



European  
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Fund

# **SUSTAINABLE HERITAGE TOURISM ACTION PLAN FOR THE CURONIAN SPIT (LITHUANIA / RUSSIAN FEDERATION)**

## **ANNEXES**



## ANNEX 1. RESULTS OF SWOT ANALYSIS

### FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS

Theme	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<b>Socio-economic sustainability</b>	Curonian Spit manages to maintain its population increasing	Homes are costly enhancing depopulation. Ever more homes are transformed into summer houses	There are many transboundary cooperation opportunities (e.g. LT-RU) to support heritage tourism	Active pressures to change the character of the recreational environment in the core zone of the Curonian Spit
	Some of the second homeowners stay on the island longer than merely during the summer season	Local population is becoming quite old. The number of active inhabitants in tourism sector declines	New recreational forest and dune management approaches are coming to the Curonian Spit	The Curonian Spit might turn into one of the most popular second-home places in Lithuania and Kaliningrad urban agglomeration
<b>Economy</b>	The Russian part of the Curonian Spit benefits from its proximity to the Kaliningrad urban agglomeration with its diverse economic opportunities	On the scale of the Baltic Sea Region, the Curonian Spit is one of the poorest in terms of GDP per capita	The Curonian Spit with the adjacent coastal areas have evolved into some of the most popular South Baltic seaside holiday destinations	The Curonian Spit turns into a second-home resort void of almost any lasting socio-economic activities except for summer months
<b>Sustainable heritage conservation and management</b>	Local knowledge of the optimum use of diverse landscape types under a permanent stress	Harsh contrast between high and low seasons causing a disproportional load on municipal utilities and water consumption	EU LEADER and LIFE+ programmes support grey dune management on the Lithuanian side of the spit	Ever increasing risk of disastrous droughts with declining precipitation causing the catastrophically dropping of groundwater levels in summer
<b>Heritage tourism sector</b>	With regeneration efforts, the landscape mosaic on the spit is recovered its historical outlook and heritage tourism appeal	The municipality doesn't put enough dedicated efforts in making the heritage features more attractive for tourists who struggle to perceive the OUV	Second home owners further extend the tourist season attracted by the heritage amenities of the shoulder seasons	Shifting tourist profiles and demand towards 'new seaside crowds', reduces the opportunities and, hence, revenues from heritage and nature tourism
<b>Tourism competitiveness</b>	Not only is the widest choice of accommodation on the Curonian Spit compared to other coastal South Baltic World Heritage tourism destinations, but also the broadest range of prices	People from tourism sector are not interested in developing new products and offers	The Curonian Spit has very close links with Germany, the Europe's largest tourism market	Real estate prices become too high on the Curonian Spit for urbanites, particularly young people to buy second homes

## LEGAL AND REGULATORY ASPECTS

Theme	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<b>Historical legacy</b>	A long history of nature conservation and landscape management traditions on the Curonian Spit	After the Second World War, the Curonian Spit became part of the Soviet Union which hindered democratic and civic development	The Curonian Spit is a very important link in the system of the Baltic Sea Marine Protected Areas and nature tourism around the Baltic Sea	A sharp decline of interest and/or commitment of the HORECA businesses and customers in sustainability or heritage designation due to 'concept inflation'
<b>Legal and management aspects of heritage conservation</b>	Both parts of the World Heritage property enjoy protection in their entirety according to the laws of Lithuania and Russian Federation	Too lengthy procedures of getting permits for new HORECA development projects in the World Heritage core and buffer zones	EU NATURA 2000 regulations in place implying support for keeping an open landscape on the Lithuanian side of the Curonian Spit	The area is susceptible to visual disruption by an eventual large-scale new infrastructure development
<b>Recent/current/eventual legal and administrative development</b>	The development of the transboundary management plan has begun bringing more coherence to the management of both parts of the World Heritage property	Many permits on the highest administrative levels are required for any larger-scale changes	National, federal and regional bodies have supervisory authority over the Municipality councils regarding any development plans in the core and buffer zones of the World Heritage	World Heritage restrictions might turn the living landscape into a museum
<b>Designations facilitating sustainable tourism</b>	In the early 2000s, the status of 'state-designated health resort' was reconfirmed for both Zelenogradsk and Neringa municipalities.	Low interest of the majority of HORECA businesses in any kind of designations or service quality benchmarking systems	All local settlements on the Curonian Spit are state-designated health or seaside resort settlements providing opportunities for sustainable wellness and wellbeing tourism services	A sharp decline of interest and/or commitment of the HORECA businesses and customers in health-resort, wellbeing, sustainability or heritage designation due to 'concept inflation'

## ORGANISATIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL ASPECTS

Theme	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<b>Organisational framework</b>	Competent advice available from numerous academic institutions in Kaliningrad, Klaipeda and other cities	Lack of resources and ideas for the innovative heritage tourism development	Both Kaliningrad Region and Klaipeda Region are members of the transnational federation of the Euroregion Baltic	EU Interregional co-operation and regional development programmes stop supporting tourism-related projects
<b>Institutional framework</b>	There is a transboundary World Heritage management plan developed in which there is also a part on tourism development	Very few of the HORECA businesses think about heritage strategically and from a sustainability perspective	There are between 10 and 20 HORECA companies and civic organizations that are interested in the development of a sustainable heritage tourism offer	Due to institutional difficulties, the tourism development part of the World Heritage management plan is ever more watered down to a wishful list of actions
<b>Institutional role of the heritage tourism-related stakeholders</b>	For many local forest managers and conservationists, the World Heritage status is appraisal of their long-term work	People from tourism sector haven't until now seen any value of the World Heritage	With abolishment of visas for the EU citizens to the Kaliningrad Region, both sides of the Curonian Spit also function as an attractive hinterland for Palanga visitors	Low added value heritage tourism development due to the brain drain of skilled professionals from the low-paid tourism sector
<b>Institutional role of the agricultural stakeholders</b>	Both national parks involve local and external experts ensuring heritage integrity with tourism development	UNESCO designation is acceptable by locals only under certain conditions	Good opportunities for building a synergy within the EuroVelo 10 route (manors and palaces listed as cultural heritage properties)	Extensive new development of HORECA facilities and unsustainable projects within central parts of the World Heritage property
<b>Coordination of World Heritage property management</b>	The whole transnational World Heritage property has a coordinator for its coherent management	Difficulty for locals and visitors alike to understand what the World Heritage value really is	Parking infrastructure upgrading projects in the World Heritage buffer zone aimed to resolve the congestion problems	Institutional difficulties, e.g. disinterest of local municipalities to stay committed to active upkeep of the World Heritage values
<b>Provision of information and education to visitors</b>	Both national parks have active visitor centres providing information and knowledge to visitors	More precise data of the visitor profile at the <i>Kurshskaya Kosa</i> National Park is missing and needs additional studies	Further development of ICT technologies for the visitor-tailored interactive provision of knowledge about the World Heritage	The decline of interest in learning and knowledge about cultural and nature heritage in the age of information 'fast-food'

