



## **Climate trends and tourist flows: first results of the case study in the Sila National Park (southern Italy) within the INDECIS Project.**

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The scientific community agrees that climate change is generating a series of direct/indirect impacts on the environment and on humans that cannot be underestimated anymore. Consequently, it becomes urgent and necessary to know how this phenomenon affects ecosystems, productive activities and human well-being in order to plan measures for mitigation and adaptation. One sector whose performance is closely related to climate trends is tourism. The influence that climate change can have on tourism determines the need for adopting appropriate strategies to guarantee the sustainability of tourist destinations.

In order to develop models and tools for the near-real-time acquisition of climate data and for spatial interpolation, visualization and communication of climate monitoring to territorial stakeholders, the INDECIS project has involved a partnership of experts in the climate sector, from 12 European countries. The INDECIS Project intends to develop an integrated approach to produce a series of climate indicators aimed at the high priority sectors of the Global Framework for Climate Services of the World Meteorological Organization (agriculture, risk reduction, energy, health, water), with the addition of tourism.

With regards to the tourism sector, the territory of the Sila National Park (Calabria, southern Italy) has been selected as a study area for the acquisition of sectorial data on tourism (in particular, attendance data and tourist arrivals) and for the realization of a Workshop useful for the identification and enhancement of climate services that should be provided to stakeholders of the tourist destination, based on their needs. The Workshop was organized with three focus groups related to the following tourism activities: snow tourism, water and lake tourism, and earth tourism. Within the focus groups, the identified stakeholders - hotel groups, local associations, tourist agencies, parks, etc. - were able to highlight their needs in relation to the climate services that the INDECIS Project intends to offer.

From the results it emerges how the stakeholders consider essential, in the case of long-term forecasts regarding both positive and negative weather conditions for their activities, to start a synergy between the institutional, the economic and social networks to undertake a joint action. In

the case of a positive forecast, these actions could consist in increasing the tourist offer, building new infrastructures, planning new investments, and in the realization of promotional actions to attract further customers. In the case of negative forecasts, the stakeholders proposed the development of a new tourist destination model, as an alternative to the existing one, with new activities that could adapt to the new climatic conditions.

In this context, the local community is the key component of the destination and the main stakeholder in tourism planning. Therefore, it is essential to pay attention to communities and work in the context of tourist destinations on a local scale to encourage mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

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