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The CATCH Best Practice Report

Best Practices of Sustainable
Angling Tourism in the
South Baltic Region, and
Recommendations on how to
Improve Touristic Service Offers



Lead Partner:



Project Partners:





We would like to thank all project partners, participating anglers and providers for sharing their experiences with, and information on, the current state of coastal angling tourism in the South Baltic Region.

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1 Coastal Angling Tourism in the South Baltic Region

With the popularity of recreational angling increasing, and awareness of the need for environmental sustainability growing, the potential for sustainable angling tourism in the South Baltic Region has become more evident over the last few years. Moreover, recent studies have shown promising numbers regarding recreational angling in the South Baltic Region. It has been illustrated that recreational angling amounts to €749 million in direct spending alone. With indirect and induced spending, coastal angling tourism adds up to approximately €1.5 billion of production in Baltic Sea countries. With that, it provides nearly 15,000 jobs directly or indirectly involved in the angling tourism sector. In the CATCH partner countries - [Denmark](#), [Germany](#), [Lithuania](#) and [Poland](#) - the contribution of recreational coastal angling amounts to a total production of €490 million and nearly 5,000 jobs in direct, indirect and induced businesses.¹ However, despite these positive prospects only a few service providers and coastal communities have seized the range of opportunities and the full potential of coastal angling tourism to date.

As a niche market, sustainable coastal angling tourism offers great possibilities for setting oneself apart from common touristic offers. To promote the development of such tourism, the [EU project CATCH](#) presents coastal communities, service providers and anglers with tools and a multilingual platform to establish sustainable angling tourism, fosters exchange and cooperation between stakeholders, and defines inspiring best practices in the South Baltic Region. CATCH also attends to anglers' demands and preferences in order to include them in the development of future-oriented strategies and suggestions for sustainable angling tourism.

In order to achieve these objectives, and by implication support service providers and local communities with their coastal angling activities, it has been considered necessary to expand general knowledge on the current market situation. Until recently, little was known about the market of coastal angling tourism in the South Baltic Region. As a first step, thus, market analyses of both the demand and the provider sides of coastal angling were carried out in

¹ Hyder, K., Radford, Z., Prellezo, R., Weltersbach, M. S., Lewin, W. C., Zarauz, L., Ferter, K., Ruiz, J., Townhill, B., Mugerza, E., & Strehlow, H. V. (2017). *Research for PECH Committee: Marine recreational and semi-subsistence fishing - its value and its impact on fish stocks*. Brussels: European Parliament, Policy Department for Structural and Cohesion Policies.

Denmark, Germany, Lithuania and Poland to illustrate the current state of coastal angling tourism in the project region. The results of these surveys can be found in [The CATCH Angler Survey Report](#) and [The CATCH Provider Survey Report](#). Based on these reports, and further guidelines on sustainability and best practice criteria developed within the project, suggestions for strategic directions of coastal angling service providers and coastal communities were deduced. The present [CATCH Best Practice Report](#) summarises these considerations in a short and comprehensive form. In the following chapters it presents useful guidelines and best practice activities on how to successfully position oneself in the angling tourism market.

2 Exploiting the Potential of Sustainable Coastal Angling Tourism

In order to establish a successful business, service providers must draw on knowledge of both the demand as well as the provider sides of the sustainable angling tourism market. Understanding the market is therefore absolutely essential, and relevant research and analyses need to be conducted. The knowledge obtained will help service providers, organisations and entire communities to position themselves properly and implement strategies and activities accordingly.

A first step to gathering this required knowledge is to analyse the characteristics of the industry's current customers, as well as its potential future customers. Besides demographic characteristics, demands and expectations of customers should be identified and service offers adapted. For those who have limited resources to conduct their own analyses, or who require a more comprehensive overview on the demand side in the South Baltic Region, **The CATCH Angler Survey Report** provides necessary information on anglers and their demands with respect to coastal angling tourism. This report assists service providers in getting to know their target group from the CATCH project area. Anglers' varying but also common characteristics and expectations are illustrated on both national and aggregated levels. The report therefore provides a valuable reference for service providers. Nevertheless, for a more detailed or individualised understanding of the region and customers, additional analyses should be conducted by service providers to the extent deemed necessary.

