

# The influence of local cultural values on the governance of adaptation. A comparison between two coastal communities at the German Baltic Sea.

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# Background of the Research

# RADOST - Regional Adaptation Strategies for the German Baltic Sea Coast



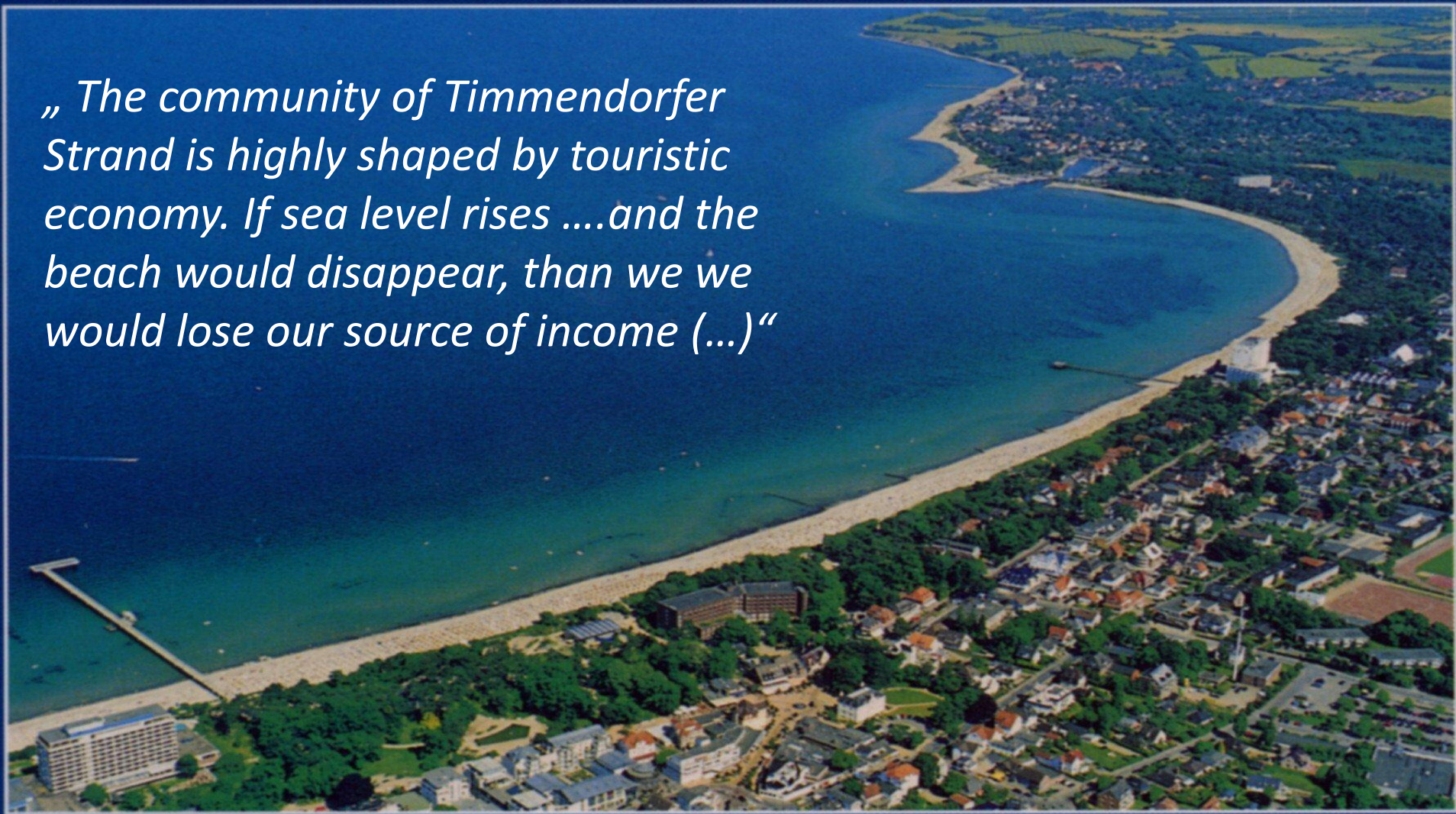
# Research Hypothesis

# Study Region: Two communities at the southern Baltic Sea Coast in Germany 300 km apart

European Climate Change Adaptation Conference 2013.  
Session: Governance of Adaptation – Barriers and Opportunities to  
Climate Adaptation. 19 March 2013



*„ The community of Timmendorfer Strand is highly shaped by touristic economy. If sea level rises ....and the beach would disappear, than we we would lose our source of income (...)"*

