

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE STUDY OF ANTALYA, TURKEY

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Abstract: This paper discusses ideas about how tourism can be made base for sustainable tourism development in Antalya, Turkey. The introduction is a general overview of sustainable tourism development in coastal areas. The paper also addresses the role of NGOs in the course of development. Information is given about coastal tourism facilities in Turkey. Finally, sustainable tourism development in the case study area, Antalya, is discussed extensively as a characteristic region in Turkey.

Introduction

Sustainable tourism is tourism that combines high standards of quality with environmental constraints, tourists and local residents in a friendly and stimulating manner which would prove to be a better way to conduct tourism all over the world. In other words, it is self-maintaining tourism solving problems without a harm to its surroundings.

Compared to the other areas surrounding the City of Antalya, this is a remarkable example exhibiting both the prosperity and problems of rapid development from the local tourism industry. To make the development more sustainable, some efforts can be made by local businesses that contribute to tourism including NGOs, government and residents who both directly and indirectly have become a part of the tourism industry. As an example, local businesses should strictly obey the plans and guidelines set up by government agencies and NGOs. Moreover, they should collaborate with them when necessary. Though NGOs are newly established, they have proven to be quite useful and effective in planning and protection of sensitive land resources.

Last, but not least, the case of Antalya can be a pilot region in Turkey in which perspectives of sustainable tourism development can be applied. Results of special techniques, planning and implementation that are used in the case of Antalya can then be used to reshape the tourism industry in various other coastal touristic regions.

The following discussion is organized as follows. First, we discuss sustainable and tourism development in general. A

combination of these, namely sustainable tourism development in coastal areas, is our next topic. The role of NGOs, general structure of tourism sectors in Turkey with its tourism policies for coastal region follows. Finally, the case area, Antalya, with its sustainable development problems and proposed approaches for their solutions are considered. Some concluding remarks are made.

Sustainable Development:

The World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) introduced the concept of sustainable development in the Brundtland Report in 1987, defining sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs." In addition, the Second World Conservation Strategy (1990) used the term sustainable development with the following meaning "to improve the quality of life of human beings by living within the carrying capacity of the ecosystems that supports life."

The concept of sustainable development also includes the strategy to establish a balance between individual motives and intragenerational motives of the society. Though this is not always possible, most the time there are strong cultural and historical complications that make such programs difficult to apply. Therefore, defining a concept that supports the strategy of sustainable development, must take into account various aspects of the region, whose benefits may not always coincide, and may in some cases directly conflict with nature (Ozaydin and Ozaydin 1998).

Tourism and Tourism Development

Tourism is a practice of travel for pleasure. Sometimes it is hard to define but easy to recognize. From the point of view of Troost (1998) "tourism is a necessary activity as a result of the negative impacts of modern life such as traffic congestion, sound pollution, over-crowding, and working hours." Tourism, which causes both undesired development and regeneration, helps people to be aware of the real value of assets existing in their region.

Tourist activity should form part of a broader framework of sustainable development in the world. Tourism is not an end in itself but should be as means to ensure more harmonious development of the societies.

The tourism industry is based on cultural and natural resources that are not produced by tourism itself, but countries are making both short and long term investments to attract tourism and to supply it with such means as accommodations, catering facilities, entertainment, etc.

Tourism development and its impact on the landscape and the environment should be taken together. Troost (1998) advocates the opinion that "tourism development should take into account the pre-existing situation of the natural, built and social environment." Tourism development activities can be directly responsible for serious actions against the environment. A couple of them are extremely serious. First of all, construction of excessive touristic facilities on coastal areas has significant impact on the natural landscape and resources of the region. Pollution

caused by bathers and by debris dumping on uncontrolled beaches is another problem faced in such coastal regions. Moreover, natural (rock, cliff, wetland, etc.) landscape features suffer from the interventions being encourage and develop the tourism industry.

