



2023 RSA Winter Conference

Unveiling the Complexity of Sustainable Monitoring: Insights from Swiss Alpine Tourism

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Tourism serves as the primary economic driver in numerous alpine regions of Switzerland, but the industry faces a critical juncture marked by climate-related changes and associated crises, as well as the imperative to adopt sustainable practices. To comprehensively grasp the state of sustainability monitoring within the tourism sector, an interdisciplinary study was conducted. The primary aim was to explore the challenges of employing existing sustainability indicator systems and propose solutions for implementing sustainability monitoring across different scales and sub-sectors.

The study first identified major indicator systems used and the key actors of sustainability indicators in Switzerland. This was followed by qualitative interviews with experts and practitioners in sustainable tourism.

One noteworthy finding was the diversity of perception and approach to sustainability. While international and national systems have laid strong foundations, indicators must be tailored to suit specific objectives and target audiences. Factors like thresholds determination contribute to successful adoption. Labels prove valuable in providing guidance and systematizing sustainability practices at the enterprise level. Academics exhibit a greater inclination towards using monitoring tools for sustainability management, while governance actors view objective indicators as potential hurdle in managing complexity. The necessity to produce data is not unanimous either.

In conclusion, this study highlights the need for a cohesive approach to sustainability monitoring in the tourism industry, acknowledging the differing perspectives of stakeholders and devising adaptable indicator systems. By bridging these gaps, we can pave the way for a more sustainable and resilient future for alpine tourism in Switzerland.



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Related Speakers



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