assessment” and provide information about important aspects of the assessment areas territories and environment, energy and resources consumption, infrastructures and services, society, and economy.

The KPIs may be monitored using a newly developed CESBA STT (Sustainable Territories Tool), which suggests certain graphs and descriptive methods to achieve easily comparable results and benchmarks. A tailor-made IT tool additionally helps in achieving this goal. The results of the CESBA STT may also be transformed into cartographical maps using GIS technology (CESBA Atlas).

Almost all regional policies at stake in the Alpine Space deal with sustainability issues. Therefore the CESBA STT may become an important strategic tool for local and regional policy makers to get a holistic picture of the state of sustainability of the areas they are responsible for. It will be necessary, though, that they provide their regional authorities with sufficient resources to keep up and further develop the system.

CESBA is also open to certifying territories in terms of sustainability. The significance of the CESBA STT should be lobbied at other governments and especially in Brussels.

The CESBA STT initiative was communicated during a number of events both in Europe and world-wide. For the local implementation, the foundation of the CESBA Local Committees (CLCs) proved important. An important contribution for the future of the CESBA initiative are the CESBA Sprint Workshops, which support the development and the dissemination of the concept.



# Background - The CESBA initiative

## Different Assessment methods for sustainability

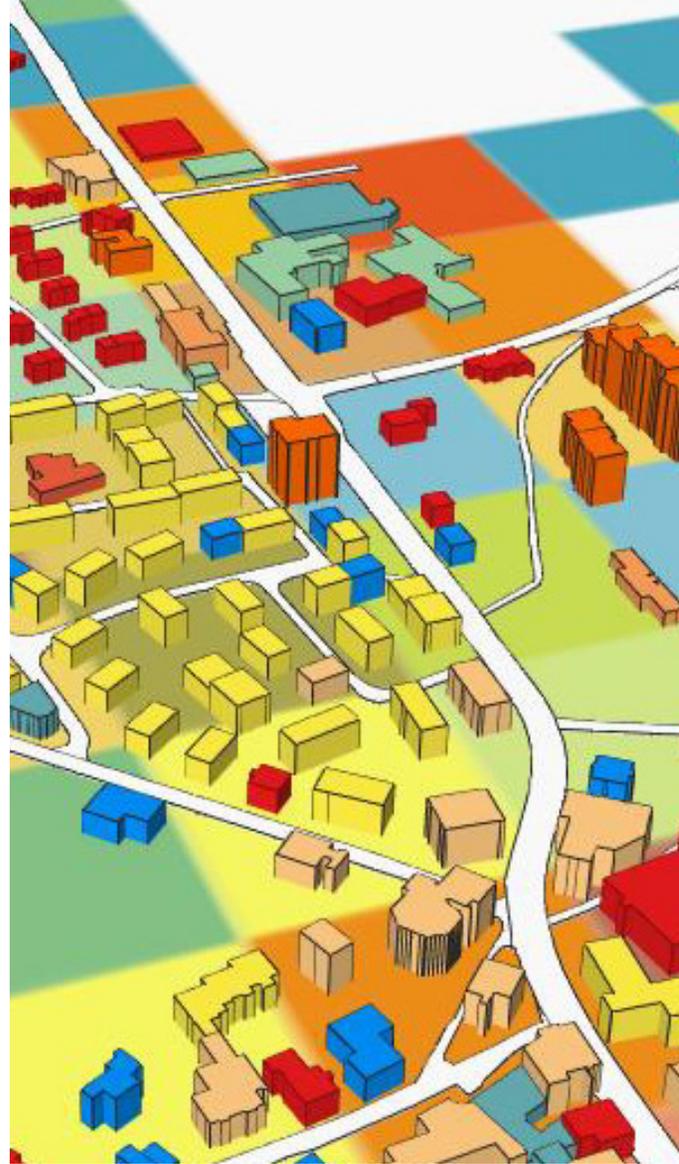
Sustainability is one of the key concepts of our days. Making more efficient use of the resources of our planet is widely accepted to be one of the main challenges of our times. Of course, this especially holds true when thinking about the built environment.

