

VOL. III | DECEMBER 2019

NEWSLETTER



SOCLIMPACT

DEDICATED TO THE CANARY ISLANDS



WHY THE CANARY ISLANDS?

Last event in the Canary Islands

The development of Local Working Groups in every region that take part in this project is an essential activity.

This type of event offers information and tools so that the stakeholders can debate and validate the results of the project. A fundamental activity in order to take action against **Climate Change** impacts, **taking into account the policy frame for each region.**

- Forest Fire in Gran Canaria
- Local Working Group
- Networking activities

Over the last few months, the Canary Islands, as a region that takes part in SOCLIMPACT project, has experienced lots of different events.

Unfortunately, one of these events has been the huge forest fire that affected Gran Canaria over two weeks last August. In the following pages, we dedicate a special mention to this tragic episode.

On the other hand, special networking activities related to the project and its purpose have been developed in Brussels by our Coordinator Carmelo León, from the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (ULPGC).

Finally, The Canary Islands received a special mention in this third newsletter for having organised the second Local Working Group in this region.



FOREST FIRE IN GRAN CANARIA

On August 2019, Gran Canaria was affected by a huge forest fire, which burnt around 9,636ha and forced the evacuation of around 9,000 people. According to Federico Grillo, one of the factors that triggered this wildfire is climate change.

One of the goals of the SOCLIMPACT project is to study the impact of Climate Change on the risk of forest fire in the tourism sector of several EU islands and archipelagos, thus contributing towards advancing the state of the art research on this topic: While the immediate effects of fires can be negative, in the long-term tourists seem to be somewhat insensitive to fire risks and do not tend to change their travel plans, even when informed about wildfires present at the destination (Hystad & Keller, 2008).

In some tourist destinations, where wildfires happen almost on a yearly basis, about 33% of tourists are not discouraged at all by this risk factor, while 42% would change their behaviour only if the risk is very high (Thapa, Cahyanto, Holland & Absher, 2013). Empirical studies demonstrate that residents would pay around 39.5-47.2€ per year to reinforce tourist destinations protection against fires, while visitors would pay 5€ (in the form of a parking fee) for the same purpose (Bonnieux, Carpentier & Paoli, 2006). During 1986-1993 and 2001-2003 (11 years), 448,799 fires were recorded across Portugal (174,057), Spain (159,523), Italy (97,786) and the Mediterranean regions of France (29,823), with a total loss of 4,565,129.625 ha of forest. The mean area of forest damaged by fire per year ranges from 178,415ha in Spain to 17,634ha in Mediterranean France (Kountouris & Remoundou, 2011). The authors have discovered that forest fires negatively affects life satisfaction. These results imply significant welfare losses.

THE MEAN YEARLY WELFARE COST OF FOREST FIRES PER HOUSEHOLD AT COUNTRY LEVEL IS:

2,900-3,622€ *IN SPAIN*

2,590-3,165€ *IN PORTUGAL*

1,778-1,885€ *IN ITALY*

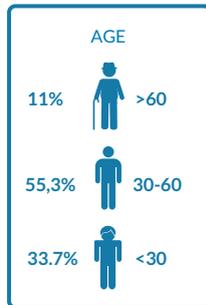
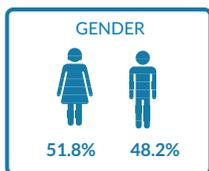
317-358€ *IN MEDITERRANEAN FRANCE*



SURVEYS

One of the objectives of the project is to estimate the economic value of changes in the Environmental Services of the marine and coastal ecosystems (inputs for the Coastal Tourism sector), due to Climate Change impacts and related policies. In order to achieve the desired aims, a significant sample of European citizens will be surveyed in the project, and asked for their opinions and perceptions of Climate Change in the context of making their decisions to travel to several islands destinations.

Focal Groups meetings constitute a crucial step in the survey design, as they are useful for the pre-testing of the questionnaire and the evaluation of its effectiveness according to the research needs. A total of six focus groups meetings were carried out between March and May 2019. These meetings took place in **The Canary Islands, Malta, Cyprus, Sicily, Crete and The Balearic islands**. This allowed for the refinement and improvement of the surveys design.



During the summer of 2019, tourists were surveyed at destination. They were asked to give their opinion about the image of the destination; to indicate how important environmental attributes are for their travelling decisions and whether they would choose a different destination if the visible impact of Climate Change could be perceived on the island; and lastly to choose between several options containing alternative adaptation policies that would ameliorate Climate Change impacts at the destination.