## DESTINATION MARKETING ASPECTS

Theme	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<b>Marketing potential of the Outstanding Universal Value</b>	The highest and longest contiguous mobile dune range strips on the Europe's coast with high aesthetic values and adjacent grey dune habitats valuable for biodiversity conservation.	A minimal awareness and knowledge of the visitors about the UNESCO World Heritage and the Outstanding Universal Value of both national parks	Dedicated investments into tourism infrastructure development aiming at interest and educate visitors in the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage	Disease, pest invasion or a devastating fire damaging the ancient pine forests in one or both national parks on the Curonian Spit
<b>Destination marketing based on the USP</b>	The highest and longest contiguous mobile dune range strips on the Europe's coast is well known internationally as a unique tourist destination	The World Heritage listing of the Curonian Spit was supposed to help broadening of the tourist appeal of the site, but it was not.	The Curonian Spit joins the Cittaslow (international movement of 'slow cities') emphasising health, well-being and heritage tourism	Nearshore or offshore environmental disaster (oil spill, algal boom etc.) spoiling the image of the destination
<b>Destination marketing based on other features</b>	Both sides of the Curonian Spit have a pleasant atmosphere with excellent beaches enhanced by the tranquillity of the pine forest	UNESCO World Heritage designation does not play a significant role in attracting tourists to the Curonian Spit	"Lonely Planet" regularly includes the Baltic Sea beach in Nida into the TOP 100 global list of pleasure beaches	Shifting tourist profiles and growing demand for more 'sun-sand-sea' reduces interest in heritage and urban tourism
<b>Events and festivals as heritage brands</b>	The Midsummer Festival is a grass-root initiative of the local community specifically aimed to promote the World Heritage	The average duration of stay of tourists on the Curonian Spit is very short (between 2 and 2.5 nights, depending on survey)	EU support could be available for positioning Nida as a World-Heritage-themed event site	Popular festivals like the Midsummer Festival turns from an authentic heritage celebration into a 'flea fair' for souvenirs
<b>Value for money</b>	On the Curonian Spit, there are plenty of different accommodation choices, however, geared towards the higher end	The maintenance of privately-owned listed buildings is carried out under the overly supervision of experts in heritage conservation	Over 30% of tourists visiting the Curonian Spit are affluent or retired German-speaking ones ('silver tourism')	Hotels in Neringa lose competition to airB&B, mobile homes and camping sites in nearby coastal and nature areas
<b>Care for the quality of the tourist offer</b>	World Heritage exploration by combining various transportation means is attractive for visitors	Cultural gap regarding the international tourists, understanding their needs	A good potential and local skills in collaboration with the academic community for improving the quality of the tourist offer	Erosion or loss of traditional life, making the heritage tourism a 'missing link' in the Curonian Spit tourism system

<b>Care for visitor satisfaction</b>	The overall guest experience and satisfaction on the Curonian Spit is rather high	Car tourism absolutely prevails on the Curonian Spit	Number of tourists which come to explore the heritage of the Curonian Spit for a day or two and cross the border is increasing	The number of overnights suffers a sharp decline due to environmental disasters
<b>Heritage tourism marketing innovations</b>	The Curonian Spit is well-positioned to cater for World Heritage tourist interests and tap into ICT innovations in World Heritage tourism marketing	None of the national parks on the Curonian Spit has any plan for innovative heritage tourism offer development and marketing	External support opportunities for start-ups and business incubators in ICT-based heritage tourism product development	Ageing professionals in the HORECA sector are less receptive of tourism marketing innovations
<b>Connectivity</b>	The Curonian Spit enjoys a unique geographical situation, and, as a result, good links with the southern coast of the Baltic Sea – Poland and Germany	Only second-rate airports (Khrabrovo and Palanga) in the vicinity with relatively few regular international flight connections	The Port of Klaipeda offers ideal conditions and development opportunities for maritime ferry liners and oceanic cruise ships, including the Russian side due to the visa waiver	Ferry connection between Klaipeda and Karlshamn turns from Ro-Pax into Ro-Ro thus hampering the possibilities for Scandinavian tourists to reach the Curonian Spit
<b>Heritage tourism product development</b>	Visitors of the Curonian Spit are interested in genuine and inspiring experiences and stories of the Nida art colony and the history of combating the dune drift	Local private tourism service providers and even tourism information centres do not use the brand of World Heritage in their marketing	Continued Quality Coast / Green Destinations certification facilitates upgrading of sustainable tourism offer on both sides of the Curonian Spit	Struggle among significant stakeholders over destination marketing priorities and messages
<b>Seasonality and length of stay</b>	The shoulder seasons are particularly attractive for outdoors on the Curonian Spit	Tourism seasonality is high and the peak tourist season on the Curonian Spit is very short	The World Heritage status may become important in prolonging visitors' stay on the Curonian Spit, especially with new opportunities to cross the border visa-free	A protracted decline in overnight stays on the Curonian Spit with an even more significant prevalence of weekend visitors
<b>Sustainability awareness</b>	Sustainability awareness is quite high among the guests, especially among birdwatchers	Sustainability awareness among the ordinary visitors is moderate	European conservation volunteer networks assist in raising sustainability awareness	Footpath erosion and littering due to sustainability ignorance
<b>Creative industries and local crafts</b>	The particular atmosphere, scenic appeal of the Curonian Spit and unique light on the spit and the Baltic Sea coast	The impact of the World Heritage designation on tourism on the Curonian Spit is hard to measure and manage	It becomes quite fashionable among people of creative professions to spend at least part of the year on the Curonian Spit	Overlooked changes in visitor tastes and interests cause the Curonian Spit to fall behind nearby destinations

## ANNEX 2. ESSENTIAL INSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT ACTORS

### INTERNATIONAL ACTORS

- **UNESCO World Heritage Centre.** Established in 1992 and located in Paris, the UNESCO World Heritage Centre is the focal point and coordinator within UNESCO for all matters related to World Heritage.
- **ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites)** is a worldwide NGO for cultural heritage professionals, and a UNESCO advisory body for the cultural heritage and the World Heritage Convention.
- **European Union – Russian Federation border regime** regulates possibilities for tourists to visit and enjoy both parts of the Curonian Spit. There exists a visa-free entry for visitors from the Schengen zone to Kaliningrad Oblast of the Russian Federation and hence, to the Russian side of the Curonian Spit. Yet, Russian citizens willing to enter the Lithuanian side of the spit need a valid Schengen visa.
- **Foreign visitors.** Over 1 Mio. foreign visitors visit the Curonian Spit each year. Most of them come from Germany. However, recently the Curonian Spit has experienced an increasing flow of tourists from Latvia, Estonia, Poland, the USA, France, Switzerland, and Finland. The results of the surveys show that domestic visitors are well aware of the UNESCO World Heritage status of the sites while foreign visitors are not.
- **Cruise Baltic** is a B2B network of partner destinations consisting of 30 ports in the Baltic region. Our aim is to promote our partners towards cruise lines and travel agents as well as all those who want to learn more about the great potential of the Baltic cruise product.
- **Green Destinations, QualityCoast** ([www.qualitycoast.info](http://www.qualitycoast.info)) is the largest international certification programme for sustainable coastal tourism destinations. It is part of the Green Destinations Award & Certification Programme aiming to establish and cherish a worldwide network of coastal communities that share similar values on sustainable development, nature and biodiversity, cultural heritage, and social responsibility, at the same time maintaining high standards in the quality of seaside tourism.
- **EUCC Baltic Office** is a regional office of the Coastal and Marine Union – EUCC for the Eastern European countries of the Baltic Sea. Registered since 1995 in Lithuania, the EUCC Baltic States Office is active in the east of the Baltic Sea: Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and the Northwest Region of the Russian Federation.
- **DUNC project partnership network** comprises seven partners located in Germany, Lithuania and Sweden. Five of the project partners – Municipality of Karlskrona (Lead Partner, Sweden), Municipality of Mörbylånga (Sweden), Curonian Spit National Park Administration (Lithuania), Hanseatic City of Stralsund (Germany), and Hanseatic City of Wismar (Germany) – represent four South Baltic coastal cultural UNESCO World Heritage sites: the Naval Port of Karlskrona, the Agricultural Landscape of Southern Öland (both in Sweden), the Curonian Spit (Lithuania/Russia), the Historic Centres of Stralsund and Wismar (Germany). The other two project partners, EUCC Germany and EUCC Baltic Office (Lithuania), represent EUCC – Coastal and Marine Union, which is the Europe's largest coastal and marine conservation network.

