



The Role Of Ecotourism In Valuing Natural Tourist Attractions

Case Study Of Tipasa

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Abstract ;	Article info
<p><i>The purpose of this research was to define the significance of ecotourism as one of the most important modern tourism patterns, as well as to highlight its role in valuing the elements of natural tourist attractions in the state of Tipasa, and what the latter enjoys of various and varied tourist elements.</i></p> <p><i>The study discovered that this type of tourism has a strong relationship with natural tourist attractions, as each serves the other and contributes to the preservation of the natural, social, cultural, and civilizational environment, and can be applied in a variety of other fields. Eco-tourism, in all of its forms and elements, we discover, derives its components from the surrounding environment. As a result, greater care must be taken to ensure that the environment does not become an impediment to the development of the eco-tourism sector.</i></p> <p>Jel Classification Codes: Q57, Z39, Z3.</p>	<p>Received 02/04/2023</p> <p>Accepted 12/05/2023</p>
	<p>Keyword:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ecotourism ✓ Elements of natural tourist attractions.

1. Introduction

Ecotourism plays an active role in the development of tourism, as it has seen a significant increase in the number of tourists who engage in ecotourism activity in recent years, owing to the numerous benefits that place ecotourism at the forefront of global tourism patterns. The importance of eco-tourism is highlighted by the fact that it provides a set of dimensions, such as environmental, tourism, economic, social, and cultural dimensions, which in total enable the creation of a community that embraces and recognizes the value of eco-tourism activity. Eco-tourism activities in natural tourist destinations crystallize through the preservation of natural resources and the attempt to sustain them in tourism in order to reduce environmental pollution and repair and treat environmental waste in those natural tourist destinations. Tipasa's natural tourist attractions range from wet areas rich in water (forests, lakes, nature reserves, natural forested spaces, prepared natural spaces) that allow for the practice of a wide range of eco-tourism activities and events.

1.1. Study Problem

The study's problem lies in the fact that, despite the reality that ecotourism is one of the most important forms of tourism today, it has not taken its place and natural role in the state of Tipasa, despite the fact that it contains various tourist attractions. The problem of this study can be formulated in the following main question:

Does ecotourism contribute to the value placed on the components of Tipasa's natural tourist attractions?

1.2. Study Structure

The study was divided into the following topics to address the problem:

- ❖ Ecotourism
- ❖ The nature of the tourist attraction
- ❖ The role of ecotourism in valuing the elements of tourism in the state of Tipasa.

2. Ecotourism

Before delving into the concept of eco-tourism, let us first examine the concept of tourism.

2.1 Ecotourism concept

Tourism is defined as "the process of moving a person from one place to another for a period of time in a legitimate manner that achieves psychological pleasure for a period not less than 24 hours and is not for permanent residence" (Zaid Munir , 2008, p. 15).

Ecotourism was defined as "a human activity carried out by humans in accordance with governing regulations and rules that protect and preserve natural wildlife, prevent pollution, and work to preserve it not only for the sake of current generations but also for the sake of future generations" (Al-Khudairi, 2005, p. 47).

While Marthamoney defines ecotourism as "travel to clean natural areas and protected areas that are struggling to reduce the impact of visitors and investors on them," this type of tourism also educates visitors about how to deal with fragile natural areas and the local cultures that live near or in these areas. And then seek appropriate sources of funding to

continue the conservation issue rather than put a stop to it. As a result, ecotourism directly contributes to the economic development of local communities, as well as their participation in decision-making and respect for their cultures and human rights (Rawashd, 2005, p. 47).

2.2 The importance of ecotourism

The self-importance of ecotourism has many aspects, including (Mustafaa , 2016, p. 91):

- ❖ Keeping the environment in balance, followed by protecting natural terrestrial, sea, and air life from pollution. As a result, it is used as a method of prevention rather than treatment, preserving the mechanisms for achieving balance, health, and the environment.
- ❖ Establishing behavioral rationalization controls in the consumption, use, or extraction of materials in a way that maintains public health and safety, resource renewal, and non-wasting, while also achieving the highest level of energy conservation and community safety and effectiveness.
- ❖ Ecotourism offers an easy, simple life free of disruption and anxiety by preventing noise and gaseous emissions that impair human efficiency, as well as bringing him closer to natural instinct and a simple, uncomplicated life.

