



Gerald Schernewski • Ulrich Schiewer  
(Eds.)

# Baltic Coastal Ecosystems

Structure, Function and  
Coastal Zone Management

With 93 Figures and 29 Tables



Springer



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# Tourism and Environmental Quality of the German Baltic Coast: Conflict or Chance?

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## Abstract

In many coastal resorts along the German Baltic coast, tourism contributes to more than 50 % to the public income and is the exclusive economic factor. The Baltic coast along the German federal state of Schleswig-Holstein has been facing a stagnation in tourism for several years. Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, on the other hand, shows an ongoing boom. The target of 13 million overnight stays per year along the Baltic coast of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern is expected to be reached soon. However, surveys show that only 17.4 % of the tourists mainly spent their holidays in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. Tourists are aware of regions with similar offers and quality. Therefore, competition between resorts and regions along the Baltic coast is increasing.

Surveys show that environmental quality along the German Baltic coast is predominantly regarded as good or very good. This is an important aspect for tourists and is expected to become even more important in future. Bathing water and beach quality are most important in this respect. Improved sewage treatment nowadays ensures a high hygienic bathing water quality along the German Baltic coast. Despite that, water quality is still negatively affected by eutrophication, the accidental release of harmful substances and natural processes.

We discuss environmental quality, its public perception and its utilisation in tourism advertisement using two examples: a) The environmentally attractive island of Usedom on the eastern Baltic coast. Usedom reflects the boom situation in eastern Germany, where environmental quality is regarded as of minor importance for tourism development at the moment. b) The town of Eckernförde on the western Baltic coast, which faces a stagnation of guest numbers. High environmental quality is regarded and promoted as the main advantage of Eckernförde. Increasing competition for tourists requires the development of a specific image and target group-oriented advertisement. Environmental quality is regarded as one key factor for this.