As a next step, service providers need to analyse their own range of services and their fit to the characteristics and demands of customers. In addition, providers should know their competitors and how to set themselves apart from others' offers. As assistance for service providers and communities, **The CATCH Provider Survey Report** offers information on the market situation of coastal angling tourism in the project region based on a market analysis, and identifies shortcomings and best practices. It also presents service providers with recommendations for adapting their own business strategies and ensuring the long-term existence of their business and sustainable recreational angling in general. However, as with the CATCH Angler Survey Report, the second report simply serves as a point of reference. For more specific guidelines, further analyses should be conducted independently.

Nevertheless, the knowledge gathered from the market analyses of CATCH provides valuable insights on the progress of sustainable coastal angling tourism in the South Baltic Region. Findings of the two analyses enabled the subsequent step of defining best practice criteria and improved activities for service providers and coastal communities, as well as identifying already existing best practices in the project region. In this regard, the following section presents examples of best practices in the project region that were chosen based on selected best practice criteria. In combination with the findings from the CATCH market analyses, the knowledge of best practices in Denmark, Germany, Lithuania and Poland allowed for the development of a road map of improved activities, as shown in chapter four of this document. The CATCH Best Practice Report concludes with a short summary on directions for providers' and communities' future progress.

3 Best Practice Examples in the South Baltic Region

Service providers and coastal communities in the South Baltic Region do not have to look far for best practice examples and inspiration. Inspiring providers, concepts and strategies can be found in the partner countries of CATCH. For this report, exemplary service providers of different service categories were selected as they stand out with their operative strategies and sustainable activities on coastal angling tourism. Although the development of sustainable coastal angling tourism has progressed unequally in the four partner countries of CATCH, each country has produced inspiring examples for the region or abroad. These providers often, in part, vary greatly in their characteristics, practices and activities, which in turn highlights the diversity and possibilities of coastal angling tourism in the South Baltic Region. In order to fall within the definition of a best practice example, service providers and organisations are required to fulfil specific criteria. These criteria include, without limitation, quality and diversification of offers, communication and visibility of services, cooperation, as well as sustainability issues. In the following sections, selected service providers and organisations are introduced for each country separately.

3.1 Denmark

Compared to other countries in the project region, sustainable coastal angling has taken a higher priority in the touristic sector of Denmark. The development of sustainable offers for anglers and guests has been driven forward, and already numerous providers conform to sustainability agreements and standards. It is therefore not surprising that angling remains a popular recreational and sporting activity in Denmark. In the Danish project area of CATCH, the network and activities of Fishing Zealand are particularly prominent and serve as a best practice example for other communities in Denmark, the CATCH partner countries and other areas in the South Baltic Region.

Fishing Zealand entails a transregional concept, wide-ranging cooperation, and the involvement of stakeholders in activities and development issues. Most notably, sustainability goals gain high priority in Fishing Zealand. Environmental considerations are addressed by

paying attention to the protection of nature and fish stock, as well as restoration activities, in order to ensure and facilitate sustainable recreational angling in the long-term. In the social dimension, partners of Fishing Zealand provide their services to anglers of all skill levels and ages. Offers and activities designed especially for juvenile or handicapped anglers complete the overall package. In the economic dimension, Fishing Zealand leads by example with its holistic concept and standards for the whole region, including communities, service providers, angling clubs and volunteers. Providers from different service categories are encouraged to work together in order to attract interested anglers and guests, but also to ensure the long-term existence of sustainable coastal angling along the Danish Baltic coast. Shared values, standards and quality requirements ensure sustainable management of the environment, high service quality and the promotion of recreational angling. Fishing Zealand now has to face the challenge of strengthening existing, and establishing new, cooperation. By communicating the significance and potential of coastal angling tourism, long-term networks and year-round visitors can be achieved.