2.3 Ecotourism rules and effects

Ecotourism has rules that govern it and the foundations upon which it is built, and this is done to regulate tourism activity. Several rules have been established in accordance with tourist tendencies and their desire to satisfy their needs by organizing their tourism activity. Ecotourism's positive and negative effects have also been identified.

a. Ecotourism Rules

Since ecotourism has today become a strategy for tourism project owners or governments, these investors must be aware of the feasibility of implementing this strategy and understand its rules and foundations, which include (Khan & Zawi , 2010):

- ❖ Reducing tourism's negative impacts on natural, cultural, and social resources in tourist areas.
- ❖ Educating tourists on the importance of preserving natural areas, as well as enacting strict and effective legislation.
- ❖ The importance of responsible investment based on collaboration with local authorities in order to meet the needs of the local population and preserve their customs and traditions.
- ❖ Tourism development should go hand in hand with social and environmental development, which means that developments in all fields should coincide so that society does not experience a sudden shift.
- ❖ Collaboration for the success of ecotourism with various specialized sectors, whether in tourism or the environment.
- ❖ relying on environmentally friendly infrastructure, reducing the use of trees for heating, and preserving wildlife and cultural life
- ❖ Natural resource and biodiversity management that is environmentally sustainable.
- ❖ Integrating local residents, raising their awareness and educating them about the

environment and tourism, and providing economic projects for income through the development of tourism industries and improving their living conditions.

- ❖ Considering the carrying capacity and not exceeding it, as well as selecting environmentally friendly modes of transportation.
- ❖ Encourage recycling, remanufacturing, and organic agriculture.

b. The effects of ecotourism

Ecotourism has both positive and negative effects, which are summarized below (Zuhair Yousef , 2014, p. 343):

- ❖ Increasing local community revenues: it is a chance for business development and job creation, as well as stimulating tourism investment and supporting local services even in remote communities.
- ❖ Natural resources are one of the most important tourist attractions, and if these areas are not exploited, they will be neglected, and the region will lose an important environmental heritage.
- ❖ Improving environmental quality is one of the positive effects of tourism activity, because a clean and beautiful environment is the raw material for eco-tourism activity, and it is also a major factor in the establishment of tourism activity in general, which appears through attention to the environment and preserving its components.
- ❖ Raising environmental tourism awareness: ecotourism works to create a state of tourism awareness, so that laws are enacted to preserve eco-tourism sites and their environmental protection at various levels, as well as its maintenance.
- ❖ Infrastructure development: The eco-tourism activity frequently has a positive impact on the environment and its elements because its preparation necessitates that man intervene with his modern techniques and new planning to beautify, improve, and prepare the environment appropriately for the eco-tourism activity through the development of infrastructure that is compatible with this tourism activity and environmentally friendly.
- ❖ Improving and developing tourist attractions: Ecotourism works to improve and develop tourist attractions, such as religious, historical, and archaeological sites, by maintaining and restoring them and presenting them as part of the tourist destination's tourism product.

As for the negative effects, they are as follows:

- ❖ Destruction of the quality of the natural environment: The use of natural sites by tourists leads to the destruction of the quality of the natural environment in them, whether due to overuse of tourist facilities such as tourist transportation or hotels, or on public facilities such as transportation routes and water.
- ❖ Tourist area distortion: Tourist area distortion results from a lack of treatment of tourist waste, i.e. through bad behavior towards public property, such as picking flowers, trees, and so on. It is worth noting that tourism generates tons of solid waste each year, according to the United Nations Environment Program.

- ❖ Water pollution occurs when sewage is directed into rivers, lakes, and seas, polluting the water with germs and substances hazardous to public and environmental health as a result of the failure to install saline water treatment and sewage treatment systems in all tourist facilities.
- ❖ Air pollution: air pollution may be caused by the excessive use of tourist transportation in some tourist areas.

