Corporate Social Responsibility:

The Role of Modern Destination Management Organizations

Gabriela Estrella* & Myrta Zemp^ & Urs Wagenseil°

*Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Switzerland   gabriela.estrella@stud.hslu.ch
^Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Switzerland   myrta.zemp@hslu.ch
°Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Switzerland   urs.wagenseil@hslu.ch

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Abstract

Looking at tourism as an industry affecting different stakeholders, the notion of responsibility is increasingly addressed by destinations. By embracing the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), destination management organizations (DMO) take responsibility for their actions towards their environment and stakeholders. A clear definition of a DMO's area of responsibility however remains unclear. Results of a website analysis and expert interviews show that the DMOs are required to play a manifold role including but not limiting to leadership, support, education, motivation and being a role-model. This paper therefore presents theoretical contribution in terms of managerial roles of a DMO when engaging in CSR.

Introduction

As ecological or natural resources often present the focus of a tourism destination's offer, it is of highest importance that these resources are to be protected. A decline in their value can have negative impact on the destination (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). Tourism can produce adverse environmental and socio-cultural impacts, some of which may even be irreversible. An increase of societal and environmental concerns exerts growing pressure on destination management policies (Dodds & Joppe, 2005). These concerns have generated an extended debate. The tourism industry has responded to these challenges by applying the concept of sustainability. Sustainable tourism involves economic, ecological or social aspects and therefore is relevant for the resource management of a destination (UNESCO, 2009). Including similar elements, the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has been introduced to the tourism industry, which aims for companies taking responsibility for their

actions towards their internal and external stakeholders (European Union, 2001). CSR is the voluntary contribution of business to sustainable development (Inoue & Lee, 2011).

However, tourism destinations are complex constructs that can be defined as several activated networks in space and time with several changing roles and responsibilities of actors (Beritelli, Reinhold, Laesser, & Bieger, 2015). Seeing a destination not only as a location, where tourism products are developed and offered, but also as a living space for locals, who can be affected by tourism, the concept of sustainable development is increasingly being applied to tourism destinations (Strasdas, 2012). As a destination is a multifaceted construct with many actors involved, a destination needs to be strategically managed by a DMO (Weber & Wehrli, 2015). Hereby, a DMO is considered being a leader to manage sustainable development at the destination level (Styles, Schönberger, & Galvez-Martos, 2013).

Sustainable development is considered to be a long-term process and should be treated on the level of the destination management. Positively managed, tourism has the potential contributing to sustainable growth. Generally, DMOs are considered to be role models due to the strong influence that they have as local authorities (Styles et al., 2013). In terms of sustainable development, the DMO has the central task to embed the topic of sustainability and its implementation within the internal strategies, structures and processes (Weber & Wehrli, 2015). Studies however have shown that many DMOs have an idea of their role(s) and responsibilities regarding sustainable development but in practice do not implement it accordingly (Wagenseil & Zemp, 2015). A good example is however set by destinations within the area of Baden-Württemberg (Germany), where the Ministry for Rural affairs has committed itself with a pilot project to protect and promote nature conservation, tourism and structural policies amongst local representatives and their partners. They apply the triangle vision, where tourism, nature conservation and land use interact successfully towards a quality destination (Baden-Wurttemberg, 2015). Many destinations within this area have been certified by the label TourCert, a label that certifies destinations, which clearly commit themselves to responsible tourism. In the case of Baden-Württemberg, the initiative was taken by the DMO that therefore acted as a leader of the process.

Apart from the example of the destinations in Baden-Württemberg, neither many destinations have committed themselves to engage in a CSR-approached development nor can much literature be found regarding the role of a Destination Management Organization when engaging in CSR as a destination. As a result, the role(s) of a DMO in terms of embracing CSR as a destination remain(s) unclear.

This paper aims for analyzing the role(s) a DMO should take when implementing the concept of CSR within a destination. Therefore, a three-folded research design has been used as the basis for understanding the role of CSR and DMOs. First, a review of the relevant literature on the concept of CSR in the tourism sector was conducted. Second, in order to follow the primary purpose of this study, a qualitative analysis of official DMO's websites aimed to

understand the notion of CSR in destinations was done; third, to provide validated results, expert interviews were performed. Triangulation of data was achieved in order to allow actual understanding and implementation of the CSR concept in a responsibility-taking destination. Conclusively, this study therefore contributes to the following main research questions:

- Which role(s) should a DMO play when engaging in CSR as a destination?

