



# COMPONENTS OF SUSTAINABILITY

## Two Cases from Turkey

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**Abstract:** This paper analyzes the development process and goals of sustainability in two internationally popular cultural destinations in Turkey. A central hypothesis of the study was that the rapid development and high concentration of tourism activities cause negative effects on the natural and cultural environments, and when involvement of locals is minimal or lacking, the outcome would be especially unacceptable to the host community. Residents, tourists, and investors were involved, with perceptual analyses conducted for evaluation of the significance of tourism and environmental attributes for future policies, supplemented with an examination of local involvement in the development process. Findings indicate that coastal locations have met more pressure and encounter greater environmental problems than inland destinations. **Keywords:** components of sustainability, perception, locality, Turkey. © 2005 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

**Résumé:** Éléments de durabilité: deux cas de Turquie. Cet article analyse le processus de développement et les buts de durabilité à deux destinations culturelles turques qui sont appréciées internationalement. Une hypothèse centrale de l'étude était que le développement rapide et la haute concentration des activités touristiques produisent des effets négatifs sur les environnements naturels et culturels, et quand l'engagement des habitants est minime ou manquant, le résultat serait particulièrement inacceptable à la communauté d'accueil. Avec la participation des habitants, des touristes et des investisseurs, on a fait des analyses de perception pour évaluer l'importance des attributs touristiques et environnementaux pour la politique future. À ces analyses, on ajoute un examen de l'engagement local au processus de développement. Les résultats indiquent que les destinations côtières subissent plus de pression que les destinations intérieures. **Mots-clés:** éléments de durabilité, perception, région, Turquie. © 2005 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

### INTRODUCTION

From globalization-localization perspectives, tourism has become a significant tool in regional development processes and increasing interest has turned toward making it sustainable especially in main destination areas. The report of the EU Commission mentions that transportation, energy, industry, and tourism are the effective key sectors for the quality of urban environment and sustainable development (CEC 1992). While tourism has enhanced the level of welfare on the one

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hand, it can strengthen the environmental pressures on the other and thus plays a critical role in sustainable regional development (Nijkamp and Bergh 1990). Whereas the economic aspects are in focus when measuring its achievement, the social, economic, and environmental impacts require extensive investigation.

The theoretical framework has been developing via studies on different locations and cases. Even though such investigations help improvements in theory and policy, each case has its own characteristics, processes, and perceptions toward tourism development. Moreover, in literature, methodology and approach focus on the perceptions of the impact of different groups, such as the host community or the tourists. Economic impacts (such as the improvement of employment opportunities) are perceived as more positive than sociocultural and environmental impacts (Ratz 2000; Tosun 2002). When perceived benefits reach an unacceptable level, negative views are likely to emerge (Ap 1992). Studies focusing on the awareness of the host community have put forward that the length of residence in a region, economic dependency, and benefits have a major impact on resident perceptions (Besculides, Lee and McCormick 2002; Jurowski, Uysal and Williams 1995). The development of the tourism industry also contributes to changes in the quality of life in the host community. However, rapid and intensive development results in less favorable impacts than small-scale development (de Kadt 1979; Pearce 1989; Ratz 2000). Without the involvement of the local community, rapid growth and the government's biased policies have planted the roots of unsustainable development (Tosun 2002). Williams and Lawson (2001) suggest that the perceptions of the community are not homogenous and differentiate due to sociodemographic variables. By using cluster analysis, they are given a more targeted examination and a deeper understanding of residential view. In developing and attracting tourism to a community, the goal is to achieve outcomes that obtain the best balance of benefits and costs for both residents and other actors.

Studies focusing on the perceptions of the environment have shown that tourists are more sensitive to the direct impacts resulting from, for example, human waste and vandalism (Hillery, Nancarrow, Griffin and Symeet 2001). However, there has been an increasing awareness of interaction with the environment, and these impacts on tourism are still debatable. They focus on levels of foulness such as sewage, oil spills, toxic waste discharge, and air pollution, while ecological issues such as species loss, biodiversity, and critical changes in habitats arise due to the sensitivity of the natural environment (Hughes 2002). However, some locations are more vulnerable in terms of the environment. The difficulties of measuring impacts and the establishment of standards like "magic numbers" are the main issues on limits of carrying capacity (Goodall and Stabler 2000; Hughes 2002).