Not only Fishing Zealand as an organisation, but also their partner providers, serve as best practice examples for single providers and smaller businesses. For this report, two single providers were selected to show the exemplary activities of Fishing Zealand. For one, the guide business Møn Guide, run by Knud Stangegård, offers anglers and guests a broad experience of the island of Møn. It attracts anglers with comprehensive skills and knowledge of fishing areas, flora, bird life, geology and the environment of Møn. To guarantee service quality to anglers, Knud is a certified sports fishing guide and has to follow the rules of ethics and professional conduct of the Danish Sports Fishing Guide Association. Offers for anglers vary from one-day to several-day trips with different options for targeting fish species and angling techniques. Møn Guide leads by example on how to successfully manage an angling guide service with its wide range of offers, certified quality and visibility for anglers and other interested guests. Like Møn Guide, additional angling guides scattered around Fishing Zealand offer equally qualified services and tours. Angling guides of Fishing Zealand do not view each other as competitors, but rather as angling enthusiasts who share the same vision of respectful treatment of water and nature.

Another best practice example from Fishing Zealand is the accommodation provider Camping Mønbroen, which particularly leads the way with its adherence to ecological, economic

as well as social aspects of sustainability. For example, in addition to its accommodation service, Camping Mønbroen runs an ecological farm and is part of the UNESCO Møns Biosphere Reserve. For anglers, it cooperates with local certified angling guides or rents boats for their trips. Further, Camping Mønbroen offers supplementary non-angling-related services, including cycling and walking tours. In cooperation with Fishing Zealand, angling activities for children, adolescents and beginners are realised. One small shortcoming of Camping Mønbroen lies with its limited online visibility for international visitors. By cooperating with Fishing Zealand, however, this deficit can be overcome as Fishing Zealand provides all necessary information in several languages.

3.2 Germany

Next to Denmark, coastal angling tourism has developed farthest in Germany – though it is still in its early stages and much potential has yet to be accessed. Although communities and providers cannot yet produce a holistic concept for the coastal region, several service providers and organisations can serve as role models in the area and other parts of the South Baltic Region. Angling service providers at the Baltic coast of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania are mainly located in or nearby the already existing touristic centres, including Rostock-Warnemünde and the island of Rügen. To illustrate that providers can also be successful outside these crowded areas and, in particular, access the potential of sustainable coastal angling tourism in quieter areas, two providers and an organisation were chosen as German best practice examples that operate away from off the mainstream destinations. Visiting anglers and guests can benefit from the tranquillity and beauty of nature.

Halbinsel Peenemünde serves as a role model for service providers that develop gradually over time. Halbinsel Peenemünde is a newly developed angling camp that aims to provide anglers and guests with everything they need for a relaxing and memorable stay. Currently, Halbinsel Peenemünde offers a wide range of services including different types of accommodation, boats for rent, guided angling tours, and supplementary offers for families and non-angling companions. Thanks to the variety of services Halbinsel Peenemünde offers it has also turned into a popular meeting point for locals, who enjoy the shop and its regional products, along with the educational talks, museum, restaurant ship, festivities and more. In addition, Halbinsel Peenemünde addresses sustainability considerations in different dimensions. For one, it

aims for and promotes considerate treatment of nature, cooperates with regional suppliers, promotes transregional non-angling service offers and pursues long-term development plans for a more comprehensive range of offers. Although Halbinsel Peenemünde is still in a developmental stage, it provides an example of what a strong overall concept, sustainability considerations and a realistic vision and assessment of the region's potential can accomplish. Halbinsel Peenemünde attracts anglers and guests from near and far and offers close-by angling grounds, skilled guides and employees, as well as quality equipment and activities.

Besides the more diversified service providers, smaller businesses, such as Green Guiding, serve as best practice examples for providers that specialise in a single core service or build their business around this core service. Green Guiding offers several services for anglers and for non-angling companions that involve guided tours in nature and educating guests with respect to the environment and its living organisms. The skilled angling guides from Green Guiding are anxious to respect local and regional characteristics, and offer guiding tours that target different fish species and different angling techniques. Besides motor boats, nature-friendly kayaks or belly boats can be used for the offered trips. To broaden the range of services, Green Guiding offers photo safaris and outdoor cooking, which inspire guests to learn from and respect their environment. Green Guiding in particular distinguishes itself from other providers via its well-structured website, on which anglers can find comprehensive information regarding rules and regulations, conduct in nature, and required licenses in both German and English language. Green Guiding also cooperates with selected providers - from accommodation to license management - to offer anglers a simplified means by which to search for further services for a relaxing trip or holiday. This cooperation could be expanded to attract even more potential guests.