In order to understand the significance of CSR and its state of the art in practice within the tourism industry, the following sub-questions will be answered:

- What is the role of CSR in the tourism sector?
- What do destinations already do and publish (online) in the field of CSR?
- What are the main challenges to apply CSR in the tourism industry?

Literature review

Corporate Social Responsibility

Initially, CSR was a subject and field of study situated at the interface between business and society. It has first been mentioned by Howard R. Bowen, who claimed that corporations should take social responsibility towards the society, as they take up their entitlements to social rights (Howard & Bowen, 1953). According to the widely accepted CSR model of Carroll (1979), the responsibility of corporations includes four different types: the economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic responsibility. In relation to the CSR concept, stakeholder theory has been addressed with regard to responsibilities that should be taken towards stakeholders (see Freeman, 1984; Donaldson & Preston, 1995). Nowadays, CSR is considered a fundamental concept to balance the impacts on economic, social and environment level with the business interests and the stakeholders (Hemingway, 2013). Hence, being socially responsible means to go beyond fulfilling legal expectations by considering compliance and investigation into human capital, the environment and the relationships with stakeholders (European Union, 2001). Global trends of CSR in tourism include welfare of employees, preservation of natural resources, technological innovations, sustainable products and mainly businesses with transparency and accountability towards their practices (Kapardis & Neophytidou, n.d.).

Corporate Social Responsibility in Tourism

In terms of research, CSR in the tourism industry is still in its early stage (Coles, Fenclova, & Dinan, 2013). However, discussions about the management of environmental and social issues, namely CSR, have been discussed extensively. Oftentimes, the framework of sustainable tourism is mentioned, as the definitions of CSR and sustainability include similar elements (Dodds & Joppe, 2005).

As for sustainable tourism, the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) and European Commission suggest the following criteria for a sustainable destination to reach a common understanding: demonstration of a sustainable destination management, maximization of social and economic benefits for visitors, communities, minimization of negative impacts as well as the protection of the environment (2016). Tourism operators and destinations have become increasingly more aware of the impacts that tourism can have on their own products. As a result, they have started to realize that resources, which often constitute the heart of the touristic offers, need to be protected for long-term business sustainability (Dodds & Kuehnel, 2010). Resources to be protected include landscapes, cultural heritage, culture, people, community and infrastructure, which are endangered by environmental risks such as pollution, garbage, sewage disposal, surface consumption, excess of energy consumptions and loss of biodiversity (Nicolae & Sabina, 2012). Consequently, it is crucial to maintain or enhance environmental conditions at the destination level (Styles et al., 2013).

While the concept of sustainable tourism mainly involves a balanced economic, social and cultural development without endangering the environment (Angelevska-Najdeska & Rakicevik, 2012), the concept of CSR relates to an organization's obligation to be accountable to all its stakeholders regarding operations and activities. CSR can be considered as "an approach to business administration where (…) closer voluntary consideration of ethical, social and environmental issues as well as the organization's varied stakeholders is taken in operations and value creation" (Coles et al., 2013, p. 122). In the tourism industry, CSR has mainly been implemented by intermediaries (e.g. tour operators), trade associations or non-governmental organizations. However, on the level of destinations, CSR has not been widely discussed.

Engaging in CSR does have many positive impacts on a business or destination. Werther & Chandler (2005) claim that CSR can act as a "brand insurance" (Werther & Chandler, 2005, p. 317) in order to prevent devastation of brand loyalty and consequently of brand image. Institutions or organizations are considered being embedded in a wider environment and therefore need to have a "social legitimacy" (2005, p. 318). The concept of networks is incorporated in the stakeholder theory of Freeman (1984). He raised the fact that all stakeholders need to be taken into consideration when operating, since they are all impacted by the firm's purpose. In the context of tourism, DMOs play a major role managing the destination networks. However, being organizations, their operations can be also judged according to their organizational efficiency and effectiveness (Pechlaner, Volgger, & Herntrei, 2012). DMOs usually have either direct control or strong influence over the policies, destination plan, decisions, infrastructure and services. Only trough good communication and motivation, a DMO can indirectly influence the stakeholders and unite them under a coherent strategy (Bieger & Beritelli, 2013). Due to the fact that DMOs need to have strong relationships with their internal and external stakeholders, CSR plays a critical role in the tourism industry (Smith & Ong, 2014).

