

## Climate change adaptation in tourism hotspots on the German Baltic Coast

**“Strategies for the complex challenge of balancing increasing tourist pressure and the conservation of biodiversity in the biosphere reserve Südost-Rügen under altered climatic conditions”**

**Workshop of the project BiKliTour, in cooperation with the projects RADOST and Baltadapt**

**Summary:** Cooperation between climate-change-adaptation projects are still rare occasions, even though they can prevent parallel research, and initiate an approach to face climate-induced risks and chances with broader perspectives. With regards to these premises, the IÖR (Institute for ecological spatial planning, representing the project BiKliTour) and EUCC – the Coastal Union Germany (representing the projects RADOST and baltadapt) joint forces. On April 9th in Lauterbach on the island of Rügen, the projects invited decision-makers from tourism industry, regional municipalities and public institutions to meet for an interdisciplinary workshop and discuss potential touristic developments in nature-reserve-areas under altered conditions initiated by climate change.

After the presentation of current works and results of the projects BiKliTour by Dr. Gerd Lupp (IÖR) and RADOST and baltadapt by Christian Filies (EUCC-D), two fictitious scenarios of the touristic situation in the biosphere reserve “Südost-Rügen” in 2030 were presented. Both scenarios projected increasing tourism numbers for the island. The type of tourists however varied, as well as their demands. The “wellness-scenario” projected an increasing number of mature guests spending their vacations seeking a healthy, nature-based and slow holiday experience. The participant’s task was to think about specific tourism products together with places/areas in the biosphere reserve where to put them. Different approaches were made; most of them implementing the characteristics of a healthy environment into the range of wellness products; e.g. sun lounges in flower fields. Other possible attractions were nature-based activities, such as bird-watching.

The second scenario (“adventure”) presented an increase of a fun-seeking, younger majority of guests. In 2030 the summery heat of inner-German regions would drive people to the coasts. The average duration of the stay is much shorter than in the wellness scenario, bearing more pressure on traffic infrastructure. The demand of products and services varies significantly from the wellness-scenario. The participants stated that it was much harder to implement relevant touristic attractions and infrastructure in the biosphere reserve in this scenario. Some possible ways to combine the conservation aspect and adrenalin-based activities were exotic attempts such as wind-engine climbing or diving-bell-restaurants.

During the concluding discussion, the workshop participants stated that a sustainable development is crucial for the conservation of nature and biosphere reserves and thus their attractiveness for tourism. The wellness scenario would enhance sustainable tourism in a more efficient way and should therefore be pursued. A combination of climate-adapted tourism infrastructure and sustainable development would be the only way to preserve the touristic potential for future generations that might indeed face some of the climatic challenges in 2030 discussed in this workshop.

The aim of the workshop was to use fictitious but still realistic future (climate and tourism development) scenarios to initiate a joint strategic thinking amongst regional decision makers and enable them to take the right steps towards a future regional development agreed upon as desirable.

