SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN IRAN: CONCEPT, OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Maryam Hamedi[a]

[a] International Development Department, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston B15 2TT, UK.
Corresponding author: mxh649@bham.ac.uk

Abstract: This paper is about sustainable tourism development in Iran in answer to the question of "How tourism can contribute to development in developing countries". As such, it seeks to provide an account of debates on the concept of development and the nature of tourism, both as phenomena of modernity, followed by the idea of sustainability as an alternative paradigm. In this way, 'sustainable tourism development' is a matter of consideration. Moreover, Iran will be seen as an interesting case in two respects: first, as a peculiar country within the developing world since it has the material aspects of development in significant extent; second, as a 'religious modernisation' where most discussions of tourism have tended to emphasis tourism within Western modernity. It was found that although the principles of sustainable tourism development are beneficial, there are serious obstacles to their operationalisation due to priorities of national economic policy, the structure of public administration, local participation, cultural conflicts and environmental issues. Thus in macro level it requires reconsideration in political and economic choices, and in micro level decisions ought to be made with regards to socio-cultural and environmental necessities at tourist destinations.

Keywords: Challenges, Iran, Sustainable development, Sustainable tourism development.

I. INTRODUCTION

Following the shortages in mainstream development theories, concept of sustainable development was introduced as an alternative paradigm by the publication of the World Commission on the Environment and Development's (WCED) 'Our Common Future' in 1987. Sustainable development was also addressed in the context of tourism in order to find a way which tourism can contribute to development as an approach to 'the good life'. Sustainable tourism development has come to represent and encompass a set of principles, policy prescription, and management methods "to achieve mutual understanding, solidarity and equality amongst participants". [1] It is interesting to note that the concept and consequently principles of sustainable tourism development mainly established by developed countries based upon Western experience without taking into account conditions in the developing world.

This paper is then about sustainable tourism development in Iran as a developing country. As such, it seeks to provide an account of debates on development, sustainable development and sustainable tourism development; followed by considering Iran and its peculiar characteristic in the developing world.

It comes to conclusion that despite the advantages of principles of sustainable tourism development, there are serious obstacles to their operation due to: (a) Priorities of national economic policy, (b) The structure of public administration, (c) Local participation and cultural conflicts (d) Environmental issues.

Thus to obtain both development and sustainability objectives in tourism, a reconsideration in political and economic choices is required, in macro level, in order to provide more opportunities to increase investment in tourism, and in micro level decisions ought to be made with regards to socio-cultural and environmental necessities.

II. DEVELOPMENT

The concept of development traditionally has been considered synonymous to economic growth. "Initially, it came to be seen as a process of modernisation with emphasis on how to inculcate wealth oriented behaviour and values in individuals".[1] Modernisation or developmental standpoint was based upon a belief that material prosperity provided by the process of industrialisation is to bring about the process of development. However, economic growth policies frequently failed to find a solution for social and

political problems. The development goals then have been redefined. Thus an evolved development is a continual, global process of human development guided by the principle of self-reliance, whilst economic growth remains a cornerstone; it also embraces social, political and cultural components. [1]

The develop mentalist paradigm believes that modernisation is an endogenous process enabling societies to be changed from simple, traditional forms to complex modern forms of economic as well as social systems. Modernisation theories claim that underdeveloped societies lack the internal structural characteristics such as investment capital and entrepreneurial values as well as modern technologies and skills.

The modernisation paradigm has been criticised mainly because of its use of 'traditional' and 'modern' as vague and the implied mutual exclusivity of the two conditions and the inevitability of the replacement of tradition with modernity.

The dependency paradigm then argues that the diffusion of Western capital, technology and value systems achieved essentially the opposite of what modernisation theory proposes and that the external economic and political structure of lower development countries means that they are unable to break out of a state of economic dependency and advance to an economic position beside the major capitalist industrial powers. So it is the situation when some countries can develop only as a reflection of the development of the dominant countries which comes as a result of a dependent relationship between economies. In other words, underdevelopment resulting from the historic evolution of an unequal relationship between the core and the periphery, for lower development countries hence to enter the road of economic growth and social progress, the political framework of their existence has to be significantly changed.

