Considering Disaster Vulnerability and Resiliency: The case of Hurricane Effects on Tourism-based Economies

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Abstract

In this study, we examine the vulnerability and resiliency of 10 tourism-based regional economies which include US national parks or seashores (situated on the Gulf of Mexico or Atlantic Ocean coastline) affected by several hurricanes over a 26-year period. The vulnerability of each economy to natural disasters was estimated using a panel linear model, while resilience was estimated by employing a negative binomial panel regression and a difference-in-difference model. Natural disaster damage, related to physical damage and human loss, was shown to have a negative effect on regional economies. Regions with stronger economies prior to natural disasters have lower disaster losses than regions with weaker economic characteristics. More effort to improve regional economic conditions before natural disasters is necessary to minimize disaster loss. Lessons learned from the economic impacts of past natural disasters, in particular in tourism-based regions, can help regional planners and policy makers predict problems related to disasters and more effectively prepare for future events

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