

## **Systems Approach to Cultural Event Management for Sustainable Destination Development**

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### **Abstract**

Cultural events are a powerful tool for shaping a tourist destination's image. They extend the tourist season, raise the quality of life for the local population, and add cultural value to the environment. Nevertheless, increased tourist traffic due to cultural events can sometimes cause an imbalance among stakeholders in the environment. The reason for this phenomenon is linear, cause-and-effect management that fails to account for the complex interdependencies among stakeholders, the local environment, the economy, and visitors. This paper proposes a systems approach (von Bertalanffy, 1968), cybernetics (Wiener, 1948; Beer, 1959), and a method of modelling system dynamics (Forrester, 1961; Sterman, 2000).

In this paper, we will analyse how systems thinking—holistic, integrative, and feedback-based thinking—enables the recognition of patterns and structures that are often invisible beneath the surface of everyday events. Using a conceptual model, we will illustrate the process of planning, organising, implementing, and evaluating cultural events as a system that includes the vision of the destination, the goals of the event, co-creation (visitors—creators—providers—locals), and evaluation as a feedback loop for learning and improvement.

We emphasise the co-creation role among stakeholders (Mason et al., 2024) and the integration of sustainable practices into event management, in accordance with ISO 20121:2024. The findings show that a systems approach to cultural event management, which includes recognising interdependence, balancing cooperation, and involving the locals, enables us to achieve sustainable destination development that is both innovative and socially responsible.

Keywords: cultural event management, systemic approach, sustainable destination development, value co-creation, systems thinking.

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