### NATIONAL ACTORS

- **The Federal Government of Russian Federation** exercises executive power in the Russian Federation. It is accountable to the President and the Parliament of the Russian Federation and is responsible for the enacting of policy and distributing of responsibilities for the conservation of the Curonian Spit in the Russian Federation.
- **The Government of the Republic of Lithuania** exercises executive power in the Republic of Lithuania. It is accountable to the President and the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania and is responsible for the enacting of policy and distributing of responsibilities for the conservation of the Curonian Spit in Lithuania.
- **Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of Russian Federation** is a federal executive body responsible for drafting and implementing government policy and the legal regulation in the field

of the exploration, use, reproduction and protection of natural resources as well as specially protected areas, territories and sites.

- **The Ministry of Environment of Lithuania** has the main conservation responsibility of the Curonian Spit as a National Park and UNESCO-listed World Heritage property. Although the protection of immovable cultural heritage is the responsibility of the cultural Heritage Department under the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania however in the case of the Curonian Spit, this is valid only partially, i.e., in the case of cultural monuments.
- **Parliament of the Russian Federation** (the Federal Assembly) is the national legislature of the Russian Federation. It consists of two chambers – the State Duma, which is the lower house, and the Federation Council, which is the upper house. Both houses adopt and enact federal laws pertinent to the conservation of the Russian part of the Curonian Spit.
- **Parliament of Lithuania** is the unicameral parliament of the Republic of Lithuania. The Seimas constitutes the legislative branch of government in Lithuania, adopting and enacting laws pertinent to the conservation of the Lithuanian part of the Curonian Spit.
- **Federal Service for Supervision of Natural Resources of Russian Federation** is a federal body of executive authority responsible for supervision and monitoring in the sphere of natural resources, including carrying out state supervision of the Kurshskaya Kosa National Park and operating under the authority of the Russian Government.
- **The State Service of Protected Areas of Lithuania** is a governmental agency under the Ministry of Environment of Lithuania. It is an institution that implements the state policy and strategy in the field of protection and management of protected areas, also performs the functions of state management of protected areas, including Kuršių Nerija National Park.
- **The UNESCO Commission of the Russian Federation** is an interdepartmental body established to coordinate interaction between Russian state services, public organisations and individuals with recognised influence in science and culture, and UNESCO on various issues, including conservation of UNESCO-listed World Heritage properties, the Russian part of the Curonian Spit *inter alia*.
- **The UNESCO Commission of Lithuania** is an essential partner that acts as a catalyst to involve key national players in the five UNESCO programme sectors – education, natural sciences, social and human sciences, culture and communication and information, including conservation of UNESCO-listed World Heritage properties, the Lithuanian part of the Curonian Spit *inter alia*.
- **The World Heritage Advisory Boards** of both national parks on the Curonian Spit represent various sectors like monument conservation, culture, nature protection, and forest management. They are established according to the UNESCO recommendations and the statutes of the national parks.
- **Švyturys Breweries** is a craft brewery located in Klaipėda, Lithuania. The enterprise comprises an entire beer-themed hub with the craft beer brewery, beer-tasting facilities, market and more. The beer from Švyturys Breweries is exported to Kaliningrad Oblast of Russia and, therefore, is the most popular beer brand on both sides of the Curonian Spit.
- **Domestic visitors.** The permanent population of the spit is app. 5500 inhabitants, but every summer it hosts 2 Mio. visitors, of which app. 1 Mio. are domestic ones. Because of the continuous evolution and development of the cultural landscape, it is very important to regulate the number of visitors on the Curonian Spit.

## REGIONAL AND MUNICIPAL ACTORS

- **Government of Kaliningrad Region** is the top permanent executive authority in the region. The activities of the Government of the Kaliningrad Region in the international arena are aimed at solving tasks of creating favourable external conditions for cooperation in nature conservation, including the Curonian Spit.
- **Kurshskaya Kosa National Park Administration.** The Russian part of the Curonian Spit is protected by Kurshskaya Kosa National Park of the Russian Federation. The Government has created the National Park Administration that plays a key role in the conservation of the property, forest and coastal

management. It has the goal of preserving the natural and cultural attributes that express the Outstanding Universal Value of the Russian part of the Curonian Spit.

- **Kuršių Nerija National Park Directorate** employs a **World Heritage coordinator**. Any proactive nature management and dune-handling measures that are aimed to help grey dune habitat restoration are agreed with UNESCO so the National Park Directorate is allowed to implement those measures even in strict nature reserves.
- **The Visitor Centre and Museum “Kurshskaya kosa”** puts the main emphasis on offering the visitors off-season organized educational tours. The educational tourism zones are being designated for guided visits on specially arranged trails for wildlife- and bird watching guided tours and for environmental education.
- **Tourist Information Centre (the Visitor Centre) “Kuršių nerija”** is located in the ethnographic part of Nida and provides visitors with detailed information about the natural and cultural values of the Curonian Spit, places of interest, ongoing events, self-guided tourist trails and other services. Information publications and souvenirs are offered there to get to know the Curonian Spit.
- **Klaipeda Municipality** is the third largest city in Lithuania. It administrates the northernmost part of the Curonian Spit, including the Lithuanian Maritime Museum. Smiltyne, which is the suburb of Klaipeda situated on the Curonian Spit, serves as a public beach for Klaipeda residents.
- **Neringa Municipality** is the westernmost municipality of Lithuania, comprising four villages on the Curonian Spit which is designated as a resort town. It administrates the better part of the spit on the Lithuanian side. However, in terms of population, it is the smallest municipality of the country.
- **Zelenogradsk Municipality** is an administrative district (rayon), one of the fifteen in Kaliningrad Oblast. It incorporates the entire Russian part of the Curonian Spit. In 1999 Zelenogradsk was declared a resort of federal significance by the resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation.
- **Real estate owners in local communities** owning private property on the Curonian Spit. Their maintenance is carried out under the supervision of experts in heritage conservation. A very important prerequisite for the protection of the Outstanding Universal Value on both sides of the spit is state land ownership where all land and water areas are administered by the National Park authorities, except the Lithuanian – Russian border zone.
- **HORECA service providers**. There are over 50 cafes and restaurants, as well as 23 hotels on both sides of the Curonian Spit, However, HORECA sector until now hasn't seen enough value in the World Heritage status to develop new products and offers. Yet, up to 10 HORECA **companies** are interested in the development of a sustainable heritage tourism offer and contribute to the development of the sustainable heritage tourism offer.
- **Curonian Lagoon east coast villages** are attractive destinations for short-term boat excursions offered to many nature lovers visiting the Curonian Spit. There are areas of unique nature on the east coast of the Curonian Lagoon, dominated by lowland pastures and wetlands. The picturesque Nemunas Delta and Ventė Cape is home to many local and migrating birds. Rusnė, a settlement located in the Nemunas Delta, is the only island town in Lithuania.

