Sustainability impact assessment and environmental technologies in sensitive regions
Participation and Socio-economy

Poster Senatssaal

Key sustainability issues and the spatial classification of sensitive regions in Europe

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Cross-cutting environmental, social and economic changes may have harsh impacts on sensitive regions. To address sustainability issues by governmental policy measures properly, the geographical delineation of sensitive regions is essential. With reference to the European impact assessment guidelines from 2005, sensitive regions were identified by using environmental, social and economic data and by applying cluster analysis, United Nation Environmental Policy priorities and expert knowledge. On a regionalised 'Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics' (NUTS) level and for pre-defined sensitive region types (post-industrial zones, mountains, coasts and islands) 31 % of the European area was identified as sensitive. However, the delineation mainly referred to social and economic issues since the regional data bases on environmental indicators are limited and do not allow the separation of medium-term vital classes of sensitive regions. Overall, the sensitive regions showed indicator values differing from the EU-25 average.

Keywords: Sensitive region types, Key sustainability issues, Cluster analysis, Expert knowledge, UNEP priorities