Tourism is indirectly responsible for unwise use of water resources and intensification of the remaining crops using chemicals. Incompatibility of specifications and health provisions for the disposal of hotel sewage is yet another issue encountered in coastal regions. In these respects, the author strongly agrees to the opinion of Troost (1998) who claimed that "the beauty of the natural environment of the coastal cities, combined with cultural heritage, their age-long cultural history, the tradition, the mild climate are transforming quiet and low economic development areas into tourist areas in brisk demand. Tourism gradually becomes mass tourism and its impacts on coastal areas are serious, threatening the particular character of the place."

All these conditions lead to the necessity of tourist accommodation facilities to be built at rates corresponding to the demand that can lead to massive construction activities.

Sustainable Tourism

Sustainable tourism has several definitions. According to the definition of the Federation of Nature and National Parks (FNNP 1993), sustainable tourism is "all forms of tourism development, management, and activity that maintain the environmental, social and economic integrity and well being of natural, built and cultural resources in perpetuity." A publication by the Tourism Concern and the World Wide Fund for Nature defines sustainable tourism as a tourism which "operates within natural capacities for the regeneration and future productivity of natural resources; recognizes the contribution that people and communities, customs and lifestyles, make to the tourism experience; accepts that these people must have an equitable share in economic benefits of tourism; and is guided by the wishes of local people and communities in the host areas" (T.C. and WWF 1992).

Sustainable tourism means tourism that combines tourist development with respect for and preservation between the tourism industry, the visitors, the host communities and the environment. Recently, Troost (1998) brought forward a new definition to sustainable tourism, according to him "sustainable tourism is tourism that ensures the preservation of quality in harmony with the environment, the tourists themselves, the local population and all other factors involved in tourism."

Sustainable tourism can be subdivided into four attributes (Figure-1) according to its economic, environmental, geographical, and sociological aspects (MED Forum):

- Long-lasting: Sustainable tourism should have properly planned long-term economical aims.
- Environment Friendly: Sustainable tourism should respect the carrying capacity of the natural and

cultural spaces, being aware of seasonal effects and searching for ways to minimize them.

- Diversified: Sustainable tourism should be designed, in relation to the hinterland, by establishing a delicate equilibrium between the local enterprises and personality of the site, that would work in favor of the preservation of natural beauty when a deviation from equilibrium is perceived.
- Participatory: Sustainable tourism requires the participation of the local residents, which benefit from tourism as well.

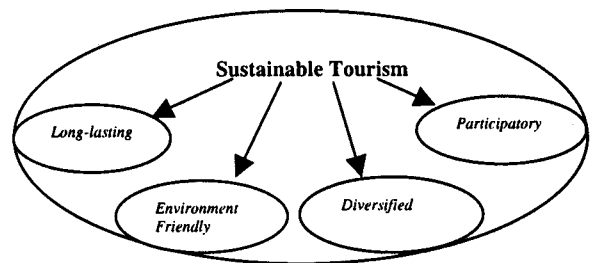


Figure-1: Sustainable Tourism

Sustainable tourism development has to be economically viable and naturally and culturally sensitive at the same time. As inappropriate tourism development results in increasing stress on destinations and consequently in negative changes in the destinations' physical, economic, and socio-cultural characteristics.

Sustainable Tourism Development in Coastal Areas

Historically, settlements have been generally located in coastal areas for ease of trade and defense. This is, because coastal areas constitute a very valuable and limited asset for economic development due to their natural resources and are mostly irreplaceable once misappropriated (Eke 1996; Eke et al. 1997).

It requires special techniques and innovative ways of planning and implementation to develop sustainable tourism in coastal regions that are popular places for touristic activities. Sustainability can be incorporated into tourism planning in coastal areas if programs and tools are designed or devised.

According to Eke (1998) there are some legal institutional frameworks for sustainable tourism development in coastal regions:

- "Multiple activities in the coastal areas require the coordination of many sectoral policies and several public bodies. It is necessary to create a public body to coordinate the dispersed activities, objectives and implementation of different ministries and organizations.
- Sustainable coastal area management requires regional and local initiative to be brought forward. Environmental protection needs the cooperation of local communities, public bodies, voluntary groups, and local NGOs to be effective."

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) role in Development

The rapid developments in coastal regions necessitate more intense cooperation between local and central command research institutions, related sector representatives and NGOs where the effects of certain developments transcend the national boundaries.