The concept of sustainability mainly considers the ecological dimension and leads to types of alternatives such as nature tourism, ecotourism, and green tourism that are contrary to mass tourism (Boo 1990; Valentine 1993). But the obvious reality in practice is that this industry is mainly located in developed regions and urban areas or that it

stimulates development in such regions (Ashworth 1990; Urry 1987; Williams and Shaw 1995). In order to compete with other destinations, expansion and economic benefits are desirable (Agarwal 2002; Hall 2000). According to Barke and Newton (1995:116), “the concept of sustainable tourism adopted in an urban area must be multifaceted if it is to be successful and must be based on more than a narrow ecological and environmental perspective”. There is no doubt that the environment is the basis for the natural and cultural resources for attracting tourists. Therefore, environmental protection is essential for long-term success. If the natural, historical, and cultural environment cannot be protected, there can be no expectations for sustainability in destination areas.

At this point, the questions arise as to how and to what extent tourism should be developed in a local area. Hunter emphasizes, “sustainable tourism should not be regarded as a rigid framework, but rather as an adaptive paradigm which legitimizes a variety of approaches according to specific circumstances” (1997:851). Diversity of interests in various communities is one of the main issues needing to be explored so as to implement successful strategies to maintain development. The framework of this paper is based on the sustainable model developed by the World Tourism Organization, related to a conceptual model on development. While its main principles include ecological, social, cultural, and economic sustainability, tourism is defined as a model form of economic development that is designated to improve the quality of life in the host community, provide a high quality experience for the tourist, and maintain the quality of the environment on which both the host community and the tourist depend (WTO 1993).

Sustainable development connects tourists and providers of facilities and services with advocates of environmental protection and community residents and their leaders who desire a better quality of life (WTO 1993). Each group has its constituents as they understand how their interests overlap. They all have common goals and thus will be more inclined to collaborate. Related to sustainability and the development process, two main hypotheses are put forward. First, tourism provides the most harmonious development with the characteristics of the regions and makes known their natural, historical, and cultural values. If there is planned development, there will be a reduction in the loss of natural resources in terms of quantity and quality. Moreover, tourism activities have an opportunity to beautify the local environment and maintain its built assets in place of other economic activities (Hunter 1997). Second, the rapid development and high concentration of activities in certain areas cause negative effects on the natural and cultural environment. Typically, this process does not involve local people/host community and is not acceptable.

Developing countries and regions have to achieve economic growth, and also have to protect their environments. Accordingly, tourism is considered a balance sector to target the dilemma and provides an opportunity for the development of these matters. In the places where tourism is relatively new, the aim would be to promote types that rely on the maintenance of a high quality natural environment and its cul-

tural assets (Hunter 1997). In the Mediterranean countries of Europe, which have a significant share of international tourism, the concentration of activities on coastal areas has caused serious environmental problems. Therefore, their market share in the world has been decreasing—as in the case of Spain—while emerging markets have been increasing. Thus, development processes for the significant destinations need to be examined and new approaches sought out.

The aim of this paper is to analyze development processes in light of the main hypotheses and goals of a sustainable model in two significant sample destination points for international tourism, to include the heritage in Turkey as a Mediterranean country. Furthermore, the two cases of Urgup and Side have been selected in order to compare the coastal and interior development process. Perception analysis is conducted as a measurement of economic, social, and environmental impacts related to the concept of sustainable development.

## ENVIRONMENTAL ATTRIBUTES AND LOCAL INVOLVEMENT

The framework of this study is based on the sustainable model. In the one developed by the WTO (1993), the goals and objectives of different groups are examined. Sustainable tourism mainly includes the satisfaction of the community, tourists, and investor/managers. According to the hypotheses of this paper, satisfaction of the components (groups) is mainly related to the already existing resources and facilities, the scale and speed of development, and the locality.

### *Study Method*

The main question is whether all groups realize the importance of the natural, historical, and cultural environment. The groups in this survey were all different in number, so a two-staged survey method was applied. In the first, before constructing the questionnaires, in-depth interviews were conducted with local authorities, experts (planners, architects, and archeologists), and tourism agents. The outcomes helped to construct the basic outline of the survey. In the second stage, in May and September, interviews were conducted with three main groups: hotel owners or managers as investors, tourists, and local residents/host community. The main structure of the survey was developed according to methodology adapted from the WTO (1993) and Dowling (1993).

The questionnaire for interviews was constructed in two parts: perceptions about resources (attractions and facilities) and environmental attributes and the indicators of local involvement and development related to the type of tourism. In order to evaluate the perceptions of tourism and the environment, the formula of the EBT model (Environmentally-Based Planning Model for Regional Tourism Development), developed by Dowling (1993), was used. His model can be applied on both a regional and an urban scale in order to define the priorities

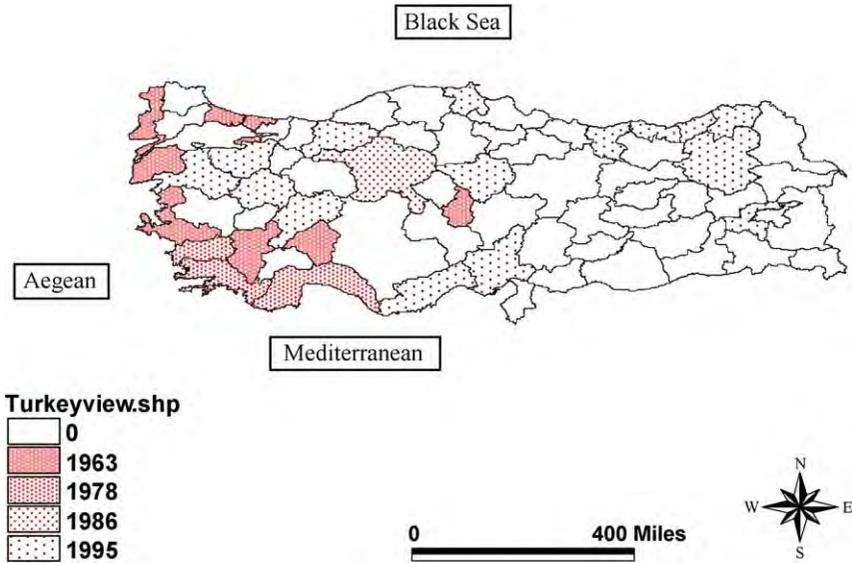
and develop compatible activities and land allocation. The model is based on the evaluation of environmental attributes and tourism resources. These two essential factors, which are required in the evaluation of different groups, also fall into subfactors (attributes) such as cultural attractions, natural attractions, accessibility, and accommodations on the tourism side and climate, flora, fauna, sea, landforms, and site areas on the environmental side. These are defined based on the characteristics of the sample areas and the ability to evaluate for all groups (Gezici 1998). To give weight to each attribute, three levels (scale) of high (3 points), moderate (2 points) and low (1 point) are defined. The values of mean and mode for each attribute are put forward with their relative significance.

Since local involvement is considered one of the important parts of sustainable tourism, the development process and the locality of both cases are discussed later. In order to compare the results, the indicators for the type of tourism (type of travel, duration of stay), and local involvement and development (origin of host community, ownership of establishment, origin of employment, scale of establishment, annual usage of establishment) are defined. In each case, 85 questionnaire interviews were conducted with local residents (total 170) and 75 questionnaire interviews made with tourists (total 150). Since the number of accommodations in Side is almost double that of Urgup, 15 questionnaires are conducted with investors/managers in Urgup, and 30 in Side. In both cases, diverse categories of hotels were chosen from the list of all in the region, according to their share in the number of nights spent by tourists, using the random sample method.

### *The Case Studies*

“Priority Regions for Tourism Development”, included in the physical planning, have been mostly oriented to the coastal areas of the Aegean and Mediterranean regions in Turkey (Figure 1). However, the subregions of Urgup and Side have been chosen as significant destination points for international tourism and heritage and as accommodation centers in their regions (Gezici 1998). They represent different zones as coastal and inland of Turkey, and both cases are included in the five development regions of the planning period. Moreover, expansion of second home ownership has not been dominant in either of these two destinations. For future strategies, the tourism development process and its effect on regional/local development and environmental problems were considered. The main characteristics and potential of these two destinations well represent the development process of Turkey.

In the national plan (1978–79), the historical and cultural attractiveness of Urgup as an inland case had been considerable enough to be defined as a priority region for tourism development. During this period, the Cappadocia region was one of the five development areas. Cappadocia was placed on the list of World Cultural Heritage sites in 1972. Urgup is a district of the Nevsehir province and is located in



**Figure 1. Provinces/Locations of Priority Areas during the Planning Period**

the region, Central Anatolia. The economic structure of the region depends mainly on agriculture, and the population growth is stable. The region could be considered to have taken part in both national and international tourism due to the improvement in transportation facilities and accessibility in the 60s. Tourism had continued to have a significant place in the economy of the region and stimulated other sectors in the 80s.

The local community has used the natural and geological structure of Cappadocia as a means of shelter since the early ages; thus a unique attractiveness has emerged. It is an integration of history and culture with nature. The cave churches and underground cities that remain from the days of the expansion of Christianity and the unique forms of the fairy chimneys are the main interest areas of the region. Accommodation centers in this region are located on transportation linkages and concentrated in a triangle of Nevşehir–Urgup–Avanos. In the middle of the 80s, development turned toward the Urgup district, away from the center of the Nevşehir province.

Side is a resort in the Antalya province, a major destination and the most developed on the coast of Turkey. The Manavgat district is the city center of the Side resort area. The population growth of Antalya has been especially concentrated along the coastal areas. The center of Antalya, the districts of Alanya, Manavgat, and Kemer have a higher population growth rate due to their larger tourism capacity in comparison to the other districts (Ministry of Tourism 1996). Ancient Side is located on a peninsula on the Mediterranean coast. To the east two main resorts (Titreyengöl and Sorgun) were initially planned. Natural beaches and archeological sites that belong to the Pamphilya Historical

Region are the main attractions. Because of the natural and historical richness of the region, an international competition was held in the 70s to promote tourism through planning. Today, activities are expanding along the west coast and also in ancient Side. During this process, the archeological sites have become damaged and agricultural land, especially the orange groves, have been destroyed. Side is the second highest district in nights spent in the Antalya province.

### *Perceptions on Environmental Attributes and Tourism Resources*

At this stage of the study, all groups were required to evaluate each attribute of tourism and environment according to three significance levels: high (3 points), moderate (2 points) and low (1 point). As a general principle, if the areas have a high significance for both attributes, the environment would take priority.

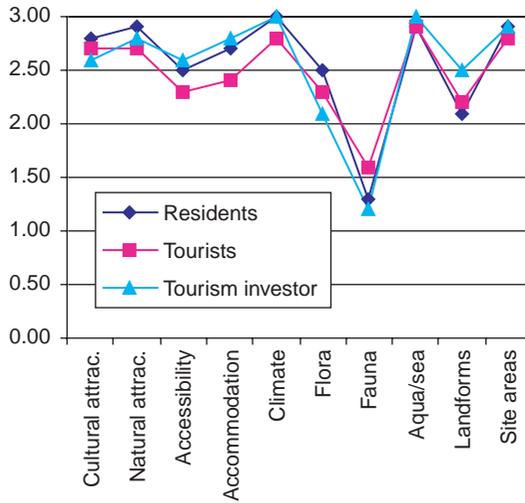
The results of analysis in Urgup (three groups) were determined (Table 1). In tourism resources, natural attractions (2.85), accommodation capacity (2.71), and cultural attractions (2.63) have a high significance with 50% of the total, respectively. Accessibility (2.33) is the only factor having a “moderate” significance. This feature highlights a well-known dilemma in accessibility. Improvements in accessibility stimulate development of the region, while an increasing number of tourists and activities cause negative effects on environmental attributes.

Except for urban and natural sites (2.84) and landforms (2.72) among environmental attributes, the others have a low or moderate significance. The main source of natural attractions in the Cappadocia region is its unique geomorphological form—the fairy chimneys. In this region, tourism has a high importance especially because of the natural

**Table 1. Evaluation of Resources and Environmental Attributes<sup>a</sup>**

Factors	Attributes	URGUP				SIDE			
		High	Mod	Low	AA	High	Mod	Low	AA
Tourism Resources	Cultural Attract.	123	40	12	2.63	148	29	13	2.71
	Natural Attract.	153	18	4	2.85	153	34	3	2.79
	Accessibility	73	87	15	2.33	95	82	13	2.43
	Accommodation	128	44	3	2.71	115	67	8	2.56
Environmental Attributes	Climate	79	78	18	2.35	176	13	0	2.91
	Flora	17	50	108	1.48	103	49	38	1.76
	Fauna	11	37	127	1.33	15	42	133	1.38
	Aqua/Sea	0	0	0	0	174	13	3	2.90
	Land Forms	134	34	7	2.72	85	58	47	2.20
	Site Areas	151	21	3	2.84	174	10	6	2.88

<sup>a</sup> High = 3; Mod = 2; Low = 1; AA = mean of values, the numbers for each column represent frequency (Gezici 1998).



**Figure 2. Evaluation of Attributes by Three Different Groups in Side**

attractions, supporting the significance of environmental attributes. Thus, it is required to find and stimulate compatible activities based on the special potential of this area. The difference of perceptions of the three groups shows that tourists consider environmental attributes more significant than other groups (Figure 2). Moreover, tourists give a lower score to the cultural attractions and accommodations relative to the other groups. This result enhances the importance of environmental attributes from the demand side.

The main findings of the same evaluation in Side appear in Table 1. All attributes of tourism resources have a high significance with respect to frequency—equal or over 50% of the total, with natural attractions (2.79) having the highest significance. Among environmental attributes, climate has the highest significance (2.91) with a share of 92.63%. The attributes of aqua/sea (2.90) and archeological sites (2.88) also show a very high significance. The highly significant value for archeological sites indicates that the priority and conservation of the characteristics of the ancient city are understood despite the dominant effect of the “sea-sun-sand” triangle. Although natural attractions are notable, flora and fauna have the lowest significance (1.76 and 1.38) among all attributes. This can be explained by the priority given to other attributes such as beaches or unique landforms rather than flora and fauna.

In Side, the perceptions of the three groups are not as varied as in Urgup. However, the local residents, more than tourists, perceive and define their own territory with a higher weight for almost all attributes, more than tourists (Figure 3).

Comparing the two sample areas, there is hope for the future of tourism. First, according to the perceptions of all components (local residents, tourists, hotel owners-managers), it is understood that tourism

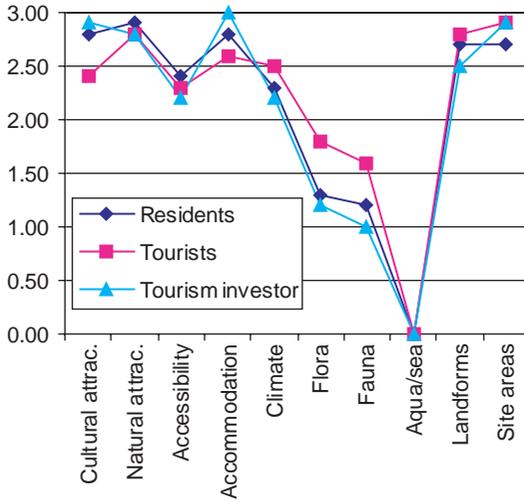


Figure 3. Evaluation of Attributes by Three Different Groups in Urgup

activities depend on “environmental resources” in both cases, even though they have different characteristics. Second, “compatible activities” are required for the development of providing the balance of conservation-usage in these areas. The planning process of the two cases and the implications of the EBT model put forward the necessity of knowing regional potential and resources in order to promote compatible activities and sustainability.

*Types of Tourism, Scale and Locality*

In both cases, it can be seen that similar problems have been encountered in the development of tourism. But the intensity of the problems changes—depending on the type of tourism, the scale of development, the locality, the characteristics of the regions, the indicators of local involvement, and development—all of which are focused on in order to reinforce the perceptual analysis and complete the picture of the two sample areas for further strategies.

Tourism is a dominant sector in Side and all characteristics and functions such as shopping arise from it. There is a different structure in Urgup and economic activities such as agriculture, transportation, and storage contribute to the regional economy. Though the number of tourists is less than Side, the industry also has revived traditional production in Urgup (Cappadocia). In both cases, it can be seen that it is an effective sector for local development and is supported by local residents, but it has generated some problems as well. As parameters for the quality of life for the community, the lack of infrastructure and environmental problems are more emphasized in Side than in Urgup, due to the number of tourists. While the most inadequate infrastructure is the water supply (62.4%) in Urgup, water supply (84.7%), waste

disposal (81.2%), and the electricity system (64.7%) are perceived as inadequate in Side (Gezici 1998).

From the literature, it is well known that indicators such as the type of tourism, the scale of development, and locality are essential for determining development. The number of tourists staying, the duration of the stay, and the type such as package tours are used as demand factors. The origin of tourists indicates the migration flows and dynamics of the region. Information about ownership of establishments, origin of employment in establishments, the share of employment in small establishments (0–10 employed), and the annual usage of establishments were drawn on in order to evaluate the scale and the locality of development.

The duration of stay indicates different values in both cases. In Urgup, 86.7% of the tourists stay less than one week, generally just two or three days, while 40% stay two weeks and 30.7% one week in Side (Figure 4). One of the reasons is the main purpose for going on vacation to Side. Because of the advantage of climate and the “sun–sea–sand” triangle factor, tourists prefer to stay longer and visit other sites near Side. The type category shows that package tours were high (61.3%) in Side, while individual trips were 65.3% of all tourists in Urgup (Figure 4). These indicators emphasize Side as a mass destination area. The origin of people was used as an indicator for considering the relationship between tourism and population migration. Of those locals who were surveyed, 64.7% were born in Urgup, and 33% in Side and the

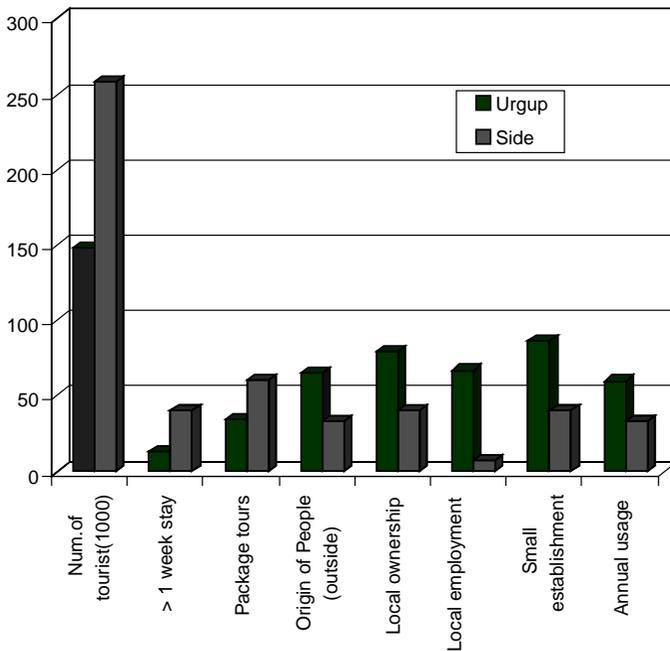


Figure 4. Indicators of Type, Scale of Development and Locality

Manavgat district (Figure 4). Thus, it is obvious that Side is more attractive for migration flow.

For the establishments (hotels), ownership by local capital is 80% in Urgup, while the capital from outside the region is 60% in Side. Tourism in the latter has a higher scale of development than in Urgup. When the capital comes from outside the region, 95% of the employment comes from outside as well. According to the origin of employment in hotels, employment from the region is 66.7% in Urgup, while only 6.7% for Side is from the region (Figure 4). On the other hand, tourism is not attractive enough as a future career because it is a seasonal job, but can still be an opportunity for young people. Side was developed mainly depending on capital and employment from outside the region, and local entrepreneurship is not sufficient for tourism development. Therefore, it is difficult to discern the local contribution to the development process in Side.

The share of employment in small hotels (0–10 employed) is 86.7% in Urgup and 40% in Side. Of those surveyed in the latter, 33% have at least 50 employees (Figure 4). Thus, Side offers a higher employment capacity and a larger scale of development than Urgup. For employment and contribution to regional development, the duration of annual usage of hotels should be longer. The ratio of the properties that can be used during the whole year is 60% in Urgup, but 33% in Side (Figure 4). Seasonal concentration continues in Side, while the attempts to promote and expand alternative activities all year round are an increasing concern in both destination areas.

## CONCLUSION

Research on the impact of tourism activities at the local level shows that the performance should not be measured only for its economic assets, but also for its social and environmental concerns over the long run. A sustainable tourism model, including the satisfaction of the community, tourists, and investors/managers could yield some explicit environmental ethical premises. In this paper, the perceptions of different components or actors on tourism through sustainable development have been emphasized. Sustainable development should involve environmental concerns and local contributions when a region gets economic gains from tourism activities.

In this case, all components (actors) have emphasized that tourism activities should depend on environmental resources. This is an indicator of the increasing awareness of environmental attributes among the components. Another significant conclusion is the importance of locality during the development processes. When activities could not be controlled by the local community, environmental and socioeconomic integration problems appeared in the destination areas. A high concentration and large-scale development of tourism are unacceptable for the host community and a risk for sustainability. But if local entrepreneurship is not enough for stimulating development, a destination needs entrepreneurs from outside the region. On this point, there is a

dilemma about the destination areas. Should they wait for support from outside or should they involve themselves in considering the development over the long run? Further, another subject of research might be to decide which types of tourism and development could be more compatible with sustainability in a destination area. Although every destination has its own unique features, there should be common limits of acceptable changes as well.

Mass tourism exists in high concentration and with large-scale development along coastal areas in Side, while there is a considerable increase in alternative activities in Urgup. As a result of this comparative study, coastal areas show more rapid development due the priority policy for coastal and mass tourism in Turkey. Thus, it is obvious that coastal destination areas have encountered more pressure and more intensive environmental problems. These cases in Turkey highlight similar trends and problems of other Mediterranean countries especially for the coastal destinations. However, Turkey has an opportunity to observe the experiences of other Mediterranean countries in advance. Therefore, the policy should focus on tourism activities in coastal areas and in inland areas which have important attractions.

The environmental problems, which are generated by mass tourism especially in significant destination areas, need new approaches and management. Still, the regions of tourism activities are filled with hope for the conservation of both the natural and cultural environment as noted in the hypothesis. Further research should focus on new tourism demands, diversity of attractions, and possible networks of destinations in the region. It is expected that high concentration and environmental problems might be decreased, providing sustainability of tourism and alternative developments in different destinations. While orienting supply and demand and creating new markets, local actors should not be neglected. Each region has to know and improve its potential and define limits of acceptable change by involving all in the development process. This would give an opportunity to the local authorities to plan activities in their regions. Further research on the perceptions of different groups on tourism development would provide for the participation of all the actors in the process and improve the planning efforts in destination areas. Moreover, using a similar approach and methodology would lend itself to the development of new destinations. **A**

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