It is not only transregional organisations such as Fishing Zealand or angling service providers that can serve as best practice examples; it is also worthwhile to consider provider-independent associations that foster coastal angling tourism in the South Baltic Region. In Germany, the Tourism Association of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania (TMV) works on the positive development of tourism and recreational activities, including sustainable angling tourism, in the area. In this context, the TMV has developed a criteria catalogue for certifying angling accommodations and angling tourist offers to ensure anglers and guests can access the best-quality angling trips and holidays. Qualified providers receive a certificate that serves as useful

guidance for interested guests to find the right offers. Having certificates in place is a great aid for anglers to orientate themselves among the vast number of providers listed online, and to find those that are qualified to best meet the anglers' needs. An objective of service providers could thus be to achieve established angling certification to stand out from competitors and ensure quality for themselves and customers.

3.3 Lithuania

The development of sustainable coastal angling tourism has progressed to varying degrees among coastal areas in Lithuania. Although communities and providers are aware of the great potential that coastal angling offers for the area, sustainability considerations are still in their very early stages and are being implemented only gradually. Nevertheless, individual service providers already stand out in the Lithuanian project area and serve as best practice examples for other local providers independent of the service category.

One example is the angling guide service Stintapūkis, which combines in its mission angling experiences and protecting nature. Stintapūkis' objective includes providing information on fishing spots and techniques, restoring the environment, and teaching locals and guests how to conduct themselves appropriately in nature. Stintapūkis offers its service year round, and thereby fosters the region's tourism economy throughout the less attractive winter season. It is therefore a role model for other providers in the region as it not only promotes its own business but simultaneously ensures the existence of others. Cooperation and networks among service providers benefit the businesses themselves and the region as a whole.

3.4 Poland

In Poland, the development of coastal angling tourism is likewise in the beginning stages. The potential of coastal angling has been widely acknowledged by coastal communities and first service providers have begun seizing up the opportunity of sustainable angling tourism. One of these providers is Oder Delta Safaris, which offers – as the first in the region – guide services in the Szczecin Lagoon. It provides tours that are organised in cooperation with local nature conservationists, farmers, hunters and wildlife tour experts in order to adhere to standards of



sustainability. In addition, a portion of the tour fees is donated to conservation plans of local guides and scientists. In order to overcome shortcomings and attract more international guests, information and services need to be provided in other languages, and further offers for anglers are desirable.

As can be seen by the selected best practice examples from the CATCH project area, sustainable coastal angling tourism has developed to varying degrees. However, it also demonstrates that, independent of the development stage, coastal angling tourism offers great opportunities for both smaller and larger providers, networks and organisations. If needed, providers can find inspiration and adapt their strategies or activities to their own requirements.

4 Road Map for Service Providers

Best practices from the CATCH project area serve as great inspiration for developing coastal angling service providers. To further support providers in their refinement of strategies, the present chapter presents exemplary guidelines. These guidelines are based on the findings of the CATCH market analyses, and can be considered individually or as part of a more holistic concept. In the following, the main areas of deficiency are highlighted, and suggestions for improvement outlined.

4.1 Customised Offers Based on Anglers' Habits and Demands

Knowing your customers and understanding their wishes and needs lays the foundation for a successful strategic direction of coastal angling service providers. Results of [The CATCH Angler Survey Report](#) show clearly that anglers do have a distinct idea of how their angling trips and holidays should be planned and organised. They also develop clear expectations on where to go, whom they want to spend their holidays with and what they require from respective service providers. Building on this knowledge, service offers adapted to customers' needs can be developed. In the following, identified demands and requirements are addressed in order to give suggestions for an advantageous positioning of services.