Many countries have set some rules that allow States to assist NGOs in their work for protecting natural areas. These rules arm NGOs with legal instruments for land management. States can also allocate some funds to help NGOs in their conservation activities. This may include tax exemptions to individuals that donate either money or land to NGOs (Leitmann 1998).

General Overview about Turkey

Turkey, geographically between east and west; developed and underdeveloped; unsustainable and sustainable, has a coastline, including islands, of 8333 kilometers. Turkey is bordered by four seas. The Black Sea covers the north shores of the country, while the Marmara Sea is basically an inland sea situated in the northwest of the country connecting the Black and the Aegean Seas together. The Aegean Sea extends up to southwest connecting the Mediterranean Sea at south part of the country. Table-1 illustrates the size of coastal zones, coastline and their share in total.

Table-1: Coastline of Turkey, 1985 (Gunay, 1985)

<u>Coastal Zones</u>	<u>Coastline of Mainland</u>	<u>Coastline of Islands</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
Black Sea	1695 km	6 km	1701 km	20.4
Marmara Sea	1189 km	252 km	1441 km	17.3
Aegean	2805 km	679 km	3484 km	41.8
Mediterranean	1577 km	130 km	1707 km	20.5
Turkey	7266 km	1067 km	8333 km	100.0

According to the 1985 census approximately 30% of the population of Turkey, 15.3 million, lived in coastal areas, which covered nearly 14% of the total area of the country. From 1975 to 1985, the ratio of urban population living in coastal regions increased from 47.7% to 64.0% (Gunay 1985; Altaban 1998). It is believed that this rate should be around 70% since past experience shows that southern coastal zones of Turkey posses every potential factor that is needed for economic growth as well as social development. The high-increase of tourism sector is another important factor affecting the economic and social development during the past twenty years. On the average 10 million foreign tourists have visited Turkey each year and 60% of them mostly stayed in the Aegean and the Mediterranean regions.

The most favorable coastal zones are the Mediterranean and Aegean regions because the coastal structure and climatic conditions predominant in both regions make them attractive for resort and summerhouse development. Izmir in Aegean coast and Antalya in Mediterranean coast are the largest urban settlements, each of them having large commercial seaports. Summer houses and resorts, have developed alongside the Mediterranean and Aegean coastal

regions, and have become popular for migratory movements from the inland regions of Turkey. In a recent analysis by Altaban (1998) this issue has been addressed as follows:

"Starting from 1960s onwards the fast rate of the urbanization and the increase of employment in tourism and other service sectors supported by an efficient highway network and well-developed transportation facilities in the western part of Anatolia, Mainland in Turkey, have stimulated increasing demand on coastal regions."

As a result of this, the City of Antalya offers unique opportunities for the international tourism market and it has the largest share in the foreign currency accumulation within Turkey.

Tourism of Turkey

Growth of tourism, as a new sector in the Turkish economy, coincides with the settlement of the 5-year fold economic development plans introduced by government in the mid 1960s. It was soon realized that the tourism sector could be very effective for solving the foreign currency shortage within the economy, as well as support the increase of National income (Altaban 1998). This is an alternative way for the economic development of the country and the main target of planning has been formulated to increase bed capacities of tourist regions.

Many authors (Gunay 1995; Eke 1996; Altaban 1998) strongly believe that tourism planning should also consider all aspects of the demands of native populations while estimating its share in the international tourism market. In other words, we may assert that the conservation, preservation and protection of natural and cultural environment and possessions should take the first priority while developing tourism. In the last three decades, these two approaches have been in conflict, but the former has been more powerful in guiding investments. In 1982, the Tourism Incitement Act was enacted and encouraged the tourism sector through credits, tax exemptions, allocation and provision of the 'fundamental foundation'. This act enables the decree of Council of Ministers to declare 'tourism regions', 'tourism areas', and 'tourism centers'. In particular tourism areas are defined as, "areas inside or outside the tourism regions, where cultural and natural wealth is concentrated, the location and boundaries are decided and declared by the decree of Council of Ministers, following the proposal of the Ministry of Tourism" (Ozhan 1996). This act provided many outstanding opportunities to developers. These include 49 years lease of land, low interest loans, tax exemptions, etc. As a result investments

in tourism development projects have enormously increased after the mid 1980s.