The role(s) of a DMO when engaging in CSR as a destination

Tourism has become a major element for the governments worldwide as it influences the legislation in favor of a broad social and economic development. By influencing the public policy, the growth of communities gets stimulated (Horner & Swarbrooke, 2008). The importance of destination management is growing rapidly due to the increasing competition to provide high quality of experience or the increasing assurance of managing the impacts of tourism on communities and environments. The destination management, often embodied by a DMO, is defined as public, private or public-private entity, whose aim is to plan, coordinate and foster the coalition of other organizations towards the development of a destination as a whole (World Tourism Organization, 2007). The DMO's main characteristic is not to own the products but to manage and promote them. Therefore, the idea of tourism networks and collaboration between destination stakeholders is key to ensure destination competitiveness (European Union, 2001). The DMO role in general is defined as being a leader and coordinator of activities under a coherent strategy. Its main goal is to gather resources and expertise towards a successful development and management in order to guide destinations (World Tourism Organization, 2007). Therefore, the DMO must possess credibility as a strategic leader and the ability to facilitate industry partnerships and collaboration. Hence, the role of a DMO goes beyond marketing but also includes other management activities (Volgger & Pechlaner, 2014).

Since a DMO heavily depend on its stakeholders, stakeholder management and cooperation are considered to be of utmost importance for a successful management of a destination (Wyss, Abegg, & Luthe, 2014). In terms of sustainable development it is crucial that a DMO wins the stakeholders' support. This can be achieved by rising awareness and providing knowledge about sustainability (Velleco & Mancino, 2010). Once awareness is raised, the DMO should set a clear focus for the stakeholders to follow in order to consolidate the engagements of the whole destination (TSG Tourism Sustainability, 2007). Furthermore, the DMOs and governmental institutes need to develop suitable tourism policies in order to initiate sustainable adaption strategies (Pechlaner & Tschurtschenthaler, 2003). A study amongst alpine destinations about the DMO's role(s) in terms of sustainable development has shown that DMOs consider themselves being the initiators and process leaders for implementing a sustainability strategy. Nearly two third (63.3%) of DMOs claimed having the necessary skills for being a leader but not enough resources for taking this responsibility. The study concludes that the DMOs are aware of the role(s) they should play but actually do not perceive in practice (Wagenseil & Zemp, 2015).

Methods and data

In order to gain more knowledge about the involvement of DMOs in the context of CSR, a cross sectional research design has been applied. Given the practical relevance of these questions for destination management the results of this study need to be embedded in the

ongoing debate about destination tourism success. A qualitative research approach aimed for two parts. First, a qualitative data analysis has been conducted in order to identify the current status of CSR engagement on the level of destinations and second, to complement the analysis of the CSR implication within a DMO, expert interviews were conducted. By examining information collected through different methods, the researcher can verify findings across data and therefore, reduce the impact of potential existing biases in a single study (Yin, 2014).

Research design

As a first step, an exploratory research approach has been applied; through exploration researchers can develop more clear concepts, establish priorities and develop operational definitions (Davidson & Cope, 2013). In this study, a website analysis was conducted in order to find out the current status about CSR (activities) in destinations. Documents analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing and evaluating documents in printed or electronic form (Bowen, 2009). The data was collected through in-depth analysis of the corporate websites, annual reports, Sustainability and CSR reports as well as other information publicly accessible. Document analysis has provided the background and context for the following expert interviews as supplementary data for tracking changes and development (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Document analysis is often used for triangulation when combined with other research methods (Denzin, 1970, p. 291).

As the second step, expert interviews were conducted with experts in the field of CSR in order to validate the findings from the website analysis and gaining deeper understanding. The semi-structured interviews, which lasted approximately 30 minutes each, were recorded and then transcribed. The interviews included seven open guiding questions that allowed the respondents to convey their views and opinions regarding CSR and its application in the tourism industry with special focus on destination management.

Sampling methods and final sample

The sample in both parts of the research was applied in a purposive sampling. Researcher uses the purposive sample in order to achieve representativeness or comparability among different types of cases (Teddlie & Yu, 2007).