The dependency paradigm of development has been criticised, by becoming clear that underdevelopment and dependency theory is no longer serviceable and must now be transcended.

The neo-classical counter revolution was manifested then, reflecting neo-classical economic theory which was based upon the fundamental reliance on the free market, the privatisation of state enterprises and overall reduction of state intervention. The neo-classical counter revolution therefore sees the problems facing lower development countries as a result of excessive state intervention and market imperfections.

III. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Over time, limitation and in many countries failure of earlier development processes became clear. According to Sharpley, "economic growth was not only failing to solve social and political problems but was actually causing or exacerbating them." [2] Thus development and its objectives were broadly redefined. In doing so, redefined development encompasses: (a) An economic component: wealth, equitable access to resource and goods, (b) A social component: health, education, employment (c) A political dimension: freedom, being part of society to select and operate political system (d) A cultural dimension: cultural identity, self-reliance.

This improved definition of development as "the continuous positive change in the economic, social, political and cultural dimensions of the human condition, guided by the principles of choice and limited by capacity of change" [2] provided the opportunity of emergence of 'alternative development'. The main concern of 'alternative development' was to break from the linear model of economic growth and addressing a 'bottom-up' approach' emphasising on resource and environment. Most recently 'sustainable development' was manifested as a development paradigm mainly concerning the capacity of continuance of global ecosystem and restricted resources. The term 'sustainable development' was the key statement of the report of the UN-sponsored World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), also known as the Brundtland Commission in 1987. 'Our Common Future' defined it as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". Lele suggested that this widespread accepted concept of sustainability "originated in the context of renewable resources ... and has been adopted as a broad slogan by environmental movement". [3] Sharpley encapsulates the historical and conceptual precursors of the concept of sustainable development;

development theory has followed an evolutionary path from 'simple', neo-classical economics-based theories of modernisation through the dependency paradigm and neo-liberal models of 'counter-revolution' to the more complex and multidimensional alternative development paradigm... the basis of development thinking has evolved from the bi-polar developed/underdeveloped, first/third world, North/South dichotomy to the integrated, 'one world' perspective. [2]

Our Common Future's definition of sustainable development has been criticised due to its ambiguity

and juxtaposition of two separate but interdependent strands, development and environmental issues; in addition to its carelessness about socio-cultural sustainability. To many people the phrase 'sustainable development' was interchangeable with environmentally sound development or simply successful development. Lele argues that "sustainable development is understood as a form of societal change that, in addition to traditional developmental objectives, has the objective or constraint of ecological sustainability". [3] Lele continues further, sustainable development has become a bundle of neat fixes: technological changes that make industrial production processes less polluting and less resource intensive and yet more productive and profitable, economic policy changes that incorporate environmental considerations and yet achieve greater economic growth, procedural changes that use local non-governmental organisations (NGOS) so as to ensure grassroots participation, agriculture that is less harmful, less resource intensive and yet more productive, and so on. [3]

Moreover, many other definitions have been suggested for sustainable development, for example: (a) The primary objective [of sustainable economic development] is reducing the absolute poverty of the world's poor through providing lasting and secure livelihoods that minimise resource depletion, environmental degradation, cultural disruption, and social instability [4], (b) Sustainable development has, as its principal aim, the search for a path of economic progress which does not impair the welfare of future generations [5], (c) Sustainable development is improving the quality of human life while living within the carrying capacity of supporting ecosystems [6], (d) Sustainable development] means laving on the earth's income rather than eroding its capital. It means keeping the consumption of renewable natural resources within the limits of their replenishment. I t means handing down to successive generations not only man-made wealth but also natural wealth, such as clean and adequate water supplies, good arable land, a wealth of wildlife and ample forests. [7]