The licensed bed capacity was as low as 55,000 in 1980, but has increased almost six times in fifteen years reaching a value over 300,000 beds in mid 1990s. Table-2 illustrates the licensed bed capacity in coastal regions as of 1996. The South Aegean and West Mediterranean regions have received the highest scores in the provision of tourism facilities.

Table-2: Distribution of Licensed Beds in Turkey

Regions	Bed Capacity	
	1985	1996
Black Sea	3310	7706
Marmara Sea	27260	63777
Aegean Sea	39091	93225
Mediterranean Sea	40991	105801
Coastal Regions	110652	270509
Inland Regions	38080	31015
Turkey	148732	301524

General Information about Antalya

Antalya is located to the center of Antalya Bay in the southwest coast of Turkey. The province of Antalya has 657 km. coastline, 42 km of which is within control of the greater city's municipality. Approximately 10 km of coastline in West Side is under the authority of State Forestry Department. The City of Antalya stretches along the bay bearing the same name and is built at 39 meters altitude above sea level. Mostly cliffs and caves constitute the coastline. Immediately to the north, Antalya is bounded by the Taurus Mountains rising to 3086 meters above the sea level that are interspersed with valleys of varying sizes. Small and large streams emerge from the west side of the Taurus Mountains and then water the plains on their flow to the Mediterranean Sea. On the east and west part of the Antalya plateau, large sandy beaches extend for kilometer's with high sand dunes covered by pine trees.

The plant life of Antalya is extremely varied and every kind of tropical plant can be found along the coast. Visitors to Antalya are struck by the size attained by different species of plants such as cacti. In particular cotton, sesame, citrus, and banana plants have a very diverse beauty of their own, and are hardly encountered to the same extent in other parts of the world (Uysal 1998).

The four climatic seasons only appear on the calendar in Antalya because no real winter exists. The summers are hot and rainless while the other months are warm and often rainy, with a mean annual temperature of 18.7 C and about 309.5 days in a year with no rain.

The population of the City of Antalya has almost doubled every ten years since the 1970s. The present population is over 700,000. Figure-2 pictures how the population of Antalya has been booming and has almost doubled in last three decades, which can be mainly attributed to the higher rate of immigration since the late 1960s.

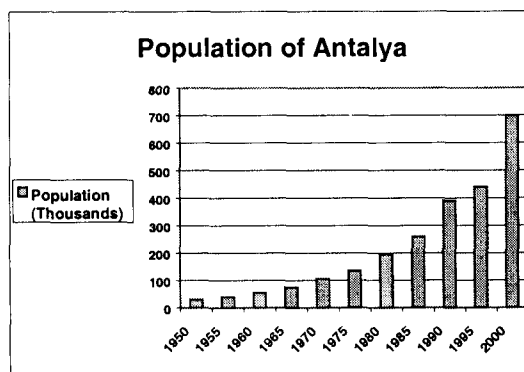


Figure-2: The population of Antalya

History of Antalya

The history of Antalya goes back to antiquity, when it was a part of Pamphilia region. Antalya was founded by Attalos, the king of Pergamum, in 138 BC and became a counter development pole with its natural harbor and easier connections with the Aegean and central Anatolia regions. Main Towns of the Pamphilia region were Thermessos, Attaleia (Antalya), Perge, Aspendos, Silium and Side. Antalya was a naval and commercial center following the occupation by Seljuk Turks in 1207 AD. From the beginning of the 15th Century, Antalya was a part of the Ottoman Empire, and become a city of Turkish Republic after 1923.

Before the development of the tourism sector, Antalya was a sub-regional center controlling commercial and agricultural activities over some part of the Mediterranean region of the country (Altaban 1998). Nevertheless, tourism development starting in the late 1960s has moved this area into a rapidly developing city receiving migration from inland regions of Turkey.

