

Presentation of initial results

Climate Change (CC) Risk and Vulnerability Assessment in Tourism and Landscape Planning in Latvia

Expert Seminar “Methodological approaches to risk and vulnerability assessment for adaptation to climate change”

1st July, 2016, Riga

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- **General description of sectors**
- **Climate change impacts on sectors**
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General background for tourism sector in Latvia

- ❑ Latvia's share of tourism in GDP: 4,2% (2013)
- ❑ Continuous growth with different growth tempos
 - ❑ Growth after 2008-2010 crisis (+9% in 2011, +7% 2012)
 - ❑ Slowdown for Ukraine conflict (-5% in 2014)
 - ❑ Still one of the fastest tourism growth regions in the Central and Eastern Europe region
- ❑ Small share of foreign tourists visiting Latvia compared to rest of Europe (0,3%)
- ❑ Local tourists - 25% choose to travel within Latvia – local potential
- ❑ Short stays dominate (1,5 nights)
- ❑ Foreign tourists – 6,8 million in 2015, around 2 million staying more than 1 night

Tourism resources

- Attractiveness for tourism: 53rd place in the world (WEF, 2015)
- Climatic conditions: summer season dominates
- Natural resources:
 - Sandy beaches
 - Geological and geomorphological sites (caves, waterfalls, etc.)
 - Biodiversity, intact nature
 - Inland waters and relevant resources
 - Landscapes
 - Changing seasons as resource
 - High quality tourism products using nature as a resource
- Man-made: historical places, museums, thematic parks and places

Factors and impacts of CC on tourism

Forecasted changes (factors)

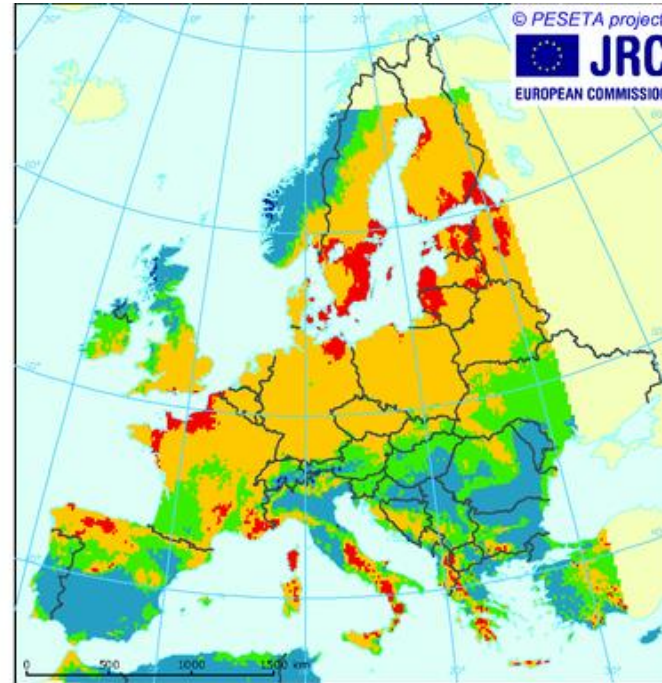
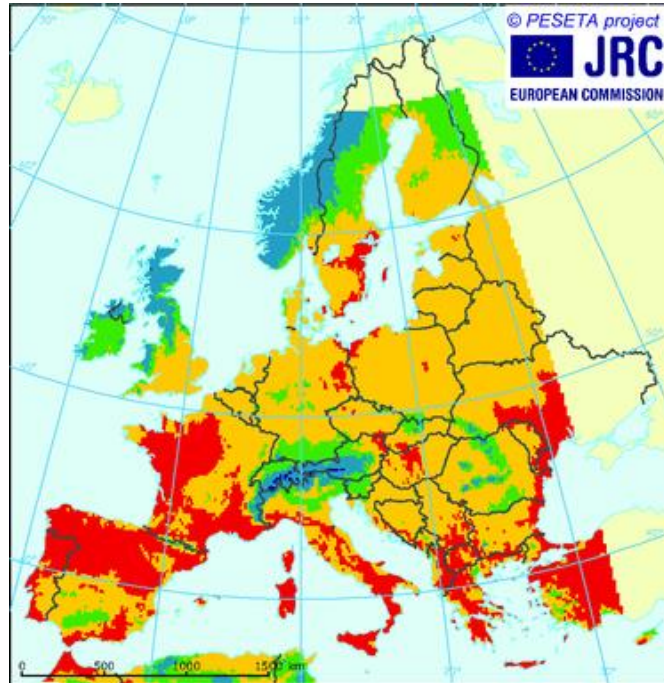
- Mean air temperature rise (0,8-1,4 degrees C)
- Mean water temperature rise (2-2,5 degrees C)
- More intense precipitation
- Changes of wind regime
- Extreme weather events (more floods, waves of heat/draught/chill/, storms etc.)
- Sea water rise

Impacts (both + and -)

- Longer summer tourism season
- Longer swimming season
- Negative impact on tourism infrastructure
- Impact on natural tourism resources (e.g. erosion, changes of flora and fauna, forest fires, windfall)
- Impact on active and passive recreation
- Winter season recreation affected

In general, CC impacts in Latvia on tourism sector are projected to be positive

Climate change impacts for tourism comfort index



Simulated conditions for summer tourism in Europe for 1961–1990 (left) and 2071–2100 (right) according to a High-Emissions Scenario (IPCC SRES A2)

Tourism Comfort Index (TCI)

Unfavourable (TCI: 0–40)

Good (TCI: 60–70)

Excellent (TCI: 80–100)

Acceptable (TCI: 40–60)

Very good (TCI: 70–80)

Source: EEA 2011

Vulnerable tourism places

- Coastal (sea) areas (Kurzeme, Vidzeme)
- Mountain and cross country skiing places (35 places)
- Open air events
- Flood risk territories
- Inland waters – rivers and lakes (loss of water quality)

Benefits of CC

Examples of positive impacts

- Boating in Dvietes paliene during spring meltwater
- Ice jam at Pļaviņas
- Ice blocks in Jūrmala
- New species, e.g. for birdwatching
- Development of coastal tourism and resorts for health

Landscapes

- Landscape as a resource, especially for tourism
- An element of quality of life
- Landscapes are influenced and changed due to variety of factors:
 - Natural (soils, topography, hydrological and climatic factors);
 - Economic e.g. access to markets, investments;
 - Technical factors;
 - Culture and social;
 - Spatial planning, environmental and agricultural policy and planning;
 - Global climate change

Typical landscapes



CC impacts on landscapes

- Change of hydrology
- Change of agricultural practice and its impact on landscape
- Impacts of forest fires
- Impacts of storms
- Coastal erosion
- Overall, impact may be loss of aesthetic, ecological, economic, historical, scientific, recreational landscape value

Main research methods and progress so far

- ❑ **Expert method**
 - ❑ specialists from fields of environmental management, spatial planning, tourism companies, tourism organisations, regional/local NGOs, insurance companies (110 respondents) – in progress
- ❑ **Quantitative survey of 650 respondents – finished, data processing ongoing**
- ❑ **Content analysis of internet tourism sites - in progress**
- ❑ **Risk identification and matrix – to be finalised after previous stages**
- ❑ **Economic analysis (adaptation measures) - – to be finalised after previous stages**

Challenges, opportunities and suggestions

- ❑ Current informational space limitations
- ❑ Cooperation among experts
- ❑ One body for data collection, analysis, research, measurements and monitoring on a long-term basis

Thank you!

Nameda Belmane

Email: nameda.belmane@ardenis-consult.com

birojs@baltkonsults.lv