Assessing blue gentrification in Michigan's coastal communities

MISG

CORE QUESTION:
How can we ensure sustainable and equitable development along Michigan's coastline?

Blue gentrification poses a significant challenge for coastal communities in Michigan and the Great Lakes region. This project aims to assess the extent of blue gentrification from 2006 to 2020, identify its driving forces, and develop policy and strategies to address it. A team including researchers, NGO experts, and educators, will seek to promote sustainable and equitable blue economies along Michigan's coastline, addressing residential displacement, and advancing justice and inclusion.

BLUE GENTRIFICATION

Green gentrification, a well-documented phenomenon, involves the creation or rehabilitation of green spaces to address environmental justice issues but can paradoxically worsen them by increasing housing costs and displacing intended beneficiaries. Similarly, blue gentrification, less studied but equally significant, refers to the displacement of long-term residents near water bodies like oceans and lakes. This phenomenon is particularly relevant in Michigan due to its abundance of water resources, including the Great Lakes. Despite its importance, scholarly research on blue gentrification remains scarce, with most existing studies focusing on large cities and overlooking smaller coastal communities like those in Michigan.

To fill this gap in knowledge, the research team aims to answer key questions about the spatial and temporal patterns, driving forces, and effective policies to combat blue gentrification in Michigan. The project will employ a mixed-methods approach, combining geospatial analysis, surveys, interviews, and policy review. It will focus on 46 coastal communities, identifying hotspots of gentrification and conducting in-depth fieldwork in selected municipalities.

The project aims to raise awareness among researchers, decision-makers, and the public about blue gentrification and its impacts. Outputs will include interactive tools, webinars, policy briefs, and outreach activities. The multidisciplinary team involved combines expertise in environmental science, social research, and community outreach to address the issue and promote justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. Ultimately, this project will support sustainable and equitable development along Michigan's coastline while preventing the displacement of long-term residents.

CONTACT

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