Tourism of Antalya

Tourism of Antalya, affected by the economic and physical structure, has had the largest portion of the licensed bed provision since the 80s. According to the latest statistics, Antalya has 40% of the total existing bed capacity in all coastal regions of Turkey. The largest two tourism development projects, namely the Side and the South Antalya Tourism Projects, have been implemented within the Province of Antalya creating the largest bed capacities. The Province of Antalya has a planned potential of 235,000 beds implemented within its territory, 45,000 of which has already been provided (Gunay, 1995). Such a capacity, created mostly within two decades, would certainly affect both the physical and the economic structure of the city. Many of the current socio-economic problems of the city can be traced to this rapid development of tourism.

Problems and Features:

In Antalya, tourism development activities are directly responsible for serious actions against environmental, socio-economical, and political structures. Among them are the following major issues:

- The population of the city has been almost doubled every ten years since the 1970s.

- Rapid development, alongside the coast in the both east and west, has endangered the cliffs.
- Local governments have welcomed most of the new settlement inquires, disregarding many of the constraints of spatial planning and environmental values.
- Construction in the city is mainly in the housing sector; therefore, there is a large surplus in the housing stock, residential areas are still continuing to erode the agricultural land, coastal zones and forests.
- Land developers are not concerned about the agricultural areas. In addition to this, farmers are attracted by the profits they can make by opening their land to residential development which increase the trends of loss of agricultural lands (Sircan 1998).
- Need for housing persists even though there are many vacant apartments and houses in the city to be sold or rented. Therefore, "the short-run incomes of land developers and the land owner have been far more effective in determination of the present land use in Antalya" (Sircan 1998).
- Cultural and historical assets of the city were, at some points, threatened by new development and the city began to lose its original identity to some extent.
- The urban economy of the city has been revitalized by the progress in the sector of tourism over the province at the beginning. However, at present, tourism has been the most critical economic sector because the urban economy is completely based upon it.
- Social equity should be a major issue in coastal planning and management. Especially, this is mainly important in case of beach access, since some coastal developments have tended to become as prestigious enclave for groups of people. In the coastlines, wire-mesh barriers are still encountered which is a direct evidence of the social inequality experienced by the most of the population.

Proposed Approaches

- Disorganized and uncontrolled development attempts in urban and agricultural lands should be avoided via the control forces of the local government in collaboration with federal government agents whenever necessary.
- Governments should update their environmental, coastal and tourism policies according to developing needs of the regions. Once these updates are put in action, they should persist in their implementation.
- A more strict taxation system can be put forward by local governments on the urban properties.

Both differentiation of taxation combined with urban zoning and increasing the cumulative level of taxation could be a useful tool in allocating the land and resources of the city. We could expect that this will block the desires of the land developers to some extent.

- In the city district, construction permits and zoning regulations should be released in relation with infrastructure.
- Tourism development should be designed to be long lasting in order to increase feasibility and avoid over-crowding in certain periods.
- Governments should revise the tourism policies aiming at mass tourism in such a way that will allow the development of soft tourism which is more environment friendly.
- Sustainable tourism development should imply a harmonized relationship between the protected environment and economic growth. This can be done by implementing sustainable tourism in such a way that will not consider the tourism in the region as a prime alternative for increasing national income and closing the trade gap of the country.
- To choose development areas in the city limiting factors and thresholds should be taken into account. For instance, the cliffs in Antalya have a quality of a seldom-seen present from nature which should be protected and valued together with the their landscape. Moreover, same sensitivity should be shown for protecting the natural beauty of coastlines and beaches.
- NGOs should release information to the public and try to make people more sensitive about the environmental issues within their neighborhoods.

Conclusion

Looking to the future, there are indications that the growth of tourism in coastal regions of developing countries such as Turkey would probably be subject to two current global trends. First of all, in the upcoming years, economic output of international travel and tourism should be expected to grow more rapidly. This fact would predictably affect the touristic coastal regions of developing countries more than the others would. Secondly, tourism development in the city of Antalya in Turkey and other similar countries will be determined by the growing interest in, and demand for, "specialty" tourism. In particular, it might be expected that nature tourism would grow in considerable extent by the increasing environmental awareness. Apparent global warming trend and rise in sea level are extremely important global challenge whose results should be carefully planned and managed to minimize its effects on coastal tourism.

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