During the initial part of the research phase, 83 official destination websites and reports (including 1 transnational, 27 national, 8 regional and 47 local DMOs) were analyzed selectively in order to identify the current status of CSR engagement on the level of destinations. Destinations were selected from the list "Certified Sustainable Destinations" published by the Global Sustainable Tourisms Council (GSTC, 2016), the Tourism for Tomorrow Destination Awards Finalists and Winners launched by the World Travel Tourisms Council (2016) , the TourCert Sustainability Check for Destinations website that is a label for sustainable tourism destinations, and Green Key voluntary eco-label awarded destinations

due to their sustainable actors such as hotels, restaurants, tourism related establishments (Green Key, 2016).

For the expert interviews, the interview partners were selected according to the following criteria: diversity and knowledge-ability (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). Participants were selected for their unique characteristics, experiences, attitudes or perceptions (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). The interviewees were selected by their professional profile in the area of sustainability/CSR or have been recommended by peers. The interviews were executed with 10 representatives of organizations related to CSR in the tourism industry (e.g. professionals in CSR private initiatives, CSR experts in destination development, DMO representatives, professionals in CSR certifications and labels as well as marketing destinations experts). Hence, the experts' broad views on the subject have been captured.

Research Findings

According to the research gap presented in this paper, the significance of CSR in tourism on the level of destinations and regarding the role of the DMOs has been observed through a two-staged research design. The data collection aimed for the research questions mentioned previously. While the website analysis mainly provided answers concerning the terminology and the level of involvement of DMOs in CSR, the expert interviews focused on the roles of destination management in the context of CSR. Both stages followed the same research questions and therefore can be considered as complementing sources.

Data analysis of official DMO websites

83 official destination websites have been analyzed in order to gain a better understanding about CSR on the level of destinations. Many of the official websites and embedded reports include diverse information about the development and planning of sustainable tourism. Different initiatives have been developed and successfully implemented.

A good example is presented by the national Scottish DMO that has committed itself with environmental policies in its own operations, as a role model. VisitScotland promotes its annual targets and reports through monitoring and managing energy, water and waste consumptions with the objective to reduce its own contribution with the adverse environmental effects; plus advertises other environmental principles such as sustainable procurement actions, enhancing the biodiversity and encouraging visitors and partners to share responsibility.

When looking specifically for the term "CSR", not many information could be found. However, Finland presents an interesting case through its local DMO VisitHelsinki, which has directly coordinated the "The Helsinki Tourism Strategy" emphasizing corporate responsibility among tourism companies. The topic of responsible tourism has mainly been addressed with terms such as: *environmental policies, climate change policies, code of practices of sustainable tourism, sustainable tourism develop, certification for sustainable*

tourism, sustainability toolkit, responsible tourism, ecological, economic and social sustainability, sustainable initiatives, eco-sustainable tourism, sustainable travel, responsible and sustainable growth, green destinations, sustainability strategic plan.

Overall, the DMOs' websites present two sides of responsibilities: the marketing and promotion of the destination on one, sustainability planning on the other side. The second part includes objectives for the future, certifications, laws and regulations towards sustainability. The following destinations representatively take stand as best practice examples about their role in terms of stakeholder collaboration, sustainable development or CSR:

1. National level
   a. **VisitScotland (Scotland)**
      The DMO has adapted CSR to its own organization to set an example and stimulate its partners to share the same vision: "We are committed to continuing to improve our environmental performance, minimizing our environmental impact and making resource efficiency a core requirement of all our operations, we will seek to promote good practice by others" (VisitScotland, 2016).

The identified roles of the DMO therefore include being a promoter and a role-model.

2. Regional level
   a. **Sentosa (Singapore):**
      It promotes CSR practices with the *Sentosa Sustainability Plan* and annual events to motivate its partners to engage. Its initiatives include aspects such as: "minimizing the island's carbon footprint, conserving its flora and fauna, developing itself as a hub for green projects and adopting responsible environmental standards and business practices, (…) running the annual island-wide 'Sentosa Gives' corporate social responsibility week in September since 2011" (Sentosa, 2015).
   b. **Tourism Engadin Scuol Samnaun Val Müstair (Switzerland)**
      The DMO gives direction for the whole destination and its stakeholders: "The Destination Management Organization (DMO) Tourism Engadin Scuol Samnaun Val Müstair AG (TESSVM) stands for sustainability in tourism. As a region of natural and cultural holiday constitutes TESSVM on deals that will not only preserve the natural and cultural values, but evolve gently" (TESSVM, 2011).
   c. **VisitHelsinki (Finland)**:
      The DMO is the direct coordinator and promoter of the sustainable policies within the city: "The Helsinki Tourism Strategy coordinated by Visit Helsinki emphasizes corporate responsibility among tourism companies. Companies

have an obligation to act appropriately in all matters related to environmental, social and financial responsibility" (VisitHelsinki, 2015).

