

Measuring Sustainability in Coastal Communities - an application of Quality Coast indicators in tourism destinations

Schumacher, J.^{a,b,*} | Schernewski, G.^{a,b} | Karnauskaitė, D.^{a,b} | Kataržytė, M^{.a,b} | Schönwald, S.^a ^aLeibniz Institute for Baltic Sea Research Warnemünde, Seestraße 15, D-18119 Rostock, ^bKlaipėda University, H. Manto 84, LT-92294 Klaipeda *Contact: johanna.schumacher@io-warnemuende.de

1 Background

In the context of Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) and sustainable development indicator assessments have garnered increasing interest. Within the project **SUSTAIN** an indicator-based method was developed, tailor-made for European coastal municipalities¹. To add value and provide direct benefits the method was linked with the **QualityCoast Award** for sustainable tourism destinations.

Here, the results of seventeen **applications** for destinations in Germany, Lithuania and Indonesia are presented. They were conducted to test and further-develop the merged tool.

Detailed information on the methodology and current and future usages are shown on Poster 58.



2 Approach			
 Development of indicator tool in which QualityCoast indicators and SUSTAIN methodology are merged It includes six categories, divided into 25 issues and supported by 117 indicators Indicators are scored on a scale from 1 to 5 based on pre-defined answers (for details see Poster 58) 			R a >
Application to ten destinations in Germany, Lithuania and Indonesia to assess potential for measuring and comparing sustainability in coastal communities			
 Repeated applications for Rostock (Germany) and Lithuanian sites to analyse degree of subjectivity and evaluator's role Subdivision of indicator set into 'policy' and 'status' indicators 			T fu sl W
eference: ¹ Schernewski, Schönwald & Acknowledgements atarzyte (2014). Application and evaluation BaltCoast has received f an indicator set to measure and promote domonstration and		ts: eived fundii	ng fr

Reference: Katarzyte (of an indica sustainable development in coastal areas. Ocean and Coastal Management 101, 2-13.

providing their knowledge and expertise.

Figures: Reached category scores (out of 5) for all destinations within a country are shown. Percentages given for each destination reflect the 'Overall Sustainability,' an index value calculated based on the aggregation of all indicator scores. Numbers after destination names indicate repeated applications by different evaluators.

4 Lessons Learned

Reasons for strong variability in results for destinations between and within countries, and for repeated applications include:

- Qualitative nature of indicators and lacking
- benchmarks/reference values
- Variations in data quality
- Indicators outside sphere of local influence but affected by **higher levels** (similarities within regions)
- Equalizations of high and low scores on aggregated levels
- High level of evaluators' subjectivity for both status and policy indicators

6 BaltCoast Project

The three-year BONUS project 'BaltCoast – A Systems Approach Framework for Coastal Research and Management in the Baltic' aims at urther-developing a Systems Approach Framework (SAF) for a coherent and systematic management approach of coastal regions. SAF hall be used as a user-friendly tool with high practical value for science policy integration. Further information can be obtained from our vebsite: www.baltcoast.net

- om BONUS (Art 185) funded jointly from the European Union's Seventh Programme for research, technological development and stration, and from Baltic Sea national funding institutions.
- We would also like to express special thanks to Albert Salman (QualityCoast Programme) as well as Xenia Loizidou and Michalis Loizides (ISOTECH Ltd, Cyprus) for



5 Outlook

Despite major weaknesses the indicator set and application is suitable for raising awareness about sustainability and as a support for strategic planning in coastal communities. Within the **BONUS Project BaltCoast** the indicator set will be further developed. Conducted applications have identified the needs for:

- > A single evaluator to reduce subjectivity and improve quality of results
- Inclusion of optional indicators to increase flexibility and to allow communities to assess whether their efforts and managements options improve coastal sustainability











