Tourism is ranked within the top three contributors to the economic growth and development of every state in the U.S. The unique natural settings and human-made attractions of coastal states, in particular, attract tens of millions of visitors annually to our nation’s coastlines. Tourism’s contribution to jobs, tax revenues, and local communities is undeniably significant.

At the same time, the “footprints” of tourism are increasingly apparent, from energy and water consumption to degradation of coastal habitats to impacts on local cultural traditions. Engaging the visitor industry sector provides an opportunity to achieve the long-term sustainability of America’s coasts.

Sea Grant programs nationwide continue to address coastal tourism and associated effects on coastal residents and environments. Sea Grant works with coastal communities, the visitor industry, and other stakeholders to foster sustainable coastal development while seeking preservation of our natural capital and maritime and cultural heritage.
Hawai‘i Sea Grant is assessing potential sector-based impacts of climate change on Hawai‘i’s visitor industry through research and targeted stakeholder interviews.

Florida Sea Grant supports the science and technical assistance required for the state’s artificial reef efforts and has done so for over 30 years. Fishing and diving on Florida’s reefs are a strong local economic driver, annually providing tens of thousands of jobs, billions in economic activity and income, and about $250 million in state revenues.

Delaware Sea Grant is conducting a study on Tourism Resilience: how coastal communities can respond, recover, and adapt to natural hazards and climate change.

Hawai‘i Sea Grant is assessing potential sector-based impacts of climate change on Hawai‘i’s visitor industry through research and targeted stakeholder interviews.

Sea Grant is the “go-to” organization for science-based information and community outreach related to all aspects of coastal tourism.

Maine Sea Grant’s Downeast Fisheries Heritage Trail links 40 sites to educate visitors and residents alike about the region’s important historical and contemporary fisheries.

Oregon Sea Grant showcases Oregon’s working waterfronts through a series of 16 videos.

NOAA Sea Grant
Read more details on these stories and more by visiting seagrant.noaa.gov and searching under Impacts.