### Climate Change and The Mediterranean: recognizing problems-managing solutions

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### Abstract

Concerns regarding climate change vis a vis tourism have been expressed, by for example (Smithers,2016, Viner, 2006, EEA,2012, IPCC, 2014). A recent assessment reviewing ‘Disappearing Destinations’ using cases from the Mediterranean and more globally, by Jones and Phillips (2011), has also explored such notions.

With respect to such, it is becoming increasingly important to identify destination management strategies that protect tourism resources and economies against predicted climate change. This is especially pertinent to areas significantly reliant on the tourism industry for their economic and social wellbeing. According to the recent 2014 UNWTO assessment of tourism , Europe still accounts for over 42% of all tourist arrivals and in absolute terms growth was led by Southern and Mediterranean Europe, which reported some 11 million more international arrivals (+6%) in 2013(UNWTO, 2014) **.** In this respect tourism provides a significant and often growing contribution to GDP (up to 30%) for such regions. The Mediterranean also provides a fitting example where direct and indirect pressures from climate change are increasingly impacting on the often unsustainable tourism developments along much of the Mediterranean coastline and hinterlands. Islands of the Mediterranean , in this respect, provide fitting examples where, in many cases, over 25% of GDP is reliant on the local tourist economy. Strategies to tackle such challenges are now firmly on the political agenda. In this context this paper will aim to discuss threats to, and consequences of current tourism growth and development and emerging issues associated with risk, natural hazards and resilience measures that are related to current estimations of climate change impact.

This includes an evaluation through primary case study research current threats, management issues and consequent policy choices. The paper proposes that public perception and policy implementation often ignore climate change warnings resulting in inadequate or inappropriate management responses. In conclusion integrated sustainable management strategies are considered and advocated for managing tourism destinations and the associated threats from climate change. Recommendations are considered which aim to ameliorate projected impacts on the tourism industries within the Mediterranean.