But what ways are there to tell if your way of building is really sustainable? In order to answer this question, a lot of stakeholders have developed their own monitoring concepts, all of them giving evidence about the amount of sustainability of the assessed entity. Some years ago, the number of different building assessment tools counted to more than 80.

This, of course, makes it difficult to compare the efficiency of sustainability measures. Not all aspects of sustainability are recognized and valued in the same way everywhere in Europe. Local stakeholders are involved in different ways. Data are collected in a different way and on different spatial scales. All these factors make benchmarking the results of the single assessments very difficult. At the same time, the market for providing sustainable solutions in building became very fragmented due to the various requirements in different areas.

## The idea for a common framework

This is why a number of actors from different EU projects started discussing about how to tackle this undesirable situation. They created the vision of agreeing on a joint European directive on how to measure the sustainability of built environments. In 2012, the concept of CESBA (Common European Sustainable Built Environment Assessment) was formulated and launched by a statement. More and more partners joined in and participated in workshops further developing the concept.



The so-called CESBA Sprint Workshop method played a crucial role on this way, inviting international experts to work, in a structured way, on common goals that may be evaluated on the local level afterwards. Finally, in 2015, the loose initiative was formalized by the foundation of an association located in Schwarzenberg in Vorarlberg, Austria.

## Too many different sustainability assess- ment tools

- Comparability is not given
- Not all aspects of sustainability are recognized and valued
- Data are collected in different ways and on different spatial scales

## CESBA Vision

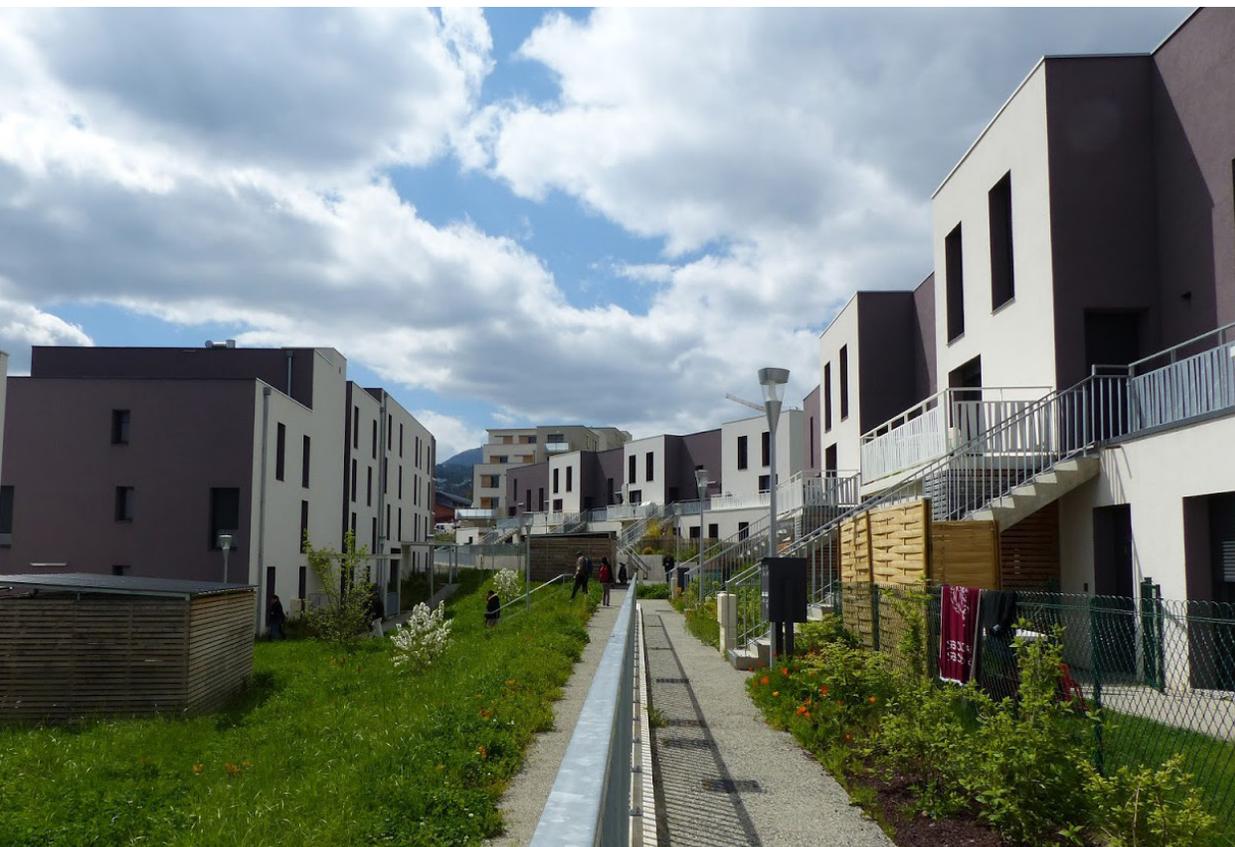
The vision of CESBA is a Europe where high quality living in a sustainable built environment is the common standard practice. CESBA's mission is to facilitate the diffusion and adoption of sustainable built environment principles among all stakeholders of the built environment sector through the use of harmonized assessment systems in the whole life cycle of the built environment.