3.The nature of the tourist attraction

The elements of tourist attractions differ from one country to the next, depending on what the country possesses in terms of natural and unnatural elements (human), and the success of the tourism process for any region depends on the sum of these elements, necessitating the need to preserve and maintain it permanently and continuously in order to achieve the desired results.

3.1 Environmental components as a basis for tourism

It consists of three basic components

a. The components of the natural environment

The natural environment is the container for all interactions, activities, and mutual influences between man and nature, and it is an essential component of eco-tourism (natural or aesthetic). These parts are as follows:

- ❖ The country's geographical location (continental and astronomical).
- ❖ Elements derived from the earth's structure and construction (geology) or rocky composition.
- ❖ Elements derived from climate elements
- ❖ Elements derived from water and its derivatives.

b. Elements of the social environment (human)

The framework of relations that determines the nature of human life's relationship with others, that basis for organizing any group of groups, whether among its members each other in an environment, the patterns of those relationships constitute what is known as social systems, and it consists of two aspects, material and non-material.

c. Bioenvironmental components

The individual, his family, and society, as well as the living organisms in the biosphere, are all part of the human being. The biological environment is a component of the natural environment, and it includes a wide range of biological components that contribute to the multiplicity and diversity of organisms that live on Earth, including plants, animals, and humans. The interest of environmental and tourism institutions in these organisms has grown, allowing eco-tourism (natural and aesthetic) to flourish in various countries around the world.

3.2 What is the tourist attraction

Tourism system is composed of three basic elements: the dynamic element of the person (the tourist), the fixed element of the place (the tourist site), and the transportation methods that provide access to or connect the person and the place. It is clear from this that one of the most common concepts of tourist attraction is that it is one of the elements of the

tourism system, without which the concept of the tourism system becomes ambiguous (Al-Hawamdeh & Al-Hamiri, 2006, p. 129).

a. Definition of a tourist attraction

The tourist attraction is defined as "well-known tourist sites famous for their unique design, managed by a specialized administrative body, and the purpose of their existence is to increase the individual's pleasure and culture."

It is also a broad concept that encompasses all natural areas with appealing and distinct features that provide services and facilities that meet the needs and desires of the demand while making it easily accessible all year (Abu Hajar, 2011).

b. Types of tourism attraction

Tourist attractions can be classified into:

- ❖ Natural resources that do not require a large financial investment to develop: because they are linked to the natural environment, such as the diversity of land forms in areas of mountains, plains, valleys, and lakes, where such topographic phenomena do not affect tourist attraction, but rather the quality of tourist demand.
- ❖ Unnatural tourist attraction (man-made): The human factors responsible for the establishment of a tourist environment come in a variety of shapes and sizes, all of which are man-made. The social and cultural life, the spirit of civilization's fragrance, the people's character, morals and worship, and traditional handicrafts of a local character...etc. are all components with distinct originality where man and his civilized development constitute the basic material for this type of tourist attraction.
- ❖ Attractions that rely on the presence of national events and festivals: The last century saw the emergence of many cultural and folklore festivals that represent people's customs and traditions, such as Algeria's Timgad and Jamila festival. The appeal of these festivals grows in proportion to the purpose for which they are held, as the festival must provide the individual with psychological and spiritual trends of the society in which he lives, as well as contribute to the development of his personality.

c. Characteristics of tourist attractions location

The tourist attractions location has several distinguishing features, which we summarize below (Al-Hawamdeh & Al-Hamiri, 2006, p. 141):

- ❖ The tourist attraction area is distinguished by its homogeneous natural characteristics and a distinctive trademark that distinguishes its tourism products and services from the rest of the other types of products, even if they belong to the same group of temptations.
- ❖ The tourist attraction area includes services and facilities that are complementary to the main tourist offer and are responsible for the individual on the tourist trip, such as the hotel itself, the design of the restaurant, or the nature of the meals served there.
- ❖ The tourist attraction area differs from the services, events, and activities that supplement the tourist offer in that an individual cannot participate in the activities or activities he desires unless he is present at the attraction. However, the tourist attraction point may be compatible with the presence of multiple activities at the

same time. To address the occurrence of varying degrees of inconsistency between those events, the management of the tourist site resorts to using a system of natural or artificial areas or the use of timetables so that the greatest number of participants can engage in as many activities as possible within a single point of attraction.