d. **Baden-Württemberg (Germany)** including Baiersbronn, Bad Herrenalb, Bad Mergentheim, Hochschwarzwald and Stuttgart:

As a part of a pilot project, the DMO is aiming and succeeding to achieve a certification for sustainable destinations for the whole region. The DMO promotes good practices and collaboration within the region: "Through the sustainability check the state government supports strong tourism destinations in their sustainable development. During the certification process all three aspects of sustainability – economic, environmental and social – checked and worked out an improvement program" (Baden-Wurttemberg, 2015).

The identified roles of the DMO hence include being a role-model, promoter, motivator, coordinator, leader, collaborator and initiator.

These chosen DMOs appreciate sustainability or CSR as an important part of the development of the destination and its network. In contrast, few destinations declare having issues implementing CSR within the destination. As an example, the Maldives mention in their Baseline report about CSR that the concept is not widely understood by the business sector and the government does not have a CSR policy (FJS Consulting, 2010). However, governmental institutions (including DMOs in Maldives) do not play a significant role in CSR promotion or it is not designated focal point as the "government's role is limited to regulatory enforcement"(2010, p. 1).

Table 1: Identified roles of a DMO when engaging in CSR

Level of destinations	Roles of DMO
National	promoter, role-model
Regional	role-model, promoter, motivator, coordinator, leader, collaborator, initiator

Expert interviews

In order to gain a better understanding regarding the terminology of CSR, the experts have been asked about a definition of CSR. As a result, respondents have defined CSR as voluntary activities by companies that take responsibility for their actions. For instance, the Area Czech Republic Manager & General Manager of Accor stated that CSR is the responsible approach towards community and its environment, where they make business and from which they profit. This definition corresponds to the previous literature review, where businesses were claimed to be responsible for more than to increase their profits (see Godfrey & Hatch, 2007) and destinations for more than just marketing but for example also for stakeholder collaboration (Volgger & Pechlaner, 2014). However, the experts mentioned that basic elements of sustainability and CSR cannot be distinct very clearly.

Asking the experts concerning the purpose of CSR in the context of tourism, the idea of the concept and its implementation seem to be conflicting: all experts agreed that CSR is crucial for the companies and for the community. The Project Manager Tourism of MyClimate mentioned representatively that in theory, CSR involves preserving nature, cultural and social values. As a consequence, companies need to act responsibly, work in conjunction with the stakeholders and show transparency in their actions. However, she further mentioned that CSR is a frequently discussed topic but in reality, not much has been done so far. Therefore, people tend to be "annoyed" by the concept. Yet, the concept has lost credibility because of the gap between theory and practice. One of the experts' explanations therefore is that there has been a negative motivation to only declare itself as being sustainable and responsible but not act such as. The founder of Conscious Hospitality & Tourism has explained the possible cause of the hesitation with the term "green washing", which is the borderline between the commitments of good practices without acting accordingly in order to gain more recognition. Nevertheless, the experts think that CSR can help destinations to create a differentiation strategy, which means that CSR is highly considered as a strong public relationship tool, marketing strategy and finally unique selling proposition. This finding goes along with the theory of Werther et al. (2005) claiming that CSR can act as brand insurance.

Concerning the role a DMO should play when engaging in CSR as a destination the experts claim that leadership should definitely be taken by the DMOs. The Project Assistant of Alpine Pearls highlighted that the environmental and cultural aspects are vital resources for the tourism sector and they need to be maintained. To secure future attractiveness and competitiveness of a tourism destination, these necessary resources must be managed in a sustainable way. Therefore, when implementing CSR within a destination, the DMO can be seen as the leader of the CSR development within the region proposing guidelines and developing products. She added that DMO could also act as a supporter and consultant for the local private businesses. A difficulty could be to bring all players to pull on one string. A lack of know-how and understanding for CSR in small and medium-sized enterprises and accommodations could also lead to difficulties. This opinion is similar to the statement expressed by a Destinations Product Manager from the tourism business consultancy named Durina Strategy, who commented that DMOs should create a framework, encourage but also lead, show good practices, because this also makes the destination more attractive. DMOs thereby should not enforce the engagement of the stakeholders (e.g. suppliers) but rather encourage and motivate stakeholders to embrace CSR within their daily activities. Being a role model by implementing CSR within the own organization is considered to be a good idea by the experts. Applying CSR in its own operational practices will motivate the awareness and set an example. Small steps towards a more responsible behavior (e.g. employee policies) will be good to inspire the rest of the actors within the destination. The DMO is furthermore considered to be responsible for the enhancement of stakeholder collaboration. A business consultant of Red Competitiva Business Consultancy (Spain) stated