This is why it is important that CESBA is a meeting point between the top-down and bottom-up approach. By creating a joint framework, at the same time, local and regional autonomy in dealing with sustainability issues can more easily be justified and valued. This shall be achieved by following the principles of CESBA – always put the user first, deal with all aspects of sustainability (i.e. ecological, environmental and social) make sure you make the system comparable at the same time as taking regional contexts into account and develop a tool which is simple to use by involving local knowledge in a transparent, open-source-based way.

## A generic tool with commonly accepted indicators

The core of the CESBA idea is to agree on a set of commonly accepted crucial indicators, the so-called Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which need to be assessed by everybody adopting the CESBA system. CESBA offers certification, training, and service around all aspects of building, starting from defining the goals of the building project, through the design, the planning, the procurement, the implementation, the commissioning and the usage of the building.

For benchmarking purposes, CESBA developed a generic tool. It is based on KPIs and programmed as an easy-to-use Excel spreadsheet. Using this tool, both single buildings and neighbourhoods may be assessed with regard to their degree of sustainability. The tool was produced in three different mutations, taking into account the differences between new and existing buildings and buildings with cultural heritage value.



# The project CESBA Alps

## Need for regionalization – the project goals

### The peculiarities of the Alpine space

The need for a low carbon economy in the Alps is urgent. During the last 120 years, the average temperature in the Alps has risen by almost 2°C, which is almost double the global average. The change caused by that endangers many inhabited areas in the Alps – many studies show that global warming increases the risk for floods, avalanches and landslides.

At the same time, a part of the problem is homemade. People living in the Alps consume around 10 % more energy per capita than the average European. This of course has to do with the peculiarities of living in remote rural regions: Less dense housing areas, more need for mobility, less public transport, less joint facilities, and all above the harsh climate of the Alpine space.

### From local to regional

This is why the CESBA partnership decided to develop the existing methods aimed at single buildings and small neighbourhoods to a larger territorial scale, allowing also small regions in the Alpine Space between 50 km<sup>2</sup> and 500 km<sup>2</sup> assess the sustainability of their built environment. By taking into account specific aspects concerning life in rural Alpine regions, the newly developed regional tool will support decision making in regional planning and the implementation of low carbon strategies and policy instruments at a regional level.