- ❖ Some attractions have emerged as a result of non-promotional projects, such as religious thresholds designated for spiritual and religious purposes, where social and religious custom does not prevent many religions from performing rituals and religious buildings, as long as the feelings and traditions of that community are respected...etc.

d. Factors Affecting Tourist Attractions

Attraction factors are divided into two categories: natural factors and artificial factors. Natural factors include geographical location, land and water distribution, biological composition, surface forms, and natural vegetation. In addition to the unnatural (human) factors affecting the tourism industry, such as hospitality facilities, transportation, infrastructure, office and tour guide availability...etc.

4.The role of ecotourism in valuing the elements of tourist attractions in the state of Tipasa

Tipasa is one of the states that has significant tourist qualifications. It is distinguished by civilization and history, as well as its ownership of numerous natural and cultural resources that set it apart from other cities and base structures that allow it to advance its tourism sector and attract the greatest number of tourists.

4.1 Elements of tourist attraction in Tipasa state

Tipasa has a variety of religious, natural, archaeological, and historical components and monuments.

a. Natural Resources

Among the most important resources available are:

❖ **Geographic location:**

The state of Tipasa is located in northern Algeria and overlooks the Mediterranean Sea, with a 123-kilometer-long coastal strip extending from the eastern border with the state of Algeria to the western border with the state of Chlef, passing through 14 coastal municipalities that allow for the practice of many diverse activities such as swimming, camping, fishing, diving, and practicing marine sports or Thalassotherapy, and it contains 54 beaches. It covers an area of 2,166 km² and is divided into mountains and plains. It is home to 28 municipalities.

❖ **Climate:**

The climate is Mediterranean, with hot and dry summers and mild and humid winters on the coast; the temperature rarely falls below 0 ° C and never rises above 40 ° C; the average temperature is 10 ° C in January and 28 ° C in August, where Tipasa is located. It attracts many tourists due to its mild climate most of the year.

❖ **Water Resources:**

The state owns several mountain water springs, including Wadi Al-Balaa 2, Sidi Brahem, and others. Wadi Muzfran, Wadi Al-Hashem, Wadi Jar, Wadi Al-Nador, Wadi Al-Qarmoud, Wadi Hamidiyah, Wadi Al-Sabt, Wadi Muslimun, Wadi Qarami, and Wadi Damous are among its valleys. In addition to the Bouarabi Valley, the state has three dams: Kaf El-Deir Dam in Damous, Boujbroun Dam in Mourad, and Boukerdan Dam in Sidi Amar, which is considered a tourist pole with distinction for its geographical location and center in the Manasir Mountains in the middle of a picturesque nature, making it a destination for family rest, not to mention windsurfing.

❖ **Cultural resources:**

Although the state territory lacks cultural facilities, this does not imply their absence, as there are:

The Abdel Wahab Selim Cultural Center is located in Shenoua and includes many facilities, the most important of which are a library, two exhibition galleries, an Internet hall, a hall equipped with advanced and complete equipment, and a special room for film programming that allows moviegoers to create their own club.

The Arab Center for Archeology is located in the Tipasa municipality. On 41,000 square meters, it houses a museum, a library, a laboratory, an institute, and lecture halls. There are three museums in Cherchell, two in the municipality, and one in the state capital.

There are four theaters, two in the Golden Horn (Tipaza) and one each in Bouismael and Cherchell. Fourteen cinema halls, spread across 13 municipalities, with a total capacity of 4160 people.

One traditional house of industry with 31 shops is located on El Mina Street in Tipasa, where the traditional industries in the Tipasa region vary, including artistic ones, for production and services, and the municipality of Cherchell specializes in the production of traditional rugs that are made by hand in the house of rugs bearing decorations deep in the region's history.

❖ **Historical and archaeological resources:**

Among the state's most important historical and archaeological resources. Tipaza's archaeological barn: It covers an estimated 70 hectares and is divided into two sections.

