



Special Session Proposal

Regional transitions: Adaptation and transformations in the tourism sector

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Abstract

Tourism, as society, is facing many environmental, digital, and social challenges. Destinations and tourist regions are at the forefront of the so-called transition of tourism. On the one hand they are directly affected by these challenges and on the other hand they are important places for actions and adaptation strategies. Adaptation is understood here as the means of adjusting a system to a hazard to reduce its vulnerability. It is one of the fundamental components of transitions. However, to be successful over time, the adaptations implemented must fix the roots of vulnerability and thus lead to transformation of the system. However, adaptation strategies developed in the tourism sector, particularly in the face of climate challenge and other environmental challenges, are often reactive and do not lead to sustainable transitions. Furthermore, adaptation processes can result in the development of maladaptation when the strategies implemented lead to increased vulnerability. These questions and related issues have no geographical barriers and are present on all continents. Thus, thinking about transition through transformative adaptation requires drawing on examples of success adaptation and/or maladaptation from a variety of geographical settings and types of tourism (mountain, ecotourism, coastal, city, etc.).

Accordingly, this session aims to bring together researchers for various geographical regions to discuss contributions on the adaptation of tourism to current global and regional challenges. These challenges could be related to climate change, mitigation imperative, labour shortage, digitalisation, social and structural changes, sustainability, etc. In sum, this session aims to address some of the following questions amongst others:

- What factors explain the success of adaptation strategies in the tourism sector?
- What are the factors favouring the development of maladaptation?
- What are the (governance implications of the transition? What role for the regional/local levels)
- How do tourism transition question territorial development? How do they contribute to the renewal of models, methods and approaches?
- How do tourism transitions drive local, regional and national development in developing countries?
- What are the socio-cultural of tourism transitions in developing and emerging economies?
- How are tourism transitions bridging/widening gender and other inequality gaps?
- What are the research approaches and specific methodology challenges targeting the transition and adaptation that need further mastering?

- What are the gaps in knowledge of the adaptation and transition research at regional level?
- ...

This special session is open to papers from all disciplines of regional science, whether they present theoretical reflection and/or empirical results.

Keywords: Adaptation, transformation, transition, tourism, maladaptation, regions, destinations