### ANNEX 3. KEY ACTORS FOR COHERENT NATURE MANAGEMENT AND CROSS-BORDER EDUCATIONAL TOURISM ON THE CURONIAN SPIT

#### MAIN HUMAN AND INSTITUTIONAL ACTORS (along with the multi-functional ones listed in Annex 2)

- 1) **Forest Management State Enterprise (LT)** was established in 2018, following the implementation of the state forestry restructuring and the merger of 42 State Forest Enterprises. The company now consists of 26 regional divisions with 337 forest districts. It is responsible for the management of forests and dunes on the Lithuanian part of the Curonian Spit.
- 2) **Academic institutions / experts in landscape conservation (LT / RU)** include a broad variety of institutions and experts both from Lithuania, Russia and the rest of Europe. The Curonian Spit is very popular among all kinds of scholars doing research on different aspects of dune landscape development and conservation.
- 3) **Nature guides (LT / RU)** are the guides from both national park visitor centres and other institutions who bring visitors to the most interesting sites of the Curonian Spit, including the strict nature reserves, who are aware of the responsibility they have while conducting their job.
- 4) **Tour service providers (LT / RU)** mainly bring short-term excursionists to the Curonian Spit. There are ca. 20 tour service providers on both sides of the spit that operate mainly in the peak season. In this way, their activity increases seasonality and therefore can be considered as unsustainable.
- 5) **Ecotourism companies (LT / RU)** bring visitors interested in the Curonian Spit as an ecotourism destination of an international scale and by doing this, motivate local environmentalists, tourism service providers and external actors to feel actively involved into a long-term conservation effort. As a result, it becomes evident to the local community and to a broader, national stakeholders' network, that there is a mutually beneficial relationship between heritage conservation, forest management and ecotourism.
- 6) **Notable people associated with nature of the spit (LT / RU)** are mainly prominent foresters who started mobile dune stabilization on the Curonian Spit in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Georg Dawid Kuwert and Wilhelm Franz Epha) or the world-renowned pioneers of birdwatching and bird migration research (Johannes Thienemann).
- 7) **Ludwig Gedeminus Rhesa (LT)** was a 19<sup>th</sup> c. professor at the University of Königsberg who was born on the Curonian Spit and well-known for writing the poem *Prutena or the Lost Village* about the sad fate of the villages on the spit covered with sand.
- 8) **Nature ambassadors, friends and volunteers (LT / RU)** work to develop ecotourism infrastructure, events, educational activities which all contribute to promote the Curonian Spit as an attractive ecotourism destination by creating new opportunities for sustainable tourism development on both sides of the spit.
- 9) **Visitors interested in nature (LT / RU)** are ever-more common among the 2 Mio. visitors that visit the Curonian Spit each year. They help to extend the tourist season since the nature and wildlife of the Curonian Spit attract visitors mainly in the shoulder seasons.
- 10) **Hobby birdwatchers (LT / RU)** cherish a long tradition of birdwatching on the Curonian Spit and facilitate prolonging the tourist season. They come to the spit in April and May, then return in September and stay until the end of October.

#### MAIN NON-HUMAN ACTORS

- 11) **Baltic Sea amber (LT / RU)** is a unique token of the southeast Baltic coast, including the Curonian Spit, symbolizing its significance on the global scale. Today, more than 90% of the world's amber comes from the Sambian Peninsula in Kaliningrad Oblast, and part of it is washed ashore on the spit.
- 12) **Baltic Sea beach stabilization (RU)** on the Curonian Spit takes place only on the eroded southernmost stretch of the Baltic Sea beach at Lesnoy. The better part of the Baltic Sea beach of the Curonian Spit is still in the condition of dynamic equilibrium albeit ever more fragile due to increasing storm surge impact resulting from climate change.
- 13) **Lagoon reed beds (LT / RU)** stretch for ca. 13 km along the coast of the Curonian Lagoon on the spit side. They provide a shelter for rare birds and offer protection against the coastal erosion.

- 14) **Protective foredune (LT / RU)** stretches along the entire 99 km Baltic Sea coast of the Curonian Spit. Covered with marram grass it reaches up 12 m height in the northernmost part of the spit yet needs regular human maintenance.
- 15) **Integrated coastal management (LT / RU)** is a coastal management process for the management of the coast using an integrated approach, regarding all aspects of the coastal zone, including geographical and political boundaries, in an attempt to achieve sustainability. However, the principles of ICM are legally-binding neither on the Lithuanian nor on the Russian parts of the Curonian Spit.
- 16) **Grey dunes (LT / RU)** are fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation designated as a priority NATURA 2000 habitat of the European Union. Albeit this designation is not valid on the Russian part of the Curonian Spit, nevertheless it is also considered as a valuable type of dune landscape and protected within the strict nature reserves there.
- 17) **The Great Curonian Dune Ridge (LT / RU)**. Until now, dune landscapes of the Curonian Spit are among the most dynamic in the Baltic Sea area. There are four strips of the migrating barchans reaching 60 m in height still remaining on the spit and comprising the Great Curonian Dune Ridge – ca. 20 km on the Russian side and ca. 11 km on the Lithuanian side of the spit.
- 18) **Kupstynė (deflation hummocks) (LT / RU)** at the windward side of the foot of grey and mobile dunes on the Curonian Spit is one of the most important structural elements of the dune landscape and habitats on the spit. It was formed when the mobile dunes moved eastwards across the spit and their residues were deflated later on.
- 19) **Villages covered with sand (LT / RU)** is one of the most famous and mysterious features of the Curonian Spit immortalized in the aforementioned poem *Prutena or the Lost Village* by Ludwig Gedeminus Rhesa. Altogether, all villages of the Curonian Spit, except Rybachy, have changed their locations at least 11 times in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries trying to escape from the menacing mobile sand.
- 20) **Palve plain on the Curonian Lagoon coast (LT / RU)** with broadleaved black alder forests on the meadow soils with large populations of Perennial honesty (*Lunaria rediviva*), a Red Book-protected plant species is one of rare ecosystems of the Curonian Spit with high biological diversity located beyond the strict nature reserves.
- 21) **Ancient forests (LT / RU)** on the Curonian Spit remain in the northern part (at Juodkrante), central part (Nida) and the southernmost part (the Royal Forest), south of Lesnoy. These forests are valuable for their unique landscape, biodiversity and long-term management traditions.
- 22) **Monuments and tombs of famous foresters (LT / RU)** are located in Rybachy (the tomb of Wilhelm Franz Epha) and Nida (the monument to Georg Dawid Kuwert). The merit of G.D. Kuwert in stabilizing the mobile dunes at Nida was so highly appreciated by the locals that it was deemed important to write an epitaph even on his father's tomb since G.D. Kuwert died and was buried elsewhere).
- 23) **Migratory birds (LT / RU)**. The Curonian Spit is an important 'stepping stone' of the northeast Atlantic flyway for migratory birds. It is expedient to use this fact for international nature and educational tourism marketing also establishing a connection for the Curonian Spit with other Baltic Sea coastal protected and World Heritage areas, e.g., Southern Öland and Rügen.
- 24) **Cormorant Colony in Juodkrante (LT)**. Of interest to nature watchers are the large great cormorant (2000 pairs) and grey heron (500 pairs) colonies west of Juodkrante. It is believed that the herons have nested near Juodkrante since 17<sup>th</sup> century, but the cormorants arrived only at the beginning of 19<sup>th</sup> century. The cormorants were exterminated at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century due to Prussian administration regulations and started to reappear only in the 1970s.
- 25) **Forest Management Project (LT)** on the Lithuanian side of the Curonian Spit was adopted in 2013 and amended in 2018. In the project, a lot of attention is paid to the change of the natural environment and forestry indicators. The specifics and uniqueness of the territory also require the provision of nature management measures. The solutions of the project envisage the removal of some redundant forest stands in Nagliai Strict Nature Reserve and some other areas.
- 26) **Forestry regulations (RU)** on the Russian side of the Curonian Spit have been developed in 2016 in accordance with Article 87 of the Forest Code of the Russian Federation (and is the basis for the use,

protection, protection, reproduction of forests located within the boundaries of the forestry in Kurshskaya Kosa National Park.

