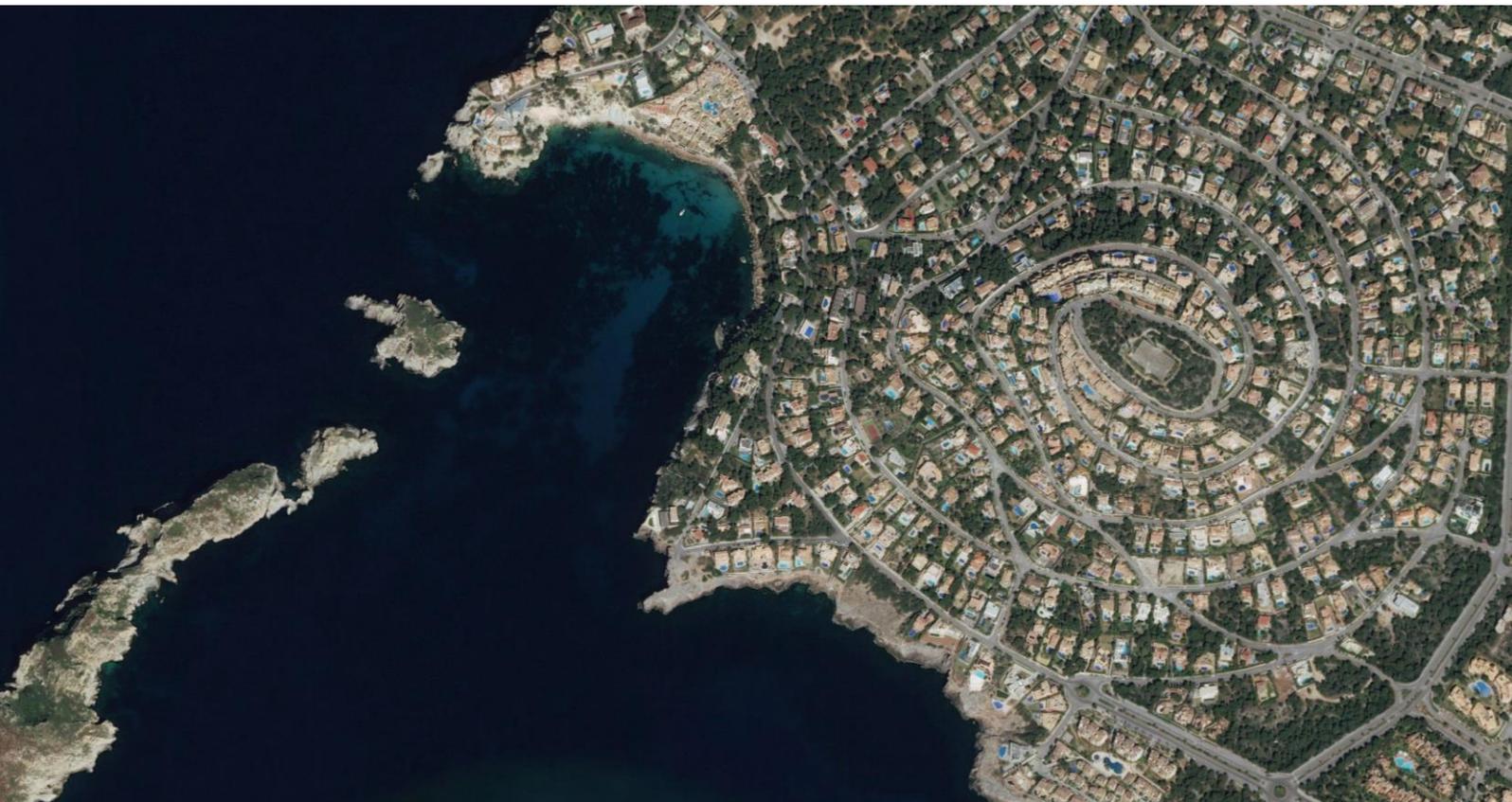


Tourism and the environment

Towards a reporting mechanism in Europe



ANNEX 14. Indicator assessment TOUR008

Percentage of destination that is designated for protection



Cover design: ETC/ULS

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European Topic Centre on Urban Land and Soil Systems (ETC/ULS)

Departament de Geografia

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB)

08193 – Bellaterra

Spain

Tel.: +34 935813520

Web: uls.eionet.europa.eu

Indicator name: TOUR008 - Percentage of destination that is designated for protection

