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# The Impact of Shoreline Stabilization on Economic Growth in Small Island Developing States\*

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#### Abstract

This paper assesses the economic growth impact of shoreline stabilization policy in Small Island Developing States. Concentrating on the Barbadian efforts to stem shoreline retreat, it explores whether investments in shoreline stabilization and beach amenity enhancement have beneficial effects on medium-term economic growth. The analysis relies on the synthetic control method as a way to systematically choose comparison units (beach sites), which allows for precise quantitative inference in small-sample studies. Our results indicate that in the first three years after shoreline stabilization works were completed, local economic effects, as measured by nighttime lights data, are positive and indicate a positive trend. Confidence bounds obtained by a bootstrapping method suggest that the positive trend is robust in the last two years posttreatment. Shoreline stabilization works may therefore not only help preserve fragile ecological conditions, but further lead to sustainable growth in the local economy.

#### JEL Codes:

O44; Q54; D04; N56

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