- 27) **National park management documents (LT / RU)**. Different management and conservation measures are outlined in the National Park management documents and approved by the parliaments both in Lithuania and in the Russian Federation. The development of the newest updates of the nature management plans are closely coordinated with UNESCO.
- 28) **UNESCO World Heritage Management Plan (LT / RU)**. Lithuania and Russia wish to prepare two separate Management Plans for the Curonian Spit. The Lithuanian authorities have already drafted a Management Plan, taking into account the concerns of the local people and the visions of the local institutions. The Russian side is lagging behind so far.
- 29) **Curonian Lagoon Biosphere Polygon (LT)** has been established to preserve the Curonian Lagoon ecosystem which is important for migratory birds, many species of fish and lampreys that spawn here or migrate to spawning grounds.
- 30) **Strict nature reserves (LT / RU)**. Different zones have been established in the National Parks for various specific purposes, such as strict reserves, reserves, recreational, residential and other zones. Strict nature reserves include the most appealing parts of the Curonian Spit but can be visited only on the self-guided trails or with professional nature guides.
- 31) **NATURA 2000 regulations and management plans (LT)**. There are nine habitat types listed and protected within the EU NATURA 2000 series of protected habitats on the Lithuanian part of the Curonian Spit, including lagoons, embryonic mobile dunes, white and grey dunes and wet dune slacks. All these and other NATURA 2000 protected habitats require special management plans that comprise an essential part of the planning process of the Lithuanian part of the Curonian Spit.
- 32) **Educational zones, self-guided trails and routes, lookouts (LT / RU)** form an indispensable backbone of the Curonian Spit as a nature-, educational- and ecotourism destination. Altogether, there are ca. 20 km of self-guided trails and routes and four educational zones on both sides of the Curonian Spit with ten lookouts over the mobile and grey dunes and other nature amenities.
- 33) **Border zone regulations and restrictions (LT / RU)**. The central part of the spit is restricted from entry up to 3 km from the border in Lithuania and up to 5 km in Russian Federation. It is also protected as strict nature reserves on both sides of the border. However, limited guided nature tours are permitted even in the restricted zone on the Lithuanian side.

#### **INTANGIBLE ACTORS:**

- 34) **Traditions of mobile sand stabilization (LT / RU)** are explicitly mentioned as the reason for UNESCO-listing of the Curonian Spit as a transboundary cultural landscape: *"Its survival to the present day has been made possible only as a result of ceaseless human efforts to combat the erosion of the Spit, dramatically illustrated by continuing stabilisation and reforestation projects."*
- 35) **Traditions of foredune management (LT / RU)** date as early as the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was artificially created throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century along the entire 99-km length of the Baltic Sea coast of the Curonian Spit with the aim to trap the sand washed ashore from the Baltic Sea and drifting eastwards across the spit. These traditions are still cherished on both sides of the spit.
- 36) **Myth of Neringa (LT)**. According to Baltic mythology, the playing of a giantess named Neringa on the seashore formed the Curonian Spit. This character also appears in other myths (in some of which she is shown as a young strong woman, similar to a female version of the Greek Heracles).
- 37) **Sustainability awareness among birdwatchers (LT / RU)**. Sustainability awareness is quite high among the visitors of the Curonian Spit, especially among birdwatchers.
- 38) **The legend of the Dancing Forest (RU)**. Unlike drunken forests, the trees in the Dancing Forest are twisted into several patterns, such as rings, hearts and convoluted spirals bending to the ground. According to popular belief, the Dancing Forest of the Curonian Spit indicates some mysterious geomantic features along with other similar places in the Far East of Russian Federation.

## ANNEX 4. KEY ACTORS FOR CHERISHING TRADITIONS OF ARTISANAL FISHERIES, ARCHITECTURE OF TRADITIONAL FISHING VILLAGES AND FISH GASTRONOMY

### MAIN HUMAN AND INSTITUTIONAL ACTORS (along with the multi-functional ones listed in Annex 2)

- 39) **The Lithuanian Maritime Museum (LT)** is a museum operating since 1979 in Kopgalis, the northernmost point of the Curonian Spit. The Dolphinarium has been operating since 1994. It is the most popular single attraction on the Curonian Spit and one of the most popular paid attractions in Lithuania.
- 40) **Local fish producers and sellers (LT / RU)** are still available although ever more fish which is sold at local restaurants, is imported from other countries, especially Denmark (pike-perch), Norway (cod) and even China (eel).
- 41) **Experts and guides in artisanal lagoon fishing (LT / RU)**. Lagoon fishing and fish processing have been the backbone of the local economy for centuries. Currently, thousands of anglers are angling in the Curonian Lagoon. In cold winters, anglers flock in their thousands on the Curonian Lagoon ice catching perch, smelt and other fish.
- 42) **Baltic Sea Marina Association (LT / RU)** is an international association of marinas of the Baltic Sea. The cooperation began in 2003 with six marinas and now has 17 members. It is a platform and community of interests of individual marinas in the Baltic Sea Region aimed to bring the Baltic Sea as a maritime tourism destination closer to international customers.
- 43) **Ethnographic boating tradition keepers (LT / RU)** are still very few. The skills of building *kurenas* – traditional artisanal fishing boats of the Curonian Lagoon were revived in the late 1980s and since then on ever-more broadly cherished by enthusiasts both due to professional vocation and with the purpose to cater for the interests of savvy summer visitors of the Curonian Spit.
- 44) **Fishermen's folklore interpreters (LT)** come together every Midsummer to the traditional international folklore festival "Tek sauluže ant maraciū" (Here comes the sun over the lagoon) held in Neringa. It's aim is to cherish the rich ethnic cultural heritage and traditional lifestyle, bring together Lithuanian and foreign folklore ensembles, craftsmen and naturalists - all lovers of the Curonian Spit.
- 45) **Families on summer holidays on the Curonian Spit (LT / RU)**. The profile of tourists staying at the seaside resorts of the Curonian Spit is somewhat different from heritage tourists. The families with children prevail, coming mainly on summer holidays. The average length of stay is 4.5 days.
- 46) **Seaside visitors (LT / RU)**. As mentioned earlier, ca. 2 Mio. visitors visit the Curonian Spit with the prevalence of married couples with children or retired couples that are travelling without children. Usually they are quite active and tend to spend part of their time hiking and biking on the Curonian Spit as well as taking short boat trips on the Curonian Lagoon. Their average length of stay is shorter.
- 47) **Domestic maritime tourists (LT / RU)** are the owners of leisure boats that are using the marinas of Smiltyne and Nida located on the Lithuanian side of the Curonian Spit and the marinas of Zelenogradsk and Lesnoy and Rybachy on the Russian side of the spit. Albeit theoretical possibilities exist, they seldom cross the border to visit the other side of the lagoon by boat.
- 48) **Foreign maritime tourists (LT / RU)** mainly are those coming by yachts to the marinas of Smiltyne and Nida located on the Curonian Spit and by cruise liners calling at Klaipeda Port. Ca. 10000 visitors come to Klaipeda Port by cruise liners annually. Typically, they are from the UK, US, Germany, Spain and Italy. Usually, their visit the Curonian Spit on a half-day excursion.

### MAIN NON-HUMAN ACTORS:

- 49) **Curonian Lagoon (LT / RU)** is a freshwater lagoon separated from the Baltic Sea by the Curonian Spit. It is the largest coastal lagoon in Europe. Its surface area is 1,619 km. Two-thirds of the lagoon belong to the Russian Federation and one-third to Lithuania.
- 50) **Border zone regulations and restrictions (LT / RU)** on the Curonian Lagoon are quite punishing concerning the international leisure boat navigation. Only the boats under the Russian and Lithuanian flag can cross the border to the Russian part of the Curonian Lagoon. All Lithuanian boats after entering the Russian part must immediately call at the checkpoint Rybachy.