Assessment

Indicator name

TOUR008 - Percentage of destination that is designated for protection

Key policy question

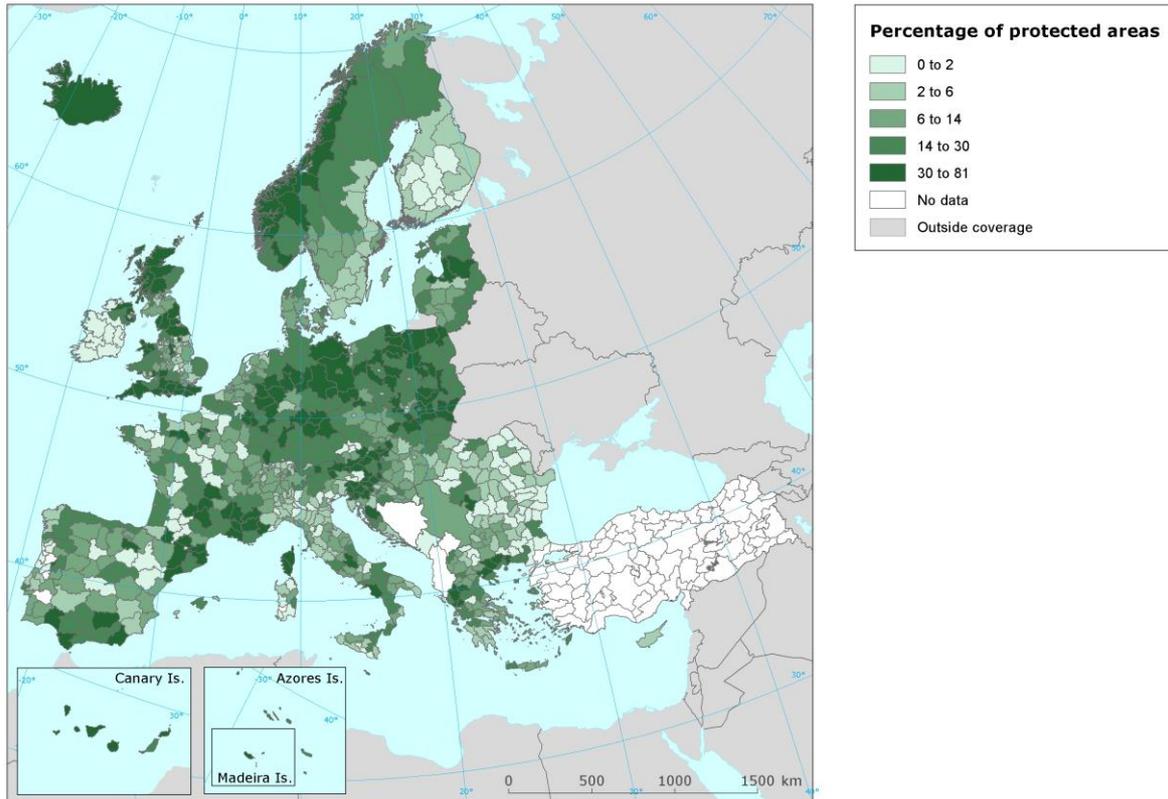
What is the potential for promoting nature-based tourism in each territory?

Key message

Although the protection of nature is not strictly a response to – or at least not a response uniquely due to – tourism development, in many cases protected areas were created also in order to help control recreational and tourism pressure on natural sites with high levels of social attractiveness, while they could also help manage visitation, and control the negative impacts of visitors. In this regard, as protected areas have become the most commonly visited places for nature-based tourism and ecotourism activities in Europe, it can be assumed that the level of nature protection of any territory can be also linked to the potential level of ecotourism use of that territory.

Key assessment

Europe has different levels of nature protection in terms of protected surface, depending on the country and the region inside each country. About 1,121,500 km² – or 25.6% of the EU-28 terrestrial land – are protected under Natura 2000 or national designations, or some combination of the two. Sites in the Natura 2000 network now account for 18% of the EU's land territory, not only providing invaluable protection for vulnerable wildlife and habitats, but also constituting some of the most valued destinations for ecotourism or nature-based tourism. Protected areas more generally (including nationally and locally designated sites) now cover 21.8% (excluding Greenland) of the land territory of the European Environment Agency's member countries and collaborating countries – i.e. 39 countries in total. At the national level, however, these percentages present significant differences: countries like Ireland, Finland, Romania or Bulgaria have low percentages of protected surface, while others such as Germany, Poland or Slovenia have higher percentages. There are also other countries with big regional differences (i.e. France, Spain, Greece, UK, etc.).



Specific policy question

What are the potential conflicts in land use by tourism (with other activities)?

Specific assessment

Protected areas visitation by tourists and leisure excursionists can be a benefit for those places and the surrounding areas, but at the same time it can create pressure and conflicts with other activities. In this case, though, there is no data at European level to analyse this issue so far.

Specifications

Indicator definition

Percentage of territory designated for protection under different protection figures included in the nationally designated areas (CCDA or Common Database on Designated Areas).

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Rationale

The more the territory under any nature protection scheme (Natura 2000, national and regional protected areas, etc.) is protected, the highest the probability to increase its use for nature-based tourism or ecotourism, as protected areas are the key destinations for these types of tourism.

Policy context

EC and national policies on tourism and sustainable tourism.

EU regulations regarding terrestrial and marine ecosystems: Marine Strategy Framework Directive, Habitat Directive.
National and sub-national spatial planning regulations.

Methodology for indicator calculation

Calculation of the percentage of NUTS 3 total surface included in the CCDA database.

Data specifications

The Common Database on Designated Areas (CDDA) is more commonly known as Nationally designated areas. It is the official source of protected area information from European countries to the World Database of Protected Areas (WDPA). The inventory began in 1995 under the CORINE programme of the European Commission. It is now one of the agreed Eionet priority data flows maintained by EEA with support from the European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity.

Rationale uncertainties

Not all the ecotourism and nature based tourism activity takes place inside protected areas, nor all the protected areas receive the same level of tourism visitation.

Ownership and contacts

ETC/ULS.

European Topic Centre on Urban Land and Soil
Systems (ETC/ULS)
Departament de Geografia
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB)
08193 – Bellaterra
Spain

Tel.: +34 935813520
Web: uls.eionet.europa.eu

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