The Royal Mausoleum of Mauritania, which overlooks the sea and is located at the top of the municipality of Sidi Rashid. It was built during the reign of Numidian King Yuba II as a tomb for his wife Selene, daughter of Cleopatra the Egyptian.

b. Equipment and infrastructure of Tipasa

The Tipasa region has significant base structures that qualify it to be one of the candidate areas for tourism development in the Mediterranean basin, and one of the most significant of these structures is mentioned below (from the Directorate of Tourism and Handicrafts).

❖ **Diwans, tourism and travel agencies:**

Tipasa has 12 diwans, seven of which are active and three of which are available in the state. It also includes 49 agencies, including 40 active agencies spread across the state.

These organizations welcome visitors, care for them, and offer educational opportunities through various tourism programs. According to Tipaza's Directorate of Tourism and Handicrafts statistics, the number of requests for the establishment of agencies in 2019 reached 37, and the number of clients reached 14,278.

❖ **Accommodation and reception structures:**

Hotels, summer camps, and tourist vehicles serve as accommodation and reception structures. Structures of hotels: The state of Tipasa has 12 tourist hotels, including 05 classified hotels with a capacity of 58 beds and 07 unclassified hotels with a capacity of 2540 beds, which are distributed by municipality as shown in the table below:

Table 1. Distribution of hotel establishments by municipality until 2019.

Municipalities	Rated hotels		Unrated hotels		Total	
	Number	Bed	Number	Bed	Number	Bed
Tipasa	2	83	4	2356	6	2439
Dawouda	-	-	3	184	3	284
Cherchell	1	74	-	-	1	74
Ain Tecurayet	1	73	-	-	1	73
Bousmail	1	228	-	-	1	228
Total	5	458	7	2540	12	2998

Source: Directorate of Tourism and Handicrafts of the State of Tipasa.

❖ **Tourist complex and summer centers:**

The province of Tipasa contains 03 tourist complex with a capacity of 2316 beds, 06 summer centers with 1160 beds, and 14 summer camps not categorized by 09: coastal municipalities with a reception capacity of 4333 beds (from the Directorate of Tourism and Handicrafts).

❖ **Transportation**

Many national and state roads run through Tipasa, the most important of which are the national highway west-east and state road 109, also known as the Hamdania roads, a 23.4-kilometer-long Algerian coastal road. There are also many ports in the municipalities of Fouka, Bousmail, Khemisti Bouharoun, Tipasa, Gouraia, and Cherchell.

c. Tipasa tourist demand:

❖ **Tourist demand for hotel establishments:**

The state is distinguished by a lack of supply of hotels located at the state region's level, and the majority of them are of a coastal nature and are not classified, making it difficult to benefit from hotel-related services; however, we find a significant influx of tourists, whether from within the country or from outside.

❖ **Seasonal changes for hotel establishments:**

The seasonal changes of hotel establishments located on state territory for the year 2018 can be explained in months using the table below:

Table 1. Distribution of hotel establishments by municipality until 2019

Months	Total Tourists
January	11,000
February	10,000
March	8,000
Avril	14,000
May	8,500
June	6,000
July	16,000
August	17,000
September	12,000
October	14,000
November	14,000
December	11,000

Source: Directorate of Tourism and Handicrafts of the State of Tipasa

According to the above figure, the summer season is the peak tourist season in which tourist demand for hotel establishments in the state of Tipasa increases significantly, with an increase in the number of tourists in both July and August. As a result, the increase in tourist numbers in August is the highest percentage recorded by the state in 2018. This influx indicates that it is a coastal city that is known for its picturesque beaches and mild climate. The majority of workers take their annual vacations during the summer season, followed by the autumn season, which saw a significant increase in the number of tourists as well as the availability of suitable climatic conditions. In terms of the tourist stagnation season in Tipasa, we notice a noticeable decrease in the number of tourists in the months of January, February, and March, and this decrease indicates that most tourists go to the desert areas. The state of Tipasa is said to be based on one type of tourism, which is beach tourism.

5. CONCLUSION

Ecotourism plays an important role in