### Climate Challenges in the Alpine Space

- Temperature in the Alps has risen by almost 2°C in the last 120 years - double of the global average
- People living in the Alps consume 10 % more energy per capita than the average European
- Risk of landslides, floods and avalanches will increase with global warming



# Partnership

## 11 Partners and 21 Observers

The EU Interreg Alpine Space project “CESBA Alpine Space – Sustainable Territories” (CESBA Alps) was handed in to the programme authorities under Programme priority 2 – Low Carbon Alpine Space and Special objective SO2.1 - Establish transnationally integrated low carbon policy instruments. The project lasted over a period of time of 42 months, starting in December 2015 and ending in June 2019.

The project was implemented by 11 project partners from Italy, France, Germany, Slovenia, Austria and Liechtenstein.

The partners were supported by 21 project observers. Responsibility for the various work packages of the project was shared between the project partners. The total budget of the project amounted to 2.60 mio. EUR, out of which 2.21 mio. EUR were co-financed by the European Regional Development fund (ERDF).

## Testing areas in six states

The 11 partners subsequently created CESBA Local Committees (CLC) and tested methods in parts of the 9 following regional entities:

- Piedmont, Lombardy and Veneto regions (Italy)
- Auvergne Rhône-Alpes and Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur regions (France)
- Chiemgauer Alpen region (Germany)
- Vorarlberg (Austria)
- The states of Slovenia
- Liechtenstein



## Project Partners

- Regione Piemonte, Environment and Territorial Government Directorate, Torino, Italy (Lead Partner)
- iiSBE Italia R&D srl, Torino, Italy
- Regione Lombardia, Urban Planning Department, Milano, Italy
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- Liechtenstein Institute for Strategic Development, Vaduz, Liechtenstein

# Process of Evolving CESBA STT

## The need for harmonization of assessment systems – the generic CESBA framework and Sustainable Territory Tool (STT)

### A multitude of indicators

All project partners have to deal with a huge variety of indicators that both on a local and international level provide information about the sustainability of their regional entities. The partners screened 64 different sources and found out that, in total, the nine regional plus the transnational entities use a total of 645 different indicators to assess the state of sustainability.

Their distribution does not reflect the equal importance of the three aspects of sustainability – ecology, economy, social status – but shows a quite big skewness towards ecology. Out of the 645 indicators, 439 (68 %) deal with ecological issues. 115 indicators (18 %) provide information about social sustainability, and 91 indicators (14 %) have to do with the economy. For example, 186 indicators (171 of them ecological) from 9 different sources are monitored in Piedmont, whereas Vorarlberg collects information about a total of 10 indicators from one single source which are equally distributed between ecological, social and economical aspects.

In addition to that, it might seem rather easy to calculate certain indicators, most of all the quantitative ones. But in order to get a clear statement about the state of sustainability, the relevant indicators have to be transferred into a common system which makes the performance of the indicators comparable. This system also has to take into account that certain indicators probably will be more important in terms of sustainability than others. So the indicators not only have to be made comparable, but also need to be weighted and subsequently aggregated.

### A generic framework and a common tool

This is why CESBA Alps has agreed to organize its sustainability assessment following a commonly agreed generic framework. The generic framework approach is perfectly in line with the nine CESBA principles. It is an open source system co-created and simple to use, being developed for mass certification. It is holistic, taking into account all the sustainability issues. It may be fully contextualized to regional conditions allowing assigning local weights and benchmarks to the chosen criteria. And it allows the comparability of results at the transnational level.

“Generic” means that the system still needs to be configured to carry out an assessment in a specific territory. It needs to be contextualized to local conditions in order to reflect the regional sustainability priorities and practices. The contextualization takes place through the selection of the active assessment criteria and the assignment of a weight and a performance scale to them. At the same time, the fact that all project partners use the same basic methodology makes the results comparable, despite the necessary local contextualization.

In addition to that, by creating a common tool for the assessment, the territorial results get even more comparable and simpler to use for benchmarking. This is why CESBA Alps has decided not only to use a common generic framework, but also to develop and test a standardized tool, the CESBA Sustainable Territories Tool (STT), as the main result of the Interreg project. This tool may in the future also be transferred to other territories inside or even outside the Alpine Space.

