



## **Climate change impacts on tourism demand in ski destinations**

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Climate change affects ski destinations worldwide because of a direct dependency on snow, although with big differences between destinations, their elevation, their size, reach ability and further vulnerability factors corresponding to demographics and socioeconomic changes. Means of adaptation mainly focus on technically made snow. In this quick developing topic there is little data about the effects of climate change on customer demand and on the reactions of tourists to offered alternatives. Resulting questions are how climate change affects tourism demand in the longer term, if there are alternatives to skiing being offered, and about the role of technically made snow in tourism demand. This paper discusses customer demand responses from the online Conjoint Analysis “Save-Snow” as a part of the international research study “SkiSustain”. The impact of climate change on skiers demand can be direct and severe if warm and dry winters become more regular. With more warm winters in the ski destinations and in especial also in the source markets of cities, mid mountain ranges and the flat lands like the winter 2006/07 has shown, about 2/3 of the tourists will ski less often or even stop skiing in the future. A snow guarantee with technically made snow in the destinations can only partly outweigh this potential decline in tourism demand, because only natural winter weather reminds potential tourists in the source markets of snow and of booking a snow holiday. Snow events and snow domes in the urban areas can potentially help to generate snow demand in the source markets despite of less natural snow in the flats. Tourists visiting a mountain destination on the other hand

are not interested in artificial snow sports in a nearby snow dome as an alternative. This paper concludes with the presentation of some opportunities for ski destinations to offer alternative services depending on the kind of customer.