This was done in order to measure their willingness to pay for these policies. **A total of 2300 surveys were completed** at the following destinations: Antilles (Martinique & Guadeloupe), The Azores, The Balearic Islands (Mallorca), The Baltic Islands (Fehmarn), The Canary Islands (Gran Canaria), Crete, Cyprus, Madeira, Malta and Sicily.



EXPECTED RESULTS



Heat Waves Amelioration



Infectious Diseases Prevention



Beaches Protection



Water Supply Policy



Forest Fire Prevention



Lands Habitats Restoration



Marine Habitats Restoration



Coastal Infrastructure protection



Cultural Heritage In protection

2528
Surveys at destinations



TOURISTS NATIONALITY



Germany 20.9%



France 17.1%



Italy 12.2%



UK 10.9%



Portugal 8.3%



PRELIMINARY RESULTS



Info session on the first results of the H2020 project, 19 September 2019 (Brussels)

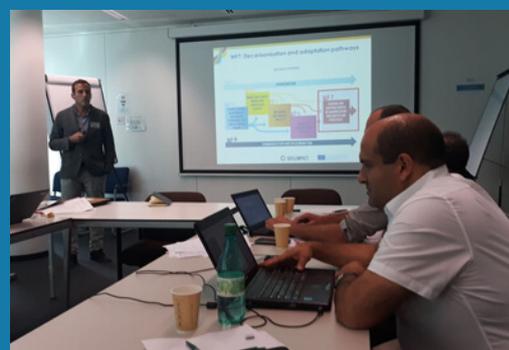
Soclimpact presented some preliminary results in a lunchtime session in Brussels.

Ms. Sigi Gruber, Head of The Marine Resources Unit (EU Science & Innovation) gave the introduction and highlighted the fact that "Europe is a great island in the Ocean..", hence, the importance of researching these issues for Europe.

The lunchtime information session was organised by the [Directorate-General for Research and Innovation \(RTD\)](#)

and the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME). This event took place in Brussels when the project had been running for 18 months.

The board of directors, Carmelo León (ULPGC), Ghislain Dubois (Ramboll) and Ulrike Lehr (GWS) took the opportunity to present some preliminary results to give some insight into the relevance of the obtained research output for policy.



Soclimpact members making a presentation about where we have got so far and what stage we are currently



PUBLICATIONS

High-Resolution wave and sea level climatology atlas

Modelling is one of the most useful tools for the assessment of likely sea-level rise, extreme waves, coastal flooding, coastal erosion and other hazards that affect the coastal environment and maritime economic activities.

In this new publication from the SoclimPact Project, entitled "High-resolution wave and sea level climatology atlas" and already available in our Knowledge Library, **different stakeholders will be able to review the wave and surge data sources selected for SOCLIMPACT.**

This kind of forecast has a huge significance for the construction of the offshore installation, for the design of port and harbour structures, for the management of naval operations and for engineering designs.

The main practical scope of the review conducted for this report is to assess data gaps that might condition the computation of meaningful wave and surge related hazard indicators and the subsequent activities of SOCLIMPACT.



[SEE FULL REPORT](#)



How important is the use of data for the SOCLIMPACT project?

The economic assessment in the SOCLIMPACT project rests on two complementary modelling methodologies entitled the macro-econometric GINFORS model and general equilibrium GEM-E3 model. It is worth acknowledging that this modelling work enables the mapping of the Blue Economy sectors in the European Union islands, to be refined notwithstanding that it was not exactly what we had addressed from the beginning.

If it were not for the fact that Data on these sectors (mainly at a regional level) is in short supply, out of date, scattered and full of missing information, we would not make this effort. For this reason, this delivery documents the development of the islands' economic data sets.



Dr. Carmelo León, SOCLIMPACT project coordinator

Not only does Carmelo León shed some light on how Climate Change is affecting tourism, but also takes a stance on how to face this environmental challenge. Have you seen the way our SOCLIMPACT leader emphasises sustainability?