However, in spite of all critiques the WCED's definition of sustainable development remained almost the most popular and enduring one. The publication of Caring for the Earth 1991, a 'strategy for sustainable living' then again was an attempt to combine the two, development and sustainability, beneath umbrella concept of sustainable development. It shifts its focus from the conservation message that dominated the previous report to an 'ethic for sustainable living' based upon an integration of conservation and development: 'conservation to keep our actions within the Earth's capacity, and

development to enable people everywhere to enjoy long, healthy and fulfilling lives' [6]. In next step the UN Conference on Environment and Development, Rio Conference or the Earth Summit 1992, tried to draw up an action plan for encouraging sustainable development within the national context. "What does it really mean for each and every community? How can we get beyond generalities and put them into practice? How do we know if we are moving toward a sustainable world?" [8] As Hall&Lew denote, sustainable development could be operationalised if it considers "changing the quality of growth, meeting the essential need for jobs, food, energy, sanitation and water, ensuring sustainable population growth, conserving and enhancing the resource base, reorienting technology and managing risk , and merging the environment and economic in decision making". [9]

It goes with no doubt that successful integration of environmental, socio-cultural concerns and economic growth and developmental objective has yet to occur. However, according to Sharpley, "despite the difficulties of definition and the broad focus of the concept, there is a need to alleviate the pressures on the global ecosystem that threaten the present and future well-being of humanity in a way that integrates and balances economic, social and ecological needs and concern". [2] Thus disregard the debates on capability and means of achieving sustainable development; it can be defined as predominantly a universally applicable long term strategy considering ecological needs as well as socio-cultural aspects on the road to development.

IV. SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Tourism theory has evolved through stages generally similar to development theories. The first stage represents the period of rapid growth in tourism mainly due to the above mentioned economic and socio-cultural changes. In this stage tourism was positively viewed as development vehicle, reflecting the modernisation paradigm. Much of tourism researches during this period were concerned with issues such as cost-benefit analysis, the economic measurement of tourism, resource allocations and the multiplier effect of tourism as positive aid to economic development. Same as in development theories, negative impacts of tourism were considered in the next stage, namely 'cautionary platform', "similar in basis to the dependency paradigm, questioning the benefits of tourism in the context of economic costs and leakages and the broader socio-cultural impacts." [2] Wall describes devotees of dependency theory's keen to reject the involvement of international corporations which could be hold as small-scale, locally owned facilities. Following that,

neo-classical counter-revolution proposed "development prospects were to be enhanced by welcoming foreign investors with minimum state involvement". [10]

It was time for alternative conceptualisation of tourism. The notion and principles of 'sustainable tourism development' can be traced back to the characteristics and strategies of alternative tourism also referred as for instance green, responsible, appropriate, low-impact or soft tourism contrary to mass tourism. While mass tourism characteristics were primarily as rapid development, maximising, short term, sectoral, remote control and socially/environmentally inconsiderate; alternative tourism was manifested as slow development, optimising, long term, holistic, local controlled and socially/environmentally considerate. Furthermore, on the one hand mass tourism development strategies pursued development without planning, project-led schemes, development in everywhere and outsiders and consequently employee imported; on the other hand, alternative tourism practiced strategies such as first plan then development, concept-led schemes, development in suitable areas, local developers and therefore local employment utilised. Alternative tourism has been criticised as a small-scale solution for a large-scale issue and because one could argue that "it implies that tourism should only be available to those who wish to understand and experience host environments and communities". [2] Nonetheless, alternative tourism had the potential to draw attention to future of tourism development "that all tourism should be included in the sustainable tourism equation". [2] Pigram&Wahab perceive tourism in the context of sustainability as "meeting current uses and demands of tourism without impairing the natural and cultural heritage, or opportunities for collective enjoyment of tourists of the future". [10] The concept of sustainable tourism development eventually appeared adopting its parental, sustainable development, principles in considerable extent, though there were diverges.

Sustainable tourism development has been defined as such, (a) The sustainable development approach can be applied to any scale of tourism development from resorts to limited size special interest tourism, and that sustainability depends on how well the planning is formulated relative to the specific characteristics of an area's environment, economy, and society and on the effectiveness of plan implementation and continuous management of tourism. [11], (b) Tourism which is developed and maintained in an area (community, environment) in such a manner and at such a scale that it remains viable over an indefinite period and does not degrade or alter the environment (human and physical) in which it exists to such a degree that it prohibits the successful

development and well-being of other activities and processes. [12] (c) Sustainable tourism development must be regarded as an adaptive paradigm capable of addressing widely different situations and articulating different goals. [13], (d) Sustainable tourism development as meeting the needs of present tourists and host region while protecting and enhancing opportunity of the future ... leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support systems. (World Tourism Organisation) (e) Tourism that is interpreted with respect to the principles of sustainable development in four ways: economic sustainability, ecological sustainability, the long-term viability of tourism, and accepting tourism as part of overall strategy for sustainable development [9].