that DMOs need to act as a driver while mentioning idea of an "umbrella organization", which enhances the work in collaboration with all players to become a sustainable destination.

Table 2: Identified roles of a DMO when engaging in CSR

Roles of DMOs	
leader	encourager
supporter	role-model
consultant	motivator
creator of framework	

Discussion

The aim of the research was to analyze the role(s) that a DMO should play when engaging in CSR as a destination. The study furthermore investigated the questions what role CSR plays in the context of tourism, what destinations have already been doing in this field and what main challenges destinations are confronted when applying the concept of CSR.

Despite the unclear labelling of the concept, research shows that CSR is highly relevant for destination management as the collaboration of stakeholders is crucial for a destination's success. It can be concluded that CSR is crucial for destinations as it helps preserving natural, cultural and social resources that often constitute the heart of a destination. Thus, a destination is required to implement a coherent CSR strategy as an integrated process. As a consequence, DMOs need to act responsibly, work in collaboration with its stakeholders and show transparency in their actions. Reality however shows that the concept of CSR has frequently been discussed but not many actions have been taken. For the development of a CSR strategy, its implementation and evaluation the responsibilities in terms of roles need to be clearly defined.

According to traditional literature, the area of responsibility of a DMO is often limited to promoting a destination. It is crucial to understand that DMO are part of a wider network and they need to take their environment into account. Consequently, stakeholder collaboration and sustainable development is considered to be a responsibility of destination management. Results show that DMOs need to play a manifold role. The most mentioned task for a DMO is being a leader. Setting clear guidelines, encouraging stakeholders and be a role-model can be considered key success factors for destination management when implementing CSR within a destination. Focusing on a more sustainable and responsible tourism becomes a core topic for modern DMOs of today.

Overall it can be concluded that destinations do engage in CSR activities although they often label the CSR related topics as sustainable tourism. Nevertheless, the concepts can be understood as similar as their aims – to take responsibility towards the whole destination and its actors for protecting its resources in the long-run– complement one another.

Therefore, a modern DMO of today is no longer only responsible for marketing a destination but also for preserving its resources.

The interviewees however have shown that there is still much potential left. Destination management organizations are often claimed not to have a systematic approach for engaging in sustainable development or CSR engagement. In order to successfully embrace CSR as a destination, the DMO needs to take the lead in the process. They are required to play a manifold tasks including but not limiting to leadership, support, education, motivation and being a role-model. Prerequisites according to the experts are an ongoing public support, a committed and well-staffed DMO and high acceptance by the tourism businesses.

Managerial implications and further research

Aside the need to further develop the concept and definition of CSR in tourism destinations it is highly important that DMOs integrate the concept of CSR within their internal and external structures. As modern DMOs play a crucial role in the development of CSR practices they need to plan and include CSR initiatives in their own overall strategy, especially with regards to stakeholder management. CSR needs to be clearly addressed in a destination's mission statement and consequently included in the business objectives and its performance measurement. Consequently, for being a strong leader, the DMO needs to take responsibility towards various actors and encourage them to align towards a common goal.

One way to establish common goals within the network can be achieved through a CSR certification for the destination. Sustainability certifications offered by organizations such as *TourCert* contribute valuably to the implementation of a more sustainable and responsible tourism. The German destination of Baden-Württemberg constitutes a good example of gaining a CSR label by *TourCert*. In collaboration with the Ministry of Rural Affairs and Consumer Protection (MLR) of Baden-Württemberg, the certification has successfully been achieved by various actors of the destinations ("TourCert" 2016).

Sustainability certification has been awarded to entire destinations amongst the sample presented in this study. More research could be determined to the models applied, their advantages and limitations as well as actual results. A case-study approach is suggested to illustrate the practical use of the notion of CSR within destinations. This could be highlighted by the illustrated example of the Baden-Württemberg's sustainability project.

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