First, although anglers pursue the same hobby, they differ in their characteristics, preferences and expectations. These differences should be taken into account when designing new service offers. Anglers differ not only in age or nationality, but also in their overall experience, years of angling and commitment to their hobby. In the angler survey it was found that the distribution of angler types in particular varies among nationalities. Whereas in Denmark and Germany a high number of anglers can be categorised as advanced or even committed anglers, the majority of anglers in Lithuania and Poland assessed themselves as rather casual anglers. Service offers from angling providers could therefore be adapted to different levels of skills and experience of anglers. Preferably, a variety of offers could be presented to anglers and guests.

Second, preferences among anglers can vary with respect to nationality or season. Although coastal angling is highly valued among anglers, it may not always be the most

favoured method of angling. To attract more anglers to the coast, service providers need to communicate the benefits of coastal over other angling options. Advantages of coastal angling need to be promoted and in some circumstances combined offers of angling tours considered, e.g. a combination of both coastal and river angling tours on consecutive days. Besides the angling type, favoured fish species can also vary. This gives service providers and coastal communities the opportunity to promote their distinctiveness from other areas. National and international guests can be attracted by highlighting the exclusive distribution of specific fish species across local angling grounds. This also applies to attracting local anglers. Communities need to emphasize their regional distinctions in order to keep local anglers in the area for their trips and holidays.

Third, service providers and coastal communities also need to consider anglers' motivations for going on angling trips and holidays. In the angler survey, the majority of anglers stated that the main reasons are not catch-related, although catch-related motives should not be disregarded. Coastal communities can benefit from this knowledge and promote - in addition to great catch opportunities - the possibility of spending time with family and friends when on a holiday, while enjoying the peaceful nature and surroundings. Offering an overall package of inspiring angling experiences, combined with the possibility of having some family time and getting away from everyday life, can set service providers apart from competitors.

Fourth, in addition to knowing anglers' preferences, service providers and coastal communities should consider anglers' varying spending power with reference to the type of angling trip and the angler's nationality. The CATCH Angler Survey Report revealed, for example, that German anglers spend by far the most on their angling trips and holidays. In contrast, Lithuanian or Polish anglers often do not have the same spending power. Therefore, when planning or creating new service offers, characteristics of targeted anglers should be taken into consideration in order to not deter certain segments. Service offers need to be affordable to attract interested anglers and guests.

In addition to anglers' characteristics and preferences, offers can be based on their actual travel habits. The results of the angler study demonstrate that angling day trips or shorter holidays are far more common compared to long angling holidays. Taking this into account, the focus could be on creating and promoting - preferentially, but not solely - offers for shorter trips or holidays. In addition, these trips are often undertaken with other anglers, or sometimes even

with the angler's family. Providers can take advantage of this fact and promote offers that can be used as a group, or include supplementary offers. Anglers are most often accompanied by their families when longer holidays are undertaken; therefore, families should be considered in the overall service package, e.g. by including offers for those companions that will not be angling. In this regard, family and angling time can be combined and anglers do not have to select one over the other.

In order to attract foreign anglers, additional efforts need to be considered. In the CATCH angler survey it was found that for day trips and shorter holidays, and to some extent even for long holidays, the angler's own home country is the favoured destination. Local coastal communities can employ this to their advantage by highlighting local singularities and benefits for anglers. In order to attract foreign anglers, similar approaches can be applied but on a more visible level. Instead of promoting the benefits of staying close by, the advantages of a more distant destination can be highlighted. However, more importantly, travel arrangements and travelling itself need to be made simple for anglers in order to commit to a longer journey. The decision to travel will highly depend on the distance and attractiveness of the angling destination.

Concluding from all points outlined in this chapter, it is absolutely vital for service providers to understand their target customers. Before refining or adapting any strategy, providers need to carefully review their knowledge of the characteristics and wishes of their customers. Only then can strategies be successfully adapted and offers customised. Recommendations listed in the following sub-chapters all build on this first step of understanding the customer; thus, it is imperative that service providers follow this first recommendation.

