

SPANISH SEASIDE RESORTS FACE LIMITED RESOURCES RELATED TO DROUGHT



This year, taking a shower on the beach of Lloret de Mar is impossible due to the ongoing drought. The Spanish seaside resort is taking measures to conserve water while the tourism industry faces criticism over its impact on climate change.

Given the continuing drought that Spain, a country at the forefront of global warming, has experienced for months, a sacrifice that may appear insignificant is quite significant.

Catalonia's reservoirs are responsible for storing rainwater in the dry months and have dropped to 29% of their capacity. As a result, the authorities have implemented restrictions since March to prevent a shortage of running water for 7.7 million people in the region. These measures are not always well-received by the tourism sector, which significantly contributes to the Spanish economy, accounting for 12% of GDP.

Limited resources

With 71.6 million foreign tourists in 2022, Spain is ranked second as the world's top tourist destination after France. However, this sector, which employs 2.5 million people, is facing criticism from environmentalists and residents concerned about the sustainability of the Spanish mass tourism model.

David Saurí, a geography professor at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, suggests setting limits to prevent uncontrolled growth with an increased population and decreased resources. He explains that tourists staying at four- or five-star hotels consume water more than twice that of an average resident.

Jordi Palaudelmàs, the spokesperson for the SOS Lloret association, has emphasized the limited availability of water resources. This has prompted the need for a more sustainable approach to tourism. The regional authorities aim to implement measures to ensure tourists' consumption is comparable to that of locals by 2040 to reduce tourism's impact on water resources. This will require significant effort from the tourism sector.

Transformation

The tourism sector should have taken action long ago, and if Spain tackled the issue today, it could improve. Like other coastal areas in Spain, recycled water is used to water gardens due to drought, but there is still limited infrastructure.

Spain can prevent much-treated water from coming to waste in coastal municipalities by redirecting it away from the sea.

Despite the challenges, experts remain optimistic about the tourism sector's future. However, they believe more must be done to transform and reuse water in the country.

Date: 2023-07-22

Article link: <https://www.tourism-review.com/spanish-seaside-resorts-under-climate-treat-news13448>