Moreover, it describes the methodology that might be applicable to enhance this data analysis so that one can further improve the mapping of the blue growth sectors. We can also state that the report encompasses clear tables in which we provide the analyst with valuable inputs to gain further understanding of how to carry out data analyses. Obviously, researchers might also draw on the database at liberty in many other ways. With respect to fishing and aquaculture activities, even though we recognise that all identified datasets have missing information, this shortcoming might be overcome by resorting to any other secondary source of information that might be available in the broadly known repositories.

It is not our intention that this report provides the whole picture. Conversely, what we do intend is to point out the existing difficulties in finding data and, in turn, provide some information about the sort of difficulties that we have encountered so far.



[SEE FULL REPORT](#)



What do we know about the methodology to assess Climate Change Impacts?

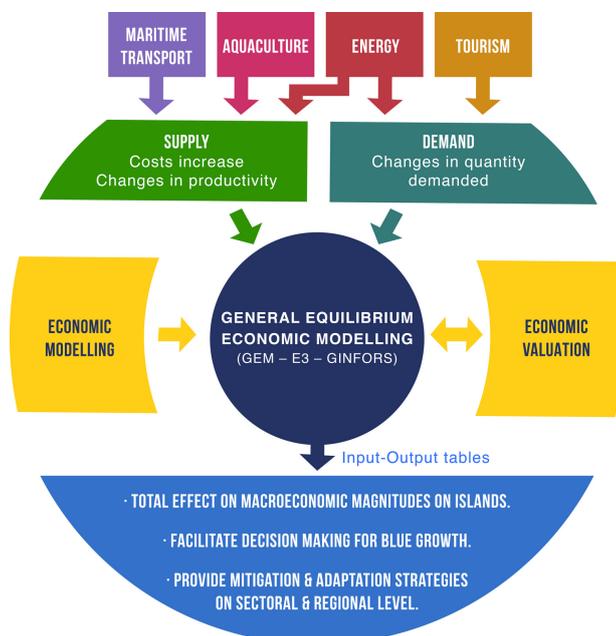
For the SOCLIMPACT project, this “valuation” is crucial in order to get useful information that one can use in order to develop policies for the Blue Economy sectors in seventeen European islands, that is, Cyprus, Malta, the Baltic Islands, Übersetzun, Fehmarn, Rügen, Usedom, the Balearics, Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, Crete, Azores, Madeira, the Canary Islands, Martinique and Guadalupe.

At the moment, the existing literature on this issue is complemented with additional methodologies, thereby one is able to obtain an estimation of the macroeconomic impacts of Climate Change. This valuation brings into focus four key sectors in the islands mentioned above: tourism, aquaculture, maritime transport, and energy. The objective of this deliverable is to gain a preliminary understanding of the benefit transfer method, how it can be used and how reliable this methodology is.

It is important to point out that there is a wide range of methodologies whose usage is spread across different sectors with the aim of measuring the economic impacts of Climate Change. Therefore, this report not only aims to give an overview of what has been studied in the existing literature so far but also pin down the research gaps. Finally, it is hoped that this meta-analysis approach can be of help in encouraging further comprehensive gathering of information, collating it and continuing to analyse relevant results.



[SEE FULL REPORT](#)





NETWORKING

2nd Outermost Regions Forum for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, 9 July 2019 (Brussels)

The European Commission organised the 2nd Outermost Regions Forum for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, a networking event, where SOCLIMPACT took part in a special panel entitled “**Blue Economy and Climate Change Adaptation**”.

Some of the important subjects considered were: the barriers and drivers for outermost regions to becoming familiarised with planned or implemented Adaptation to Climate Change, and how outermost regions can be integrated into the EU Adaptation Strategy.

SOCLIMPACT project Coordinator, Dr. Carmelo León (ULPGC), had the opportunity to share with experts and stakeholders the risks associated with Climate Change Adaptation in EU outermost regions, as well as potential actions to counteract their effects in Blue Economy sectors: Coastal and Maritime Tourism, Aquaculture, Marine Energy and Maritime Transport.



SOCLIMPACT project coordinator, Dr. Carmelo León (ULPGC), had the opportunity to share with experts and stakeholders the risk associated with Climate Change Adaptation in European outermost regions, as well as potential actions to counteract their effects in Blue Economy sectors.

Synergies and networking are some of the benefits of a project. Especially if society and stakeholders can take advantage of its results and knowledge.

This deliverable details the activities that SOCLIMPACT project have developed in this regard. The document includes an event calendar, what type of project and who has taken part in the different events celebrated, as well as the topics addressed in each of them.