- 51) **Marina and checkpoint Nida (LT)** is the only Lithuanian-Russian border and customs checkpoint on the Lithuanian side of the Curonian Lagoon located in the marina of Nida aimed to facilitate the transboundary leisure boat navigation in the lagoon.
- 52) **Marina and checkpoint Rybachy (RU)** is the only Russian-Lithuanian border and customs checkpoint on the Russian side of the Curonian Lagoon aimed to facilitate the transboundary leisure boat navigation in the lagoon. It is not fully completed yet.
- 53) **Navigation installations (LT / RU)** on the Curonian Spit and in the Curonian Lagoon are also valuable artifacts of the World Heritage listed in the definition of the Outstanding Universal Value of the spit as a UNESCO listed property: *"The most valuable elements and qualities of the Curonian Spit cultural landscape are [...] lighthouses, piers [...] and elements of marine cultural heritage"...*
- 54) **Fish and fishing (LT / RU)**. Traditionally, bream and pike perch dominated in the commercial catches of local fishermen in the Curonian Lagoon. However, in recent years, commercial fisheries is dwindling due to ever increasing diesel fuel costs for vessels and the EU policy to facilitate the shift from commercial fishing to leisure angling and fish production in aquaculture. It is anticipated that in the coming decades, commercial fishing in the lagoon will further decline.
- 55) **Ethnographic boats Kurenas (LT)** is a traditional wooden type of flat bottom boat that was used in the Curonian Lagoon for artisanal fishing. The name comes from the German name of the Curonian people (*Kuren*). Kurenas were 11-12 m long, with two main sails: the large and the small. They were used to catch fish by dragging a large net in pairs.
- 56) **Traditional weather vanes (LT)** were typically used on the kurenas boats not only for showing the direction of the wind but also as an ornament on the top of the mast. Combined with the boat-plates indicating the affiliation of the boats with particular coastal villages of the Curonian Lagoon, these weather vanes have become decorated with carved images of elks, houses, anchors etc.
- 57) **Local restaurants (LT / RU)**. There are ca. 40 food and drink establishments serving fish dishes and catering for the tastes of the tourists visiting the Lithuanian or Russian side of the Curonian Spit. Most of them are open only during the summer season. Notably, the food and drink establishments on the Lithuanian side are valued by the patrons better than the ones on the Russian side.

#### INTANGIBLE ACTORS:

- 58) **Traditions of artisanal fisheries (LT / RU)**. Strong fishing traditions on the Curonian Spit maintain the local habits of artisanal fishing from small fishing boats. Unfortunately, these traditions are vanishing very fast due to lack of sufficient support from the state to artisanal fisheries in both Lithuania and Russian Federation.
- 59) **Fisherman's Day (LT / RU)** is a professional holiday of fishermen celebrated in both Lithuania and Russian Federation on the second weekend of July. This tradition is dates back to the Soviet period. It was established by the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on May 3, 1965. The origin of this professional holiday was the active development of fishing in Soviet times.
- 60) **Autumn Harvest Festival (LT)**. The reed sculptures that adorn the Amber Bay at Juodkrante each summer, revive in the flames of the Autumn Equinox Festival. The spectacle of light and fire is accompanied by musical interpretations of Baltic folklore. The ambition is to make the festival celebrated all over the Curonian Spit including the Russian side.
- 61) **Traditions of boatbuilding (LT / RU)** around the Curonian lagoon have been lost after the World War II. They have been revived in the late 1980s as a result of dedicated and passionate efforts by Romualdas Adomavicius and his colleagues from the Lithuanian Maritime Museum.
- 62) **Architecture of fishermen's villages (LT / RU)** is among the key features determining the Outstanding Universal Value of the Curonian Spit: *"The most valuable elements and qualities of the Curonian Spit cultural landscape are [...] the spatial-planned structure and architecture of ancient fishermen villages turned into resort settlements (ancient wooden fishermen houses...)"*.
- 63) **Fish gastronomy (LT / RU)**. Bream is the only large fish that is surely caught in the Curonian Lagoon and smoked local style albeit this style is introduced in the Soviet period. Other most popular fish catered for the visitors of the Curonian Spit include pikeperch, perch, roach and eel.

**ANNEX 5. OPTIMISTIC SCENARIO (REALISED OPPORTUNITIES), PESSIMISTIC SCENARIO (REALISED THREATS) AND REALISTIC SCENARIO (STRATEGY 'BUSINESS AS USUAL')**

**FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS**

Optimistic scenario (Realised opportunities)	Pessimistic scenario (Realised threats)	Realistic scenario (Strategy 'Business as Usual')
<b>Social sustainability</b>		
There are many transboundary cooperation opportunities (e.g. Lit-Ru and Pol-Ru) to support heritage tourism	Active pressures to change the character of the recreational environment in the core zone of the Curonian Spit	Number of second homes on the Curonian Spit increases drastically due to high real estate prices turning the spit into one of the most popular second-home places in Lithuania and Kaliningrad urban agglomeration
New recreational forest and dune management approaches are coming to the Curonian Spit	The Curonian Spit might turn into one of the most popular second-home places in Lithuania and Kaliningrad urban agglomeration	
<b>Economy</b>		
The Curonian Spit with the adjacent coastal areas has evolved into some of the most popular South Baltic seaside holiday destinations	The Curonian Spit turns into a second-home resort void of almost any lasting socio-economic activities except for summer months	The Curonian Spit turns into a second-home resort void of almost any lasting socio-economic activities except for summer months
<b>Sustainable heritage conservation and management</b>		
EU LEADER and LIFE+ programmes support grey dune management on the Lithuanian side of the spit	Ever increasing risk of disastrous droughts with declining precipitation causing the catastrophically dropping of groundwater levels in summer	Ever increasing risk of disastrous droughts with declining precipitation causing the catastrophically dropping of groundwater levels in summer, especially in Nida
<b>Heritage tourism sector</b>		
Second home owners further extend the tourist season attracted by the heritage amenities of the shoulder seasons	Shifting tourist profiles and demand towards 'new seaside crowds', reduces the opportunities and, hence, revenues from heritage and nature tourism	Shifting tourist profiles and demand towards 'new seaside crowds', reduces the opportunities and, hence, revenues from heritage and nature tourism
<b>Tourism competitiveness</b>		
The Curonian Spit has very close links with Germany, the Europe's largest tourism market	Real estate prices become too high on the Curonian Spit for urbanites, particularly young people to buy second homes	Real estate prices become too high on the Curonian Spit for urbanites, particularly young people to buy second homes

**LEGAL AND REGULATORY ASPECTS**

Optimistic scenario (Realised opportunities)	Pessimistic scenario (Realised threats)	Realistic scenario (Strategy 'Business as Usual')
<b>Historical legacy</b>		
The Curonian Spit is a very important link in the system of the Baltic Sea Marine Protected Areas and nature tourism around the Baltic Sea	A sharp decline of interest and/or commitment of the HORECA businesses and customers in sustainability or heritage designation due to 'concept inflation'	A sharp decline of interest and/or commitment of the HORECA businesses and customers in sustainability or heritage designation due to 'concept inflation'
<b>Legal and management aspects of heritage conservation</b>		
EU NATURA 2000 regulations in place implying support for keeping an open landscape on the Lithuanian side of the Curonian Spit	The area is susceptible to visual disruption by an eventual large-scale new infrastructure development	EU NATURA 2000 regulations in place implying support for keeping an open landscape on the Lithuanian side of the Curonian Spit while on the Russian side visual disruption happens in Lesnoy, Morskoye and Rybachy