## Assessment criteria

The CESBA Alps generic framework consists of a number of sets of criteria that are grouped into three modules:

- The information module,
- The capacity to act module and
- The territorial performance assessment module.

The information module consists of a total of 43 criteria that all are descriptive. They give an overview over those facts which characterize a territory without or almost without describing the territory's effort to increase its sustainability. They are grouped into 5 main categories:

- Climate: 20 criteria dealing with temperatures, temperature extremes, amount of rainfall, snowfall, droughts and UV radiation.
- Land: 8 criteria describing gradient, geology, avalanche risks, protected wetlands, and general land use.

- Natural risks: 4 criteria dealing with landslides, avalanches, floods and seismic activity.
- Demography: 10 criteria depicting population number and density, age distribution, life expectancy, fertility and mortality.
- Energy: 1 criterion – the general potential for renewable energy.

The capacity to act module consists of 28 criteria and describes the existing policies for participation and governance which are important prerequisites for a sustainable development.

Some of the criteria deal with a.o. the quality of land use and urban planning strategies, disaster preparedness, the state of the recycling infrastructure and value chains, energy and public transport networks, the quality of stakeholder involvement, or the safeguarding of the qualities of the cultural landscape.





## The territorial performance assessment module

The largest module is the territorial performance assessment module. It consists of 5 assessment areas with a total of 35 categories and 281 criteria:

- Territories and environment (land, water quality, nature and biodiversity, landscape, waste, effluents, contaminated land, emissions, quality of air, exposure to non-ionising and ionising radiation, exposure to noise, industrial hazards).
- Energy and resource consumption (energy consumption, sustainable energy, water consumption, land and building stock use).
- Infrastructures and services (mobility, leisure services, health services, education, efficiency of infrastructures, information and communication, basic infrastructure).
- Society (demography, socio-economic aspects, cultural aspects, land use, anthropogenic risks).
- Economy (local economy, actions for innovation, tourism, agriculture, industry, trade and commerce).

The list of criteria has been positively checked for their contribution to the UN Strategic Development Goals and the goals of the EUSALP programme.

## Making criteria comparable

The key to making the scores of the single criteria comparable is the normalization of the results. For each criterion, the discrete results of the calculation are transferred to a rougher scale that describes the way that certain results are rated in terms of their contribution to the fulfilment of sustainability goals.

This way, each result is rated on a scale between -1 (a score which is under the minimum acceptable performance) and +5 (a score which is excellent or even ideal). These scores are then, in the end, weighted to get a final result for each criterion. These final results may then be accumulated by a simple addition to a total score per category and assessment area or the assessed territory as a whole.

For example, the criterion “final energy consumption” might be calculated as the energy consumption per inhabitant, measured as TEP (tons of oil equivalent) per inhabitant. In this example (comp. DT1.1.2 CESBA STT GF, p. 18), the territory has a TEP value of 2.24 per inhabitant. After entering the value into a simple graph, the normalized value amounts to +3.0. This criterion may then be weighted with 20 % within its category. So the final score for the criterion will be  $3.0 * 0.2 = 1.2$ .

# The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

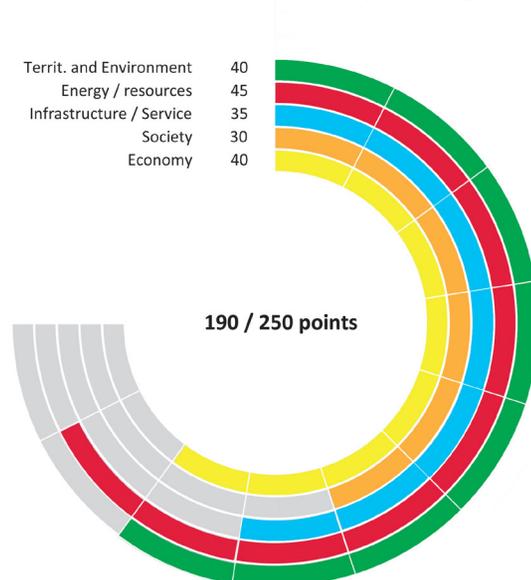
Thus, the project partners agreed on a list of 18 mandatory and 11 recommended KPIs. All KPIs are part of the territorial performance assessment module:

## Mandatory KPIs

Assessment area	Category	Criterion
Territory and Environment	Land	A1.6: CO2 sequestration through bio-sequestration
	Water quality	A2.4: Good ecological status: surface water bodies
	Water quality	A2.7: Good ground water body chemical status: groundwaters
	Nature / biodiversity	A3.1: Green infrastructure
	Landscape	A4.6: Protected natural heritages
	Landscape	A4.7: Protected cultural heritages
	Waste	A5.6: Recycled share of produced waste
	Emissions	A8.1: Greenhouse gas emissions
	Quality of air	A9.1: Exposure to air pollution
	Energy / Resources	Energy consumption
Energy consumption		B1.8: Primary energy consumption
Energy consumption		B1.20: Degree of renewable energy consumed
Water consumption		B3.1: Consumption of water
Land / building stock		B4.6: Intensity of land use
Infrastructure / Service Society	Mobility	C1.11: Modal split of public transport
	Socio-economic aspects	D2.19: Occupation by gender
Economy	Socio-economic aspects	D2.20: Gross income
	Agriculture	E4.2: Organic farming

## KPI Calculation

The circle graphic reflects the results of the KPI calculation. The design of the graphic may be further developed.





## Recommended KPIs

Assessment area	Category	Criterion
Territory and Environment Energy / Resources	Exposure to noise	A12.1: Exposure of households to noise
	Land / build. stock	B4.1: Efficiency in the use of existing residential buildings
	Land / build. stock	B4.2: Efficiency in the use of existing non-residential buildings
Infrastructure / Service Society	Land / build. stock	B4.16: Recycled share of construction waste
	Mobility	C1.2: Performance of the public transport
	Demography	D1.1: Population balance
	Demography	D2.3: Poverty and social exclusion
Economy	Demography	D2.27: Employment rate (15-64 year olds)
	Local Economy	D2.29: Design for all
	Tourism	E1.17: Assessed sustainable standard
	Tourism	E3.16: Sustainable tourism

### Three useful tools

In order to make the assessment results even more comparable between the assessed territories, three tools were developed:

- The CESBA Passport may easily be generated using an automatized (online) tool creating standardized graphs and tables.
- The CESBA Atlas, a tool based on a Geographical Information System (GIS), helps to visualize the results of the territorial assessment on cartographical maps.
- The CESBA STT (CESBA Sustainable Territories Tool ), a transnational generic multicriteria assessment system for assessing the sustainability of mountain areas, may in the future be transferred to other territories inside or even outside the Alpine Space.



## Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), the CESBA Passport and CESBA Atlas

### Concentrating on the most important indicators

It is obvious that a total of 352 criteria is impossible to be calculated thinking of the available data and work resources of all territories assessed within CESBA Alps. Even more, thinking about the necessity to contextualize the CESBA STT for the specific needs of the assessed territories, many of the criteria might not be equally relevant to all territories. On the other hand, it is important to agree at least on a certain set of criteria to be assessed in all cases in order to achieve the goal of transnational comparability which is one of the key ideas of the CESBA Alps project.

This is why the CESBA Alps partners finally, after a long effort supported by the CESBA Sprint Workshops, agreed on a shorter list of so-called Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These Key Performance Indicators are those criteria that are mandatory or at least recommended to be assessed in order to make the results of the single territorial assessments comparable to each other.