4.2 Communication Strategies of Service Providers

Customised offers need to be promoted accordingly. In doing so, service providers must pay great attention to the visibility of their offers. Offers can only be seen by anglers if they are communicated through more than one channel. To attract local anglers it might be feasible to draw their attention to the providers' offers by only putting them on display via offline channels. For other anglers and customers, however, further distribution channels need to be utilised in order to ensure wide-ranging visibility. Here, the easiest option is to use the Internet; however, the CATCH provider analysis illustrated that provider websites and social media presences are often neglected, or little attention is paid thereto. Out-dated or missing information can discourage

anglers and other potential customers from searching for further details. They then tend to rely on well-known offers or friends' recommendations, but will not be open to new experiences in unknown areas with as-yet unknown providers. Thus, informing customers and keeping data on online platforms up to date should be high on the agenda of coastal angling service providers.

To attract anglers and their companions, it is advisable to provide all information and necessary details for the angling trip. This includes not only offers provided by the individual business, such as accommodation or guide services, but also information on angling spots, laws and regulations, licenses, closed seasons, etc. This saves time and trouble for potential guests, and encourages them to go on with their travel plans. The sufficient provision of information on angling trips and holidays can distinguish providers from their competitors. This is particularly salient, as in the CATCH angler survey most participants indicated that they organise their trips on their own. Lowered barriers in the form of all necessary information being clearly provided result in fewer obstacles for anglers to choose a destination and, with that, the promoted service provider.

4.3 Overcoming Barriers

All promotional and communication strategies become redundant when barriers or boundaries for not going on angling trips prevail. In order to successfully attract anglers, service providers, and especially coastal communities, need to make some effort to overcome these barriers. In the CATCH angler survey, several boundaries to taking angling trips were identified and summarised at national levels. Anglers in Denmark, Germany, Lithuania and Poland were asked to rate the severity of interpersonal boundaries, angling quality boundaries and conditional boundaries. Although most boundaries were not rated as major barriers, they do carry weight for anglers. Conditional boundaries are those barriers that can actually be tackled by coastal communities; they include the communication, clarity and comprehensibility of regulations, as well as all issues regarding angling licenses. Making it easier for anglers to find all necessary information on rules, regulations and licenses would thus clear the way to a joyful angling trip or holiday.

In addition to the aforementioned boundaries to taking angling trips, service providers and communities should not neglect language barriers as a potential reason for anglers to avoid taking trips abroad. For service providers, but also for coastal communities as a whole, it is

necessary to analyse their current and targeted customer structure. One focus lies on the questions of where guests come from and which language skills are necessary in order to communicate with them sufficiently. In general English is a good starting point for providers, but is not always the only solution. Additional language skills with reference to customer nationalities can be necessary. Furthermore, in order to be noticed by international guests, online presences and marketing materials need to be translated. If this is not possible, help and assistance can be provided by allied businesses. It is, however, advantageous for each provider to possess at least some language skills to be able to work independently when required.

4.4 Sustainability Considerations in Coastal Angling Tourism

Sustainability in touristic offers and services is not only a short-term trend or marketing strategy, but a long-term necessity to meet the challenges of surviving in the highly competitive tourism sector. Therefore, if they have not already, service providers and coastal communities need to introduce and establish sustainability standards on environmental, economic and social levels. Therein, overarching sustainability objectives and concepts should be in place for not only single providers, but also a union of like-minded local or regional providers.

Visiting guests and anglers are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of utilising sustainable businesses. The responsible treatment of nature by providers and communities can thus attract visitors who are searching for sustainable experiences. To support service providers and coastal communities, sustainability guidelines were developed within the CATCH project. These guidelines include suggestions for defined standards at all levels. The environmental dimension involves, for example, the reduction of pollution, the use of renewable energies and resources, as well as the protection of fish stocks and angling spots. Furthermore, the economic dimension comprises support for a long-term existence, the maintenance and improvement of competitive advantages, the diversification of offers, understanding of the target group and the creation of cooperation between providers. The social dimension of sustainability should also not be underestimated as it addresses the responsibility of each service provider, stakeholder and community to its own environment. It also involves joint decision making and activities, as well as the consideration of perspectives from all stakeholders. The full list of CATCH sustainability guidelines elaborates these dimensions and suggested activities in more detail, and helps providers and coastal communities in their sustainable development.