<b>Recent/current/eventual legal and administrative development</b>		
National, federal and regional bodies have supervisory authority regarding any development plans in of the World Heritage property	World Heritage restrictions might turn the living landscape into a museum	UNESCO continues having a supervisory authority regarding development plans in the core and buffer zones of the World Heritage
<b>Designations facilitating sustainable tourism</b>		
All local settlements on the Curonian Spit are state-designated health or seaside resort settlements providing opportunities for sustainable wellness and wellbeing tourism services	A sharp decline of interest and/or commitment of the HORECA businesses and customers in health-resort, wellbeing, sustainability or heritage designation due to 'concept inflation'	All local settlements on the Curonian Spit are state-designated health or seaside resort settlements providing opportunities for sustainable wellness and wellbeing tourism services

#### **ORGANISATIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL ASPECTS**

<b>Optimistic scenario (Realised opportunities)</b>	<b>Pessimistic scenario (Realised threats)</b>	<b>Realistic scenario (Strategy 'Business as Usual')</b>
<b>Organisational framework</b>		
Both Kaliningrad Region and Klaipeda Region are members of the transnational federation of the Euroregion Baltic	EU Interregional co-operation and regional development programmes stop supporting tourism-related projects	Both Kaliningrad Region and Klaipeda Region are members of the transnational federation of the Euroregion Baltic
<b>Institutional framework</b>		
There are between 10 and 20 HORECA companies and civic organizations that are interested in the development of a heritage tourism offer	Due to institutional difficulties, the tourism development part of the World Heritage management plan is ever more watered down to a wishful list of actions	There are between 10 and 20 HORECA companies and civic organizations that are interested in the development of a heritage tourism offer
<b>Institutional role of the heritage tourism-related stakeholders</b>		
With abolishment of visas for the EU citizens to the Kaliningrad Region, the Curonian Spit function as an attractive hinterland for Palanga visitors	Low added value heritage tourism development due to the brain drain of skilled professionals from the low-paid tourism sector	With abolishment of visas for the EU citizens to the Kaliningrad Region, the Curonian Spit functions as an attractive hinterland for Palanga visitors
<b>Institutional role of other stakeholders</b>		
Good opportunities for building a synergy within the EuroVelo 10 route (manors and palaces listed as cultural heritage properties)	Extensive new development of HORECA facilities and unsustainable projects within central parts of the World Heritage property	Extensive new development of HORECA facilities and unsustainable projects within central parts of the World Heritage property
<b>Coordination of sustainable World Heritage property management</b>		
Parking infrastructure upgrading projects in the World Heritage buffer zone aimed to resolve the congestion problems	Institutional difficulties, e.g. disinterest of local municipalities to stay committed to upkeeping of the World Heritage values	Institutional difficulties, e.g. disinterest of local municipalities to stay committed to upkeeping of the World Heritage values
<b>Provision of information and education to visitors</b>		
Development of ICT technologies for the visitor-tailored interactive provision of knowledge about the World Heritage	The decline of interest in learning and knowledge about cultural and nature heritage in the age of information 'fast-food'	Development of ICT technologies for the visitor-tailored interactive provision of knowledge about the World Heritage

## DESTINATION MARKETING ASPECTS

Optimistic scenario (Realised opportunities)	Pessimistic scenario (Realised threats)	Realistic scenario (Strategy 'Business as Usual')
<b>The marketing potential of the Outstanding Universal Value</b>		
Dedicated investments into tourism infrastructure development aiming at interest and educate visitors in the Outstanding Universal Value of the Curonian Spit	Disease, pest invasion or a devastating fire damaging the ancient pine forests in one or both national parks on the Curonian Spit	Dedicated investments into education infrastructure development hampered by pest invasion or a devastating fire damaging ancient pine forests which, however, do not reduce the appeal of the Curonian Spit
<b>Destination marketing based on the USP</b>		
The Curonian Spit joins the Cittaslow (international movement of 'slow cities') emphasising health, well-being and heritage tourism as well as ecotourism	Nearshore or offshore environmental disaster (oil spill, algal boom etc.) spoiling the image of the destination	Nearshore or offshore environmental disaster (oil spill, algal boom etc.) spoiling the image of the destination
<b>Destination marketing based on other features</b>		
"Lonely Planet" regularly includes the Baltic Sea beach in Nida into the TOP 100 global list of pleasure beaches	Shifting tourist profiles and growing demand for more 'sun-sand-sea' reduces interest in heritage and urban tourism	Shifting tourist profiles and growing demand for more 'sun-sand-sea' reduces interest in heritage and urban tourism fuelled by Instagram influencers
<b>Events and festivals as heritage brands</b>		
EU support could be available for positioning Nida as a World-Heritage-themed event site	Popular festivals like the Midsummer Festival turns from an authentic heritage celebration into a 'flea fair' for souvenirs	EU support could be available for positioning Nida as a World-Heritage-themed event site
<b>Value for money</b>		
Over 30% of tourists visiting the Curonian Spit are affluent or retired German-speaking ones ('silver tourism')	Hotels in Neringa lose competition to airB&B, mobile homes and camping sites in nearby coastal and nature areas	Over 30% of tourists visiting the Curonian Spit still are affluent or retired German-speaking ones ('silver tourism')
<b>Care for the quality of the tourist offer</b>		
A good potential and local skills in collaboration with the academic community for improving the quality of the tourist offer	Erosion or loss of traditional life, making the heritage tourism a 'missing link' in the Curonian Spit tourism system	Erosion or loss of traditional life, making the heritage tourism a 'missing link' in the Curonian Spit tourism system
<b>Care for visitor satisfaction</b>		
Number of tourists which come to explore the Curonian Spit for a day or two and cross the border is increasing	The number of overnights suffers a sharp decline due to environmental disasters	Number of tourists which come to explore the Curonian Spit for a day or two and cross the border is increasing
<b>Heritage tourism marketing innovations</b>		
External support opportunities for start-ups and business incubators in ICT-based heritage tourism product development related to academic institutions on both sides of the border	Ageing professionals in the HORECA sector are less receptive of tourism marketing innovations	External support opportunities for start-ups and business incubators in ICT-based heritage tourism product development related to academic institutions on both sides of the Lithuanian-Russian border of the Curonian Spit
<b>Seasonality and length of stay</b>		
The World Heritage status may become important in prolonging visitors' stay on the Curonian Spit, especially with new opportunities to cross the border visa-free	A protracted decline in overnight stays on the Curonian Spit with an even more significant prevalence of weekend visitors	A protracted decline in overnight stays on the Curonian Spit with an even more significant prevalence of weekend visitors

<b>Heritage tourism product development</b>		
Continued Quality Coast / Green Destinations certification facilitates upgrading of sustainable tourism offer on both sides of the Curonian Spit	Struggle among significant stakeholders over destination marketing priorities and messages	Struggle among significant stakeholders over destination marketing priorities and messages
<b>Sustainability awareness</b>		
European conservation volunteer networks assist in raising sustainability awareness	Footpath erosion and littering due to sustainability ignorance	European conservation volunteer networks assist in raising sustainability awareness
<b>Creative industries and local crafts</b>		
It is quite fashionable among people of creative professions to spend at least part of the year on the Curonian Spit	Overlooked changes in visitor tastes and interests cause the Curonian Spit to fall behind nearby destinations	It is quite fashionable among people of creative professions to spend at least part of the year on the Curonian Spit
<b>Connectivity</b>		
The Port of Klaipeda offers ideal conditions and development opportunities for maritime ferry liners and oceanic cruise ships, including the Russian side due to the visa waiver	Ferry connection between Klaipeda with Karlshamn and Kiel turns from Ro-Pax into Ro-Ro hampering the possibilities for German and Scandinavian tourists to reach the Spit	Ferry connection between Klaipeda with Karlshamn and Kiel continues running Ro-Pax services ensuring the possibilities for foreign tourists to reach the Curonian Spit