Unlike other development objects such as manufacturing and industry; tourism has the advantage of being clean and renewable industry investing on free natural, historical, social and cultural resources. However, the very immediate profit and economic changes oriented from tourism industry result in an increasing pressure around the social and environmental resources needed to be protected. The over use of natural resources often results in loss of biological diversity, social and cultural structure may suffer from encounter with outside values and modes of behaviour and the traditional life-style of indigenous people gradually disappear. Tourism's developmental role is taken for granted and, to many, sustainable tourism development has been simplified to sustaining tourism; while the question of whether, in any destination, tourism is the most appropriate development mean is not addressed. Tourism must be a transaction bringing together the exogenous forces of global market and the endogenous power of local without highlighting one at the expense of the other.

The sustainable tourism development approach then considers tourism not only as an economic developmental element, but also as a more effective means of achieving equitable social condition on a global scale. Bramwell et al. identify dimensions of sustainability as: environmental, cultural, political, economic, social, managerial and governmental. Hence, sustainable tourism operates within natural capacities concerning the regeneration and future productivity of natural resources, recognising the contribution that people and communities, customs and life-styles, make to the tourism experience. Sustainable tourism development requires a certain consideration about combining the actions and interests of all major stakeholders at different scales (the household scale, the scale of firm, the destination

scale, regional and national scale) including appropriate levels of the state.

Sustainable tourism development has been criticised for a number of shortages. First, it seems as ambiguous and paradoxical as its parental paradigm, sustainable development. Second, it mainly emphasises on environmental resource protection. Conversely Liu calls for three levels of resources to be considered: 1) the attractions for tourists, including natural, cultural and purpose-built; 2) the infrastructure to support tourist activities; and 3) the physical and social settings, including hospitality of the community. Third, focusing on local community, no due attention has yet been paid to tourist demand where tourist flow has been taken for granted while tourism development is both 'supply-led and demand-driven'. In other words concentrating on sustaining local community through emphasising on authenticity or primitiveness of tourist destinations may result in a limited group of tourists becoming interested and consequently lower profit. Moreover from another angle 'cultural sustainability' somehow seems to be against the societies and human intrinsic: evolution. This is to say that tourist destinations especially in developing or less developed countries are on the road of transformation by themselves, so rather than sustaining socio-culturally it is to be 'reciprocal socio-cultural relationship'. Forth, although principally tourism should contribute to the local and national development, "sustainable tourism strategies in practice tend to focus almost exclusively on localised, relatively small-scale development projects, rarely transcending local or regional boundaries". [2] This small scale development is impact wise, but it conversely brings lower and slower profit while tourist destination for example in developing or less developed countries are struggling with poverty and social desperation and seeking quick return to meet their immediate needs. Liu argues that the more that residents gain from tourism, the more they will be motivated to protect the area's natural and cultural heritage and support tourism activities. If they do not benefit from tourism development, they may become resentful and this may drive tourists away from a destination as tourists do not like visiting places where they are not welcomed ... and it is hard to justify caring about fairness to future generations without extending this concern to people in society today. [14]

Fifth, local participation as an objective of sustainable tourism development empowers local communities through increasing level of involvement in decision making and ownership and management of tourism businesses; however, local community is tourism inexperience or with limited skills which

most probably results in reducing global tourism market or lower capital input. Sixth, sustainable tourism development seems to be inclined to monopolise stakeholder to local community rather than meeting the needs of all stakeholders including the tourists, the tourists businesses, the host community and the needs of environmental concerns. Seventh, sustainable tourism development seems suffice itself to some areas and not necessitate it in all tourist destinations which is not according to its objectives. Klemm suggests that the real challenge for the future is to provide sustainable tourism for the mass market. Eighth, sustainable tourism development was suppose to be part of a wider (sustainable) development strategies; however, attention is rarely paid to the relationship between tourism and other economic sectors "results in tourism competing for, rather than sharing, resources". [2]