### Regional testing

The shortlist of KPIs was tested by the project partners in the 9 participating regional entities in a sub-region between 50 km<sup>2</sup> and 500 km<sup>2</sup>. The results show that all KPIs proposed should be kept, even though 3 of them were not calculated in any test region due to the fact that no valid data were available. For 11 KPIs, the decision was taken to change the assessment method in order to better reflect the data availability situation and the local needs of Alpine areas. 2 KPIs underwent minor changes, whereas 13 remained unchanged after the evaluation phase. One KPI was shifted from mandatory to recommended.

### CESBA Alps Toolbox:

- CESBA STT
- CESBA Passport
- CESBA Atlas



## Making the CESBA STT operational for local decision making

### Empowering local stakeholders

A screening of existing regional policies in the nine Alpine regions represented by the project partners has shown that all deal with sustainability issues and goals. This is why the CESBA STT has the potential to become an important strategic tool for local and regional policy makers to get a holistic picture of the state of sustainability of their municipalities and regions. This is why it would be desirable to make the CESBA STT part of the monitoring schedule of those regional plans.

In order to teach the use of the CESBA STT to local officers in the participating regions, a number of training tools, mainly PowerPoint presentations about the results of the CESBA Alps project, were prepared. They may be customized for the use in the single regions.

The key decisions that need to be taken for this are to provide the regional authorities with sufficient resources to monitor the development of the KPIs and to make sure that the necessary data may be collected and updated continuously. Most of all, regions working with the CESBA STT need sufficient staff resources to do and coordinate the work, financial resources to set up and maintain data collection – also creating ways to collect data that are so far not available but are considered important for the CESBA STT – and political and legal support to overcome problems with ownership of certain data or data protection issues.

### The next steps

CESBA is also open to certifying territories in terms of sustainability. During the CESBA Sprint Workshop 2017, the participants have agreed on recognizing the fact that CESBA has, by now, gained a lot of expertise that may be important to public policies. This is why CESBA needs to capitalize and look for opportunities to take a next step in business development and strategic communication. CESBA may be developed into a consultancy business spreading the idea behind the CESBA initiative and the CESBA STT to other similar regions all over the Alpine Space and beyond.

The political representatives from the partner regions are highly welcome to support the next step by lobbying for the importance of the CESBA STT, at other governments and especially in Brussels, following the vision of creating a joint European directive on how to measure the sustainability of built environments.

# Communicating CESBA STT

## The communication plan

One key to promote the results of CESBA Alps to the public are the newly founded CESBA Local Committees (CLCs). The members of the CLCs have committed themselves to supporting the implementation of the CESBA STT on the local and regional level. The CLCs can serve as valuable multipliers towards a wider public, but also to raising professional awareness.

The communication plan for CESBA Alps features four main communication objectives:

- increase knowledge
- raise awareness
- influence attitude
- change behaviour

The project communication was targeted towards a wide range of stakeholders:

- local and regional public authorities
- sectoral agencies and affiliated SMEs
- schools, universities, research and training centers
- international organizations in the field of sustainable built environment issues

## CESBA Sprint Workshops

- 5-6 teams, each focusing on special topics but linked to each other
- All teams have 2 moderators and a set of working questions
- An overall moderator leads the teams through the workshop and ensures a fruitful working atmosphere and useful results

## Conferences and workshops

In order to raise international awareness for the goals of CESBA Alps, some project partners participated in international conferences which a.o. took place in Brussels, Geneva and Hong Kong.

A key factor in further developing the CESBA initiative are the CESBA Sprint Workshops, where project partners, observers, and other key stakeholders meet, team up and regularly update the CESBA idea. The CESBA Sprint Workshops have already led to the dissemination of the CESBA concept to other parts of Europe, a.o. by a partnering project granted under the Interreg Mediterranean scheme, CESBA Med, who organised the last CESBA Sprint Workshop in Malta in 2018.



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The opinions expressed are those of the author(s) only and should not be considered as representative of the Interreg Alpine Space Programme.

# CESBA Alps - Territorial Assessment

## Recommendations for Technical Experts

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**Interreg**  
**Alpine Space**

European Regional Development Fund



EUROPEAN UNION



Sustainable  
Territories