## ANNEX 6. ACTIONS TO AVERT THE COINCIDENCE OF WEAKNESSES AND THREATS

### FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS

Weaknesses	Threats	Proposed Actions
<b>Social sustainability</b>		
Homes are costly enhancing depopulation. Ever more homes are transformed into summer houses	Active pressures to change the character of the recreational environment in the core zone of the Curonian Spit	Engage creative industry adepts who bought second-homes on the Curonian Spit ('new locals') to participate more actively in the Autumn Equinox festival
Local population is becoming quite old. The number of active inhabitants in tourism sector declines	The Curonian Spit might turn into one of the most popular second-home places in Lithuania and Kaliningrad urban agglomeration	Develop and launch a wide-scale and segment-tailored World Heritage marketing campaign to make sea convalescence on the Curonian Spit more attractive for elderly tourists
<b>Economy</b>		
On the scale of the Baltic Sea Region, the Curonian Spit is one of the poorest in terms of GDP per capita	The Curonian Spit turns into a second-home resort void of almost any lasting socio-economic activities except for summer months	Promote the Curonian Spit as a cutting-edge innovative ICT-based sustainable tourism 'lab' offering contemporary take on coastal heritage tourism
<b>Sustainable heritage conservation and management</b>		
Harsh contrast between high and low seasons causing a disproportional load on municipal utilities and water consumption	Ever increasing risk of disastrous droughts with declining precipitation causing the catastrophically dropping of groundwater levels in summer	Impose tax incentives (e.g. even more contrasting car toll) between the high and shoulder season to regulate the visitor flow and the load on utilities
<b>Heritage tourism sector</b>		
The municipality doesn't put enough dedicated efforts in making the heritage features more attractive for tourists who struggle to perceive the OUV	Shifting tourist profiles and demand towards 'new seaside crowds', reduces the opportunities and, hence, revenues from heritage and nature tourism	Apply the best practice from the English Lake District to celebrate and reward those entrepreneurs from HORECA and related sectors that invest in quality through greater exposure to the World Heritage marketplace

<b>Tourism competitiveness</b>		
People from tourism sector are not interested in developing new products and offers	Real estate prices become too high on the Curonian Spit for urbanites, particularly young people to buy second homes	Increase real estate taxes on second-homes on the Curonian Spit up to the maximum level permitted in Lithuania and Russian Federation

#### LEGAL AND REGULATORY ASPECTS

Weaknesses	Threats	Proposed Actions
<b>Historical legacy</b>		
After the Second World War, the Curonian Spit became part of the Soviet Union which hindered democratic and civic development	A sharp decline of interest and/or commitment of the HORECA businesses and customers in sustainability or heritage designation due to 'concept inflation'	Strengthen collaboration with ta UNESCO-listed Southern Ūland Agricultural Landscape to learn and acquire democratic and inclusive heritage tourism development practices
<b>Legal and management aspects of heritage conservation</b>		
Too lengthy procedures of getting permits for new HORECA projects in the World Heritage core and buffer zones	The area is susceptible to visual disruption by an eventual large-scale new infrastructure development	Join efforts with other interested stakeholders to establish the transboundary World Heritage Office of the Curonian Spit
<b>Recent/current/eventual legal and administrative development</b>		
Many permits on the highest administrative levels are required for any larger-scale changes	World Heritage restrictions might turn the living landscape into an open-air museum	Develop and implement a World Heritage 'Storytelling Master Plan' for vivification and animation of the underpinning farming culture creatively adapted from the English Lake District that faces similar challenges of 'concept inflation' and turning the living landscape into an open-air museum
<b>Designations facilitating sustainable tourism</b>		
Low interest of the majority of HORECA businesses in any kind of designations or service quality benchmarking systems	A sharp decline of interest and/or commitment of the HORECA businesses and customers in health-resort, wellbeing, sustainability or heritage designation due to 'concept inflation'	Joining efforts of both parks on the Curonian Spit with the Polish coastal national parks (e.g. Slowinski) to establish a Southeast Baltic sustainable coastal tourism network

## ANNEX 7. COMPARISON OF THE VIABILITY OF WORLD HERITAGE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES

Criteria	STRATEGY 'BUSINESS AS USUAL' ('0 STRATEGY')		MITIGATING COINCIDENCE OF WEAKNESSES AND THREATS ('0+ STRATEGY')		AVAILABLE HERITAGE-BASED TOURISM DEVELOPMENT NOTIONS	
1. Efficiency	 (w.f.=2.0)	It is not the way, how the goals and breakthroughs of sustainable heritage tourism development are achieved	 (w.f.=2.0)	Limited measures to mitigate coincidence of weaknesses and threats have a long-term limited positive effect	 (w.f.=2.0)	The available heritage tourism notions will deliver a substantial socio-economic breakthrough
2. Socio-economic acceptability	 (w.f.=3.0)	It is not the way how the wide society and business anticipate heritage tourism development	 (w.f.=3.0)	Mitigating coincidence of weaknesses and threats is acceptable by the society	 (w.f.=3.0)	The available heritage tourism notions are focused to achieve long-term overall sustainability goals.
3. Technical feasibility	 (w.f.=1.5)	Continuing the 'Business as Usual' policy doesn't require additional technical solutions	 (w.f.=1.5)	Mitigating coincidence of weaknesses and threats requires extra limited technical solutions	 (w.f.=1.5)	No new approaches are necessary while implementing the available heritage tourism notions
4. Policy feasibility	 (w.f.=1.0)	Continuing the 'Business as Usual' policy goes against the sustainability policy	 (w.f.=1.0)	Mitigating coincidence of weaknesses and threats is neutral for the sustainability policy	 (w.f.=1.0)	The available heritage tourism notions for the Curonian Spit facilitate sustainable local development
5. Suitability	 (w.f.=1.5)	It has a narrower impact range than alternatives whose results cover very different areas	 (w.f.=1.5)	Emphasis on creative outdoor leisure provides a narrower impact range than broader options and is quite suitable	 (w.f.=1.5)	The tourism notions of the cross-border World Heritage Action Plan for the Curonian Spit aim to have quite a broad impact range in different areas
6. Reliability	 (w.f.=2.0)	Continuing the 'Business as Usual' policy is surely reliably implementable at low costs	 (w.f.=2.0)	Strengthening cross-border co-operation between both sides mitigates coincidence of weaknesses and threats	 (w.f.=2.0)	The implementation of the available heritage tourism notions has good chances to deliver the outlined improvement
7. Prevalence	 (w.f.=1.0)	It is not the way, how the key stakeholders see sustainable heritage tourism development	 (w.f.=1.0)	It is not the way, how the key stakeholders see sustainable heritage tourism development	 (w.f.=1.0)	The implementation of the available heritage tourism notions fits best the prevailing public opinion
8. Flexibility	 (w.f.=3.0)	The strategy is unsuitable for solving the issues as circumstances or situation change	 (w.f.=3.0)	The strategy is barely suitable for solving the issues as circumstances or situation change	 (w.f.=2.0)	The available heritage tourism notions are formulated flexibly even as circumstances change
9. Smoothness	 (w.f.=2.0)	Continuing the 'Business as Usual' policy is the smoothest strategic alternative	 (w.f.=2.0)	The length of time between strategy adoption and implementation is relatively short	 (w.f.=2.0)	The smoothness of implementation of the heritage tourism notions is fixed by the validity of the Action Plan
10. Implementation costs	 (w.f.=4.0)	Continuing the 'Business as Usual' policy doesn't require extra implementation costs	 (w.f.=4.0)	Mitigating coincidence of weaknesses and threats require only minimal additional costs	 (w.f.=4.0)	Implementation of the available heritage tourism notions including all proposed measures bears high costs
FINAL SCORE	<b>5.0</b>		<b>19.5</b>		<b>32.0</b>	