[SEE FULL REPORT](#)





Networking and knowledge sharing event for decarbonisation projects, 5 September 2019 (Brussels)

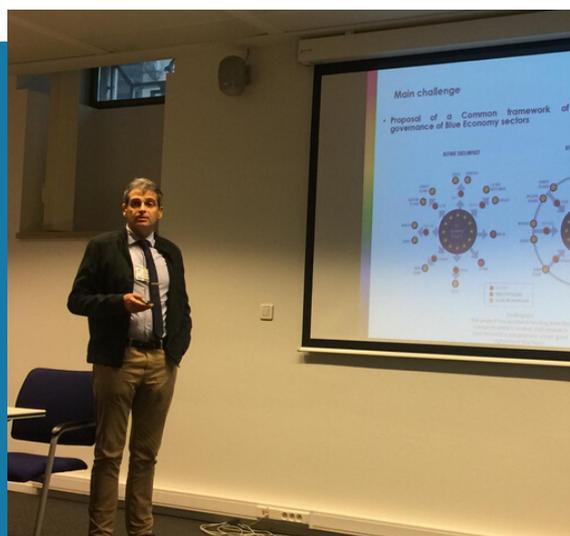
The networking event organised by EASME and DG Research & Innovation set out the following objectives:

1. To address the challenge of defining the carbon-neutral pathways that are compatible with the Paris Agreement by taking into account both research and policy perspectives.
2. To exchange current experience in defined topics (i.e., focus groups) not only to gain insight into the current state of the art, but also to pin down the requirements needed for future developments.
3. To provide a networking space, for attendees (projects representatives, research & modelling teams and policymakers) to meet one another and, in turn, raise questions together and share reflections on their ongoing projects.

In addition to bringing up the issue of their projects goals, results and discussions, **SOCLIMPACT** had the honour to deliver a **presentation on modelling of impact chains** with practical implications for policymakers in EU islands (Cyprus, Malta, the Baltic Islands (Übersetzun, Fehmarn, Rügen, Usedom), the Balearics, Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, Crete, Azores, Madeira, the Canary Islands, Martinique, Guadalupe).

Carmelo León, sharing & adding value

As far as a European project frame is concerned, networking becomes important inasmuch as it works crafting experiences and creating synergies.





THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The event was celebrated in the beautiful Palazzo Comitini in Palermo (Sicily)



From 19th to 22nd November, the last General Assembly took place in Palermo (Sicily). The UNESCO World Heritage city hosted this event where all the SOCLIMPACT partners met to review what we have done so far and what the next steps are to keep the project on track.

During the first day, the main topics of discussion were the progress restitutions, future steps, how to improve the linkages between work packages and a reminder of the rules.

On the second day, in order to work more efficiently, the different partners were divided into 4 working groups. Each group presented those variables that shaped the models for every sector. Some of the conclusions of this session included developing an island report and providing a guideline on where to get the data and the information.

Finally, on the last day, the session focussed on an overall assessment composed of comments and recommendations, the compliance with objectives and the work-plan, as well as its impacts and its implementation.

This was the fourth General Assembly held by the SOCLIMPACT Project. An important event composed of activities needed for the proper running of a complex project.





DISSEMINATION - CONGRESSES



ECOMOD NETWORK

The SOCLIMPACT Project represented by its partner GWS received great attention in EcoMod2019 thanks to its special session dedicated to highlighting the vulnerability of the OR to Climate Change and the scarcity of disaggregated visions and applied research on socioeconomic consequences.



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7TH IATE CONFERENCE

The 7th #IATE Conference had the participation of our partner Università di Bologna with Paolo Figini and a presentation entitled "The impact of Climate Change on coastal tourism: a literature review of impact chains".



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WORKSHOP-TOURISM: ECONOMIC & MANAGEMENT



Dr. Paolo Figini gave a talk on Climate Change and Tourism, in this workshop celebrated last September in Uruguay. It is no surprise that both topics are research priorities for the SOCLIMPACT project. It was our partner from University of Bologna that addressed the issue of how Climate Change can affect tourism on islands.



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NECSTOUR

Sergio Moreno Gil from Instituto Universitario TIDES took part in the NECSTouR Conference: "Driving Sustainable Destinations Change Through Trans-Regional Cooperation" where we had the opportunity to present the SOCLIMPACT Project as a tool to achieve a behavioural change towards European Sustainable Destinations.



