



WP13.4 - Integrated management of the vulnerability to climate change in touristic coastal zones

Responsible

Alexandre Magnan (IDDRI)

Total project description

Tourism is one of the fastest growing activity in Mediterranean coastal zones, both in terms of volume and number of destination. Coastal tourism offer many opportunities for Mediterranean countries both also several threats for the development of coastal area. In particular, the magnitude of development of coastal tourism creates competitions and, eventually, tensions on diverse natural resources: ecosystem, water resources, natural and agricultural land, etc. Like other human activities, tourism industry is also thought to be a contributing factor of an accelerated trend which threatens coastal habitat and ecosystems. Coastal tourism is susceptible to climate change in several ways. Tourism depends on resources that are foreseen to be affected by climate change impacts: forest fires, landscapes changes, water availability and quality, coastal erosion... Tourism infrastructures can be directly affected by climate changes. But tourism development might also contribute to reinforce climate change impacts, trough the increased consumption of natural resources (water, land availability...), the development of coastal infrastructures reinforcing climate change impacts, etc. These tensions are reinforced by the dynamic nature of the sector taking place in an environment lacking policies, legislations and coordination to support the management of these resources; as well as jurisdictional complexities combined with the fragmentation and lack of clear definition of tourism industry.

This WP will develop an integrated assessment of the climate change vulnerability of touristic coastal area based on the « Tourism Carrying Capacity » (TCC) of these area. TCC provide an integrated concept encompassing three basic components or dimensions: physical-ecological, sociodemographic and political-economic. Changes in tourism carrying capacity will be assessed taking into account: the natural and physical impact of climate change on touristic area, as studied in RL 5 to 9 and their economic valuation (RL10); the direct economical impact of climate change on the tourism industry (RL10); the scenarios of development for relevant socio-economic sectors (RL12).

Three categories of touristic coastal area will be considered: mature touristic area, where tourism industry is massive both in terms of revenue and number of visitors (France, Spain, Italy, Greece, Malta...); emergent touristic area, where tourism industry is already significant but expected to grow significantly in the short term future (Marocco, Cyprus, Turkey, Tunisia, Croatia, Israel, Montenegro); potential touristic area, benefiting from natural or cultural resources favourable to the development of tourism activities in a mid-term future (Albania, Algeria, Libia...), when present obstacles to their development will be removed.

For each of these regions, contrasted scenarios of TCC evolution will be developed and considered for the mid-term future, taking into account both the natural impacts of climate change and their economical valuation, as well as sociodemographic and political-economic scenarios for the regions.

The integrated assessment framework will enable the WP to identify and propose a wide range of responses and policies induced by climate change, from pure adaptations measures to mainstreamed inflexions of development policies that are necessary to prevent collapse of Mediterranean coastal areas tourism carrying capacity. These induced responses will be formulated in a perspective of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM): balanced tourism development and other resource-based activities in the coastal zone, strengthen capacity of coastal communities to participate in tourism opportunities, supportive regulatory environment for both tourism development and preservation of natural resources and ecosystems in the coastal zone, etc. These recommendations will be discussed and disseminated in a series of carefully designed workshops, for both improving their relevance for decision making and identify potential implementation constraints and barriers.