4.5 Networks and Cooperation

In a highly competitive sector such as tourism, networks and cooperation among service providers can be imperative for economic survival. For both small and large businesses, the advantages of shared resources and infrastructure are clear. For one, partnerships among individual providers or even whole communities enable diversified portfolios of angling-related – as well as supplementary, non-angling-related – services. This improves the overall attractiveness of the region and thereby attracts more anglers and guests. Furthermore, local and regional networks, and thus a trusting support system, can be established.

Service providers involved in these networks can benefit from shared standards, guidelines and objectives. By means of the common exchange of experience and knowledge, providers can learn and improve on a collaborative level. Previous shortcomings of providers or communities can be overcome by dividing tasks and activities, supporting each other when challenges occur, promoting services and events collectively, offering service bundles with other providers and recommending each other's services.

A network of different service providers also offers the opportunity to address a larger target group. Service providers and communities can position themselves favourably against other tourism or leisure sectors and attract both advanced and new anglers. By utilising service providers from a network, anglers do not need to search around for additional offers, but can rely on trustworthy cooperation and rapid replacement of services if needed.

4.6 Recommendations for Single Service Provider Categories

Seven categories of service providers within coastal angling tourism can be differentiated: boat rentals, cutter operators, angling shops, accommodation facilities, angling associations, angling guides and license management. Based on the results of The CATCH Provider Survey Report, three provider categories were selected for individual recommendations. These categories are accommodation services, angling shops and angling guides. The CATCH Provider Survey Report, in combination with The CATCH Angler Survey Report, demonstrated that these three provider categories deserve particular attention in that they show shortcomings in current strategies and great potential for improving them by utilising the knowledge on anglers' demands and requirements. Although general recommendations can be made for all providers,

it is appropriate to differentiate among these provider categories. Their specific characteristics require respective guidelines that can, in some circumstances, be transferred to other providers. In the following, a more detailed consideration of how providers from the three selected categories can position themselves for successful and sustainable coastal angling business is outlined.

In the CATCH angler survey, the majority of anglers stated that they prefer to stay in cottages or campsites when on angling trips or holidays in order to determine their own rest periods and meal times, operate independently of other guests, etc. When choosing accommodation for a trip, anglers consider specific features. Proximity to an angling spot, price, and overall impression of the surroundings and region were rated as the most important selection criteria. Accommodation providers should therefore have these criteria in mind when promoting their services. Criteria applicable to the accommodation need to be highlighted, and those that are not applicable should be compensated for via other features that are required by anglers. These include storage facilities, space for a boat and gear, and also close proximity to boat rentals and a good local infrastructure. For accommodation services in general, service providers should adapt to anglers' needs as far as possible. Anglers will, for example, value adjusted breakfast times or packed lunches for an angling tour. Additionally, angling-related information should be made available to anglers, such as information on angling spots, other angling service providers, national and local guidelines, and contact persons for further information. Supplementary offers for both anglers and non-angling companions need likewise to be communicated to broaden providers' range of services, and thereby attract more potential guests.

The second provider category, local angling shops, is confronted with the challenge of transferring from offline to online retailing. Although anglers indicated in the CATCH angler survey that they prefer real-life shops, the importance of online shops has gained continuous momentum in recent years. In fact, in some regions no angling shops exist due to their online competition. In order to set themselves apart from the latter, local angling shops have different options. One possibility includes, for example, implementing an online shop or providing the opportunity to place postal orders. However, this might not be practicable for all providers, for various reasons. More short-term approaches address the sales and the consulting process directly. Ensuring and highlighting the quality of sales advice and sales conversations can set angling shops apart from shops found online. Therefore, the expertise and experience of sales

assistants need to be promoted, as this is not given in online sales. In addition, establishing real bonds among providers and customers can only be realised through offline sales, and this can then turn into loyal customer behaviour and then repeated sales and positive recommendations. To set themselves further apart from their online competition, angling shops can organise additional events or angling competitions. In cooperation with angling guides, tours and courses, or even preparation courses and exams for angling licenses, can be offered. All in all, angling shops need to select those approaches that seem most fitting to them, but always pay great attention to the social aspect of sales.