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AQUACULTURE EUROPE 2019

Last September, our partner AquaBioTech Group had a great experience in Berlin. Not only did they present the SOCLIMPACT project, but they also set up a stand from which our experts touched upon how SOCLIMPACT was spotting the hazards of aquaculture on EU islands.



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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON REGIONAL CLIMATE (CORDEX)



Regional Climate Models was the main issue at the last International Congress (CORDEX2019) in Beijing. The interaction between atmosphere and ocean and how the small-scale oceanic processes have the potential to affect the regional climate was the main topic of speech of our partner Universitat de les Illes Balears.



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WORKSHOP: STRATEGIES FOR THE SUSTAINABLE WHALE WATCHING

How does Climate Change affect the activity of whale watching? This and many more questions were addressed in the workshop celebrated, on 22nd October, in Tenerife where SOCLIMPACT, represented by Andreia Sousa from Fundacao da Faculdade de Ciencias da Universidade de Lisboa, applied the climate and whale watching scenarios to this beautiful island.



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II LOCAL WORKING GROUP IN THE CANARY ISLAND

On 8th November, the partners and coordinators of the SOCLIMPACT project organised a workshop where the main blue economy sectors took part and had the opportunity to validate and discuss the first results.

The event looks for proper use of the document in order for the results to become real actions against Climate Change impacts in European Islands.



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COP25 MADRID 2019

Dr. Carmelo León, director of the University Institute TIDES of the ULPGC, and coordinator of the SOCLIMPACT Project funded by the EU through the call H2020, attended the Official Conference of the Parties (COP25), taking part in an event entitled "Climate Action in Travel & Tourism – COP25 programme" organised by The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) and the COP.



The event, which was attended by personalities at the highest level in Climate Change issues, began with the intervention of the United Nations Executive Secretary for Climate Change, Patricia Espinosa and was presided over by Gloria Guevara, President and Executive Director of the WTTC.

The interventions were led by representatives of the tourism industry (Iberia, Europamundo Vacaciones, CLIA) as well as the environmental sector (GSD, IETA, Acciona) and moderated by Professor Geoffrey Lipman, Co-founder of the SUNx Programme - Strong Universal Network. On this occasion, Dr. Carmelo León participated as a keynote speaker (laying the scientific foundations for the debate) and as a lecturer **highlighting the role and the importance of the SOCLIMPACT project in facing the challenges that Climate Change represents for tourism.**

Taking advantage of the celebration of this international summit in Spanish territory, Dr. Carmelo León used examples of the Canarian economy, such as the case of the recent fires in Gran Canaria and how this event affects the future decisions of the tourist when choosing a destination, the economic losses in terms of renewal costs, or those costs related to the deterioration of the image and the loss of value of the tourist experience.

The central theme of the event revolved around the importance that travel and tourism has for the economy and society worldwide, which has allowed millions of people to discover new destinations, meet family and friends and generate thousands of jobs, especially in developing countries, which has revealed this sector as a true global economic power.

The tourism and travel industry accounted for 10.4% of world GDP in 2018, thus becoming the leading industry in the economy, trade, employment and development worldwide. However, **it is also a sector that contributes about 8% of global greenhouse gas emissions.**

In this sense, the World Travel and Tourism Council has set a goal for 2050 for the sector to become climate neutral, a challenge that many companies are already demonstrating by reducing the impacts of their activities. The session focused on the analysis of what is needed and what travel and tourism companies are doing to achieve this goal.

Last year, the organisation signed up to the United Nations Climate Neutral Now initiative with a commitment to measure its greenhouse gas emissions, reduce what it can and offset the rest, while promoting the same climate-friendly regime to its 15 members worldwide

"The ravages of climate change will soon require all of us, governments and corporations in particular, to do things differently", Espinosa said, citing a recent open letter from the directors of major financial institutions: "If some businesses and industries don't adjust," they will simply cease to exist.

Among the opening remarks at the event, President and CEO, Gloria Guevara, noted that the message is clear: "Climate and the environment are top priorities." She also pointed out that we need to find a way to offer "environmentally friendly" travel (...) adding: "Not traveling, may help the environment but it would be very irresponsible" as it would lead to greater poverty, higher unemployment, and ultimately greater damage to the environment.



Would you like to suggest any content for our next newsletter?

Contact us at pot@soclimpact.org



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