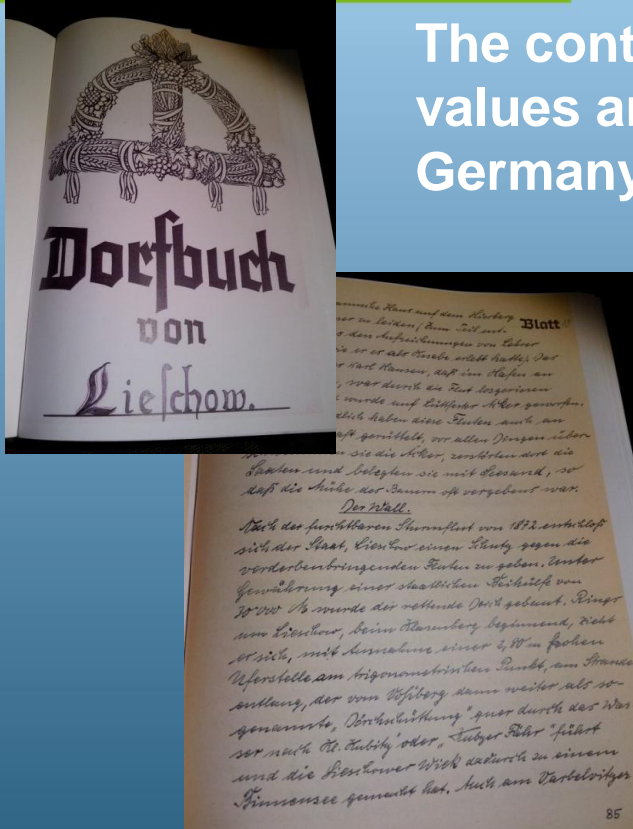




*„... In the community of Ummanz we are surrounded by water. Our nature is intact, we are almost living like in an animal park...we live where others want to make vacation... And we have every spring and fall the bird migration... approximately 20.000 sea birds.. this is an impressive event.. We also have a large forest on the island (...)“*



## The contribution of history to the understanding of local values and actions: The example of storm surges in Germany.



Explanation about the erection of a dyke (Der Wall) in 1873 in the chronicle of Ummanz (Mecklenburg Pommerania), Source: Mursewiek: 1947)



1872 Storm's historic mark surge in Dahme (Schleswig-Holstein), Source: Eckert: 1992

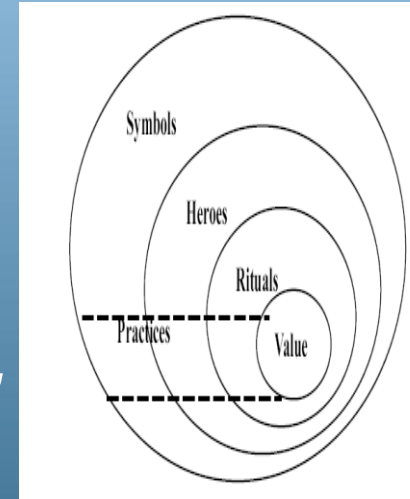


Timmendorfer Strand (Schleswig-Holstein) after the highest previously known flood in November 1872; Source: Herde:2002

## Research focus:

Values in the community; perceived level of threat posed by climate change and how this affects governance of adaptation;

*“Culture refers to the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experiences, ... values, attitudes, religion, ... spatial relations, material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations (...)”*  
(Appelt et al: 2011)



The 'Onion Diagram' of culture:  
Shili Sun, 'Organizational Culture  
and Its Themes', International  
Journal of Business and  
Management, Vol. 3, No. 12 (2008).

Methods: Interviews, background- & media analysis

# Snapshot of Findings

Similarities & differences in the communities development and the resulting consequences for the adaptation of coastal traditions were classified in four central categories. Investigation: through historic events.

- Coastal Protection
- Tourism
- Agriculture & Fisheries
- Understanding of Nature/ Sense of Place

# Coastal Protection: Identical exposure to storm surges (1872, 1949, 1954, 1995, 2002, 2006 ) shaped distinct economic realities and coping strategies in both communities

Dyke in Timmendorfer Strand

Notice about the break-up of the assembly „habitat“ in Ummanz, February 2013, Baltic Sea Newspaper



## Tourism:

For more than a century the economy of Timmendorfer Strand was solely depending on tourism which shaped the communities values and preferences.

*„Yes Timmendorfer Strand is an exclusive place, it has always been and it will remain to be...The Sea with it's beach and coastline is our vital line, our capital....“*

*In Ummanz farming has been shaped the landscape and people's customs for centuries. Drainage of the land has a high priority. Tourism just recently arose as an alternative to make a living.*

*„A peaceful place which shall be protected from mass tourism...“*

## Agriculture:

In 1925 Timmendorfer Strand became connected to the railway system and tourists could easily reach the - by now – well developed spa resort.

„Today we have agriculture only at two farm in the region. All the other farms became a victim of tourism (....)“

After the second world war agriculture & fisheries in Ummanz were heavily subsidized by the government of the GDR (area of mass production/ co-operations. Cattle farming became a main source of income.

*„I can tell you that we started with 850 cattle and when the GDR collapsed we had 7.500 cattle. But you know all that changed after the German unification (... )“*



## Understanding of Nature/ Sense of Place:

In both communities the interviewees had a positive relationship to the sea. Negative („indundation“) und neutral namings („you have to live with nature“) are less often than positive (sun sets, quality of live...):

However nature is extremely significant to the people in Ummanz, parts of community belongs to a nationalpark/ tourism shall bring a new source of income: *„Our ancestors needed more than 50 years to wrest the land from the sea and to make it fertile. So we do not want the sea taking our land away. We do not want renaturation.“*

# Conclusions

**1. Historic development paths shaped the communities development towards material/immaterial values. This resulted in different requirements for coastal protection and adaptation strategies.**

Timmendorfer Strand: Interests for coastal protection/ adaptation to climate change coincided with wishes for touristic development.

Ummanz: Community is interested to save existing landscape. Values are connected with farming. Immaterial values such as peace and solitude are central. Unlike Timmendorfer Strand the community is lacking financial resources to finance its “dream solution” of a coastal adaptation measure.

**2. Local values and socio-economic developments are in a co-evolutionary process framed by political constellations. Local dealing with climate change is a result of a non-linear process. Geo-morphological similarities are less important.**

Thank you for your attention!

# Regional Adaptation Strategies for the German Baltic Sea Coast (RADOST)

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