Angling guides occupy a special position among the service provider categories of coastal angling tourism. The utilisation of angling guides is associated with a number of boundaries. Among all partner countries, anglers stated that they do not usually hire angling guides for their tours. The reasons for this non-utilisation vary from anglers judging themselves as sufficiently experienced, monetary aspects, and communication problems including language barriers. Often, anglers also feel confident that they can find all necessary information for their angling tours on the Internet. To counteract these arguments, angling guides need to promote aspects that speak in favour of their expertise, including their comprehensive knowledge of angling techniques, gear, local rules and unwritten laws, and especially on where to find the best angling spots. Therefore, the value of hiring an angling guide needs to be promoted without disregarding the knowledge or skills of anglers. Angling guides can emphasize the (complicated) specifics of the surroundings, or angling spots that are difficult to access without local knowledge. Likewise, angling guides are aware of the angling spots that offer the best angling opportunities in the region, and those that are less frequented than the more popular spots. In this regard, angling guides can point out that not all information can be found on the Internet, and that much lies with the skilled guides themselves. Additional suggestions for angling guides include, besides the promotion of expertise and years of experience, the reduction of language barriers, the provision of supplementary offers and cooperation with other angling service providers. Offering overall service packages can improve the attractiveness of utilising the service of an angling guide.

5 Conclusions

Despite the differences in development status among countries and regions, sustainable coastal angling tourism in the South Baltic Region entails great potential for coastal communities and their local providers. The differences in the progress of coastal angling tourism should not be seen as an obstacle, but rather as an opportunity for mutual advancement and beneficial learning from each other. Providers and communities can pay attention to each other's strengths and weaknesses, and can learn from other's mistakes and experiences. Not only partners or neighbours, but also competitors in the area or from farther away can serve as role models. Providers and coastal communities can work and improve together, and thus exploit the as-yet untapped potential of sustainable coastal angling tourism in the South Baltic Region. This, in turn, will be beneficial for anglers, providers and communities as a whole.

When promoting coastal angling tourism, the search for role models represents a promising possibility. Role models can support providers in finding the right approach and strategy for their own businesses: What is the realistic potential of the business? What are the short- to long-term goals for the business? What has to be done in order to achieve these goals? Can they be achieved alone, or is support needed? **Role models and best practices** can help providers in answering these questions. In this, however, it is important not to copy another business' strategy, but to adapt advantageous approaches to one's own circumstances and peculiarities. Only then is the long-term success and survival of a business possible.

The CATCH Best Practice Report gives providers recommendations and options to evaluate their own situation, to adapt their strategies and approaches accordingly, and to position themselves beneficially within the highly competitive tourism market. Drawing from this report, a possible road map for service providers in the coastal angling tourism market includes three action steps. First, providers need to **understand the market situation**. Market analyses of both the supply and the demand sides of coastal angling tourism, especially the analysis of customer structures, form the basis for subsequent actions. Second, providers are encouraged to look for role models and follow best practice criteria for sustainable coastal angling tourism in order to become exemplary service providers themselves that commit to sustainable treatment of the ecological, economic and social environment. In a third step, service providers need to realise recommendations and measures, and **reassess strategies** and change or adapt them if needed.

Potential measures include **customised service offers**, **improved communication strategies** and **visibility**, reduced barriers for anglers to ensure **worry-free planning and travel**, entering into **partnerships and cooperation** for mutual help and benefit, emphasising aspects of **sustainability** to increase attractiveness and ensure the long-term protection of nature and the organisation, and lastly considering special recommendations for single service provider categories.

Despite the importance of the action steps outlined in this report, it needs to be emphasised that these are recommendations, and not strict instructions or regulations. Each individual service provider should select those points that seem appropriate and necessary for them, and that are reasonable and beneficial for their individual situation. The CATCH Best Practice Report, therefore, is simply a guide or road map for interested providers that want to take a step forward with respect to sustainable coastal angling tourism, and exploit their potential while seeking support on their way.

CATCH has aimed to provide service providers and coastal communities with tools and measures to grow autonomously and to develop in a positive direction. With the CATCH Angler Survey Report, the CATCH Provider Survey Report and the CATCH Best Practice Report, the CATCH project forms a basis for this objective and encourages service providers and coastal communities to address the challenges and opportunities of changing customer demands and sustainability efforts, and to grow together.