The role of tourism as a mean of achieving sustainable development is therefore to ensure that under any circumstances, tourism development approach are compatible with sustainable development one. For this purpose, sustainable tourism development is an approach to achieve development objectives through the medium of tourism practicing patterns that is about to gain both industrial and economic aspects and attribute to the social, cultural and environmental products, on which it is based. Or in Shapley's words, tourism development in a manner and "at such a scale that is viable in the long-term and does not degrade or deplete the physical and socio-cultural environment in which it exists, and which represents a positive and integral element of the overall sustainable development policies and plans". [2] According to McCool and Lime, impacts cannot be avoided but they can be based on established objectives or an understanding of the biophysical or social conditions desired. Liu warns of being preoccupied with inventing or relabeling things rather than searching ways of applying the principles to considerate appropriate sustainable tourism development. Those principles ought to address sustainable tourism development with regards to following, (a) Be part of larger concept of sustainable development and more profitable, (b) Establish a mix of small and large scale development; incremental development according to community size, (c) Planning with regard to stakeholders participation, mix of local and foreign ownership, local control with foreign input and mix of foreign experts and local trained specialists, (d) Concerning government role as to facilitate investment and regulation but not over-regulation.

V. Sustainable Tourism Development and Iran

Iran's opportunities for tourism

Iran is a big country with long costal lines in North and South, plains in North and West, central deserts surrounded by mountain ranges. This geographical diversity formed diverse climate, ecology and biology within the country. In addition to this ecological variety, there is a history of three thousand years of civilisation which results a cultural diversity or in better words a mosaic of different ethnicities and different life-style and mode of production such as nomadic mode of production, rural one or modernised industries. An infrastructure network of roads, railways and airlines as well as energy and communication networks are connecting this, sound to be paradoxical, ecological and cultural diversity. So there is a strong probability for tourism in Iran. A quick glance over the history of tourism in Iran reveals the existence of tourists in all historical periods and also in contemporary era Iran is attractive for international tourists specially those were interested in history and archaeology.

The typology of tourism in Iran is as following, (a) Ecotourism: As it was mentioned Iran is a land of ecological diversity; costal line in North and South, mountain ranges and peaks and lagoons, central deserts, rivers and forests, (b)Tourism of history: historical monuments from two thousand B.C., palaces and sites remaining from Achaemenid like Persepolis and Pasargad, Sassanid and Islamic architecture, (c) Cultural tourism: different ethnicities and culture provides a wide range of anthropological attractions such as way of men and women dressing in different areas, local music, local food and diverse handicrafts like carpet, ceramic and silver. (d) Rural and agriculture tourism: geographical diversity of the country formed different type of rural life, for example households and agricultural landscape, which varies in each area. (d) War tourism: in spite of all reconstruction of area damaged during the Iran-Iraq war; many areas remained untouched which provides good chance for documentation to whom might be interested, (e) Medical tourism: there are two types of medical tourism in Iran. One is technological advanced hospitals and professional and well-skilled doctors, especially in organ transplant surgeries that mark Iran as a superior country for countries of the region. Second type of medical attraction for tourism is related to natural resources such as hot mineral water springs and relaxing resorts.

Challenges of sustainable tourism development in Iran:

Challenges of policies and planning: discovery of oil in early twenties was significant in characterising the state in Iran. State's source of income has changed to the oil/petrol revenues paid in foreign exchange directly to the state. Oil/petrol revenue was supposed to be an engine of growth; yet easy access to its exchange rate eventually inhibited the development of agriculture, industry and all other productive activities and "promote a reliance on import, services, and speculative activity rather than long-term investment". [15] So, Iran's economy mainly based upon exporting raw oil/petrol which is about 85% of annual budget of the country. As a result, government as a monopolised owner of oil resources pays the least attention to other sources of income which can be considered in long term policy making and development planning. Additionally, government's political and social spastic approach and policy reduce the trend toward international investment in tourism development in Iran and consequently cause an obstacle in order to entrance the international tourism market. Other difficulties, directly or indirectly, emerged from this neglection are as follows.

Infrastructure challenges: centralised state system in Iran resulted in an unequal infrastructure development. On the one hand, big cities such as Tehran, Isfahan, Tabriz and Shiraz are fairly developed and modernised; on the other hand, many other regions and cities remained marginalised and deprived. Roads and railways do not go far in accordance with the developmental needs; rather they go according to big cities requirements. As it has been mentioned above, tourism is not seen as a development priority in national development planning and again it was said that there is no noticeable, neither public nor private, investment in tourism; hence, appropriate accommodation facilities are insufficient. Moreover, in spite of long distance between tourist destinations, tourist services such as restaurants, sanitation services and so on are very limited. Iran has not developed its banking and financial system with regards to tourism, particularly international tourism requirements. There are few foreign exchange centres and almost no possibility of international money facilities such as credit card, foreign exchange cash machine, electronic banking and alike.

Cultural challenges: notwithstanding tourism potentials have been naturally distributed all around

the country, it does not mean that all local communities are ready and prepared to welcome tourists. In explaining that, it is to say that as the idea of change has not been experienced directly (like what happened in Western societies); traditional societies have a low capacity for identification with new aspects of their life. Traditional society "develops few requiring economic interdependence; lacking the bonds of interdependence, people's horizons are limited by local and their decisions involve only other known people in known situations". [16] In other words, local communities are not open to tourism and changes brought by it or even in worst case scenario they might be hostile. One can see this attitude as a result of lack of information and education about tourism and its positive contribution to the region's development. Furthermore, it is remarkable to say that 'non-participant' is predominant characteristic of local communities and they are hardly ever up for alteration due to general weakness of civil society and lack of NGOs.

Apart from those communities which do not welcome tourist, areas that do so will be affected in other way. "Using cultural values at the wrong place, wrong time with the wrong standard has created in turn a misleading and damaging image about local communities in those tourist destinations. Overtime, it may become increasingly difficult to discern differences between commercially inspired and authentic cultural shows". [17]

Environmental challenges: environment and ecological balance were influenced by tourism development in many regions. The possibility of quick profit of tourism industry is tempting especially in environmentally good but economically poor areas; however, overuse of resources is a serious threat. Since there is no comprehensive national plan and monitoring for tourism development, in some cases local authorities make decisions on their own disregarding the environmental issue and long-term viability of resources. Pollution is also another environmental matter at popular tourist destination "due to lack of measures to cope with the generation of new or increased waste residues". [17] The carrying capacity of sewage disposal systems has not been exceeded in accordance with tourism growth and increased number of hotels and services. Air pollution, overcrowding, traffic jam and noise can be mentioned as other discomforts, especially for local people.

VI. CONCLUSION

All these arguments were about sustainable tourism development with reference to Iran as a developing country having its own specialities; however, they may be valid for other countries that have followed a similar path and experienced similar difficulties. So it is good to draw several general conclusions.

Like many other developing countries, Iran is struggling with severe economic, political, social and cultural challenges such as high rates of unemployment, rapid growth of the working-age population, inflation and so on. In the short term many developing countries are inclined to support current tourism development even though it may not be compatible with the principles of long term sustainable development. In Tosun's words it is not "the objective to create sustainable tourism development. Rather, the main objective is to achieve tourism growth in volume and value terms". [17] In Iran situation is different in some aspects though. Government is not in an urgent need of foreign exchange oriented from tourism since the main source of foreign exchange is oil revenue, so tourism development's priority is not high. However, tourism has been seen as an alternative in some of the national or regional development planning. Not surprisingly, these tourism development plans have concentrated merely on increasing the number of tourists. This is to demonstrate an approach which achieves national objectives at the expense of local communities "widening intra-generation inequality and unbalanced regional development" [17]. Sustainable tourism development in Iran thus has to conquer following shortcoming, (a) Lack of comprehensiveness and integration, (b) Lack of co-ordination between and amongst related bodies, (c) Lack of decentralisation together with being driven by interests of central government and business (d) Lack of local perspective.

Finally this paper proposes that tourism development in Iran, or any other developing country with the same or similar situation, has to adopt a holistic perspective considering both macro level and micro level. In macro level it is to upraise the priority of tourism development in national long term development policies and giving more attention to planning, co-ordination and monitoring; improvement of infrastructure required for tourism development; empowerment of local authorities in order to avoid bureaucracy and making investment more feasible. Yet this large scale contemplation is not enough since it lacks many of sustainability indicators. For this reason it should be articulated with micro level concerns. It should be addressed in each area whether tourism development is a promising idea or not, rather than overestimating its developmental benefits and simply synonymising sustainable tourism development with sustaining tourism. In order to 'meet the needs of presents', local communities must be involved in decision

making for their area, their awareness of positive contributions and negative impacts of tourism should be increased (through the mass media, education system, workshops and so on) and the opportunity of raising their voice, in case of need, must be provided for them through enhancement of civil institutions. Meanwhile to avoid 'compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs', environmental codes should be enforced in order to protect natural resources. Moreover tourists supposed to be informed of consuming tourism in an environmentally and culturally appropriate style. Transparency in all decision making process and tourism development related activities, efforts to maximising all stakeholders' participation and the principles of fair sharing of benefits are helpful to overcome suspicions and resistance. "Resource problems are human problems and, therefore, sustainable development requires sustainable behaviour". [2]

REFERENCES

[1] Sharpley, Richard (2000) "Tourism and Sustainable Development: Exploring the Theoretical Divide", Journal of Sustainable Tourism, Vol. 8, No. 1.

[2] Sharpley, Richard (1998) "Sustainable Tourism Development: a Theoretical and Empirical Analysis", Lancaster University, pp. 25-192.

[3] Lele, Sharachachandram (1991) "Sustainable Development: a Critical Review", World Development, Vol. 19, No. 6.

[4] Barbier, E. B. (1987) "The Concept of Sustainable Economic Development", Environmental Conservation, Vol. 14, No. 2.

[5] Pearce, D., Markandya, A., Barbier, E. (1989) "Blueprint for a Green Economy", London Earthscan Publication, pp. 28.

[6] International Union for Conservation of Nature IUCN (1991) "Caring for the Earth: A Strategy for Sustainable Living", Gland, Switzerland.

[7] Her Majesty's Stationary Office HMSO (1994) "Sustainable Development: The UK Strategy", London.

[8] Merbatu, Desta (1998) "Sustainability and Sustainable Development: Historical and Conceptual Review", Elsevier Science Ltd, pp. 502.

[9] Hall, Michael l& Lew Allan A. (1998) "Sustainable Tourism", Longman Limited, pp. 29-36.

[10] Wahab, Salah & John J. Pigram (1997) "Tourism, Development and Growth: the Challenge of Sustainability", Routledge, pp. 4-37.

[11] Inskeep, E. (1991) "Tourism Planning: An Integrated and Sustainable Approach", New York Van Nostrand Reinhold, pp. Xviii.

[12] Butler, R. (1993) "Tourism: An Evolutionary Perspective", in J. G. Nelson, R. Butler and G. Wall (eds.) "Tourism and Sustainable Development: Monitoring, Planning, Managing", Department of Geography Publication series, No. 37, University of Waterloo Canada, pp. 27-43.

[13] Hunter, Colin (1997) "Sustainable Tourism as an Adaptive paradigm", Annals of Tourism Research.

[14] Liu, Zhenhua (2003) "Sustainable Tourism Development: A Critique", Journal of Sustainable Tourism, Vol.11, No. 6.

[15] Karl, Terry Lynn (1997) "The Paradox of Plenty", University of California Press, pp. 53.

[16] Lerner, Daniel (1958) "The passing of Traditional Society: Modernising the Middle East", Free Press, pp. 359.

[17] Tosun, Cevat (2001) "Challenges of Sustainable Tourism Development in Developing World: The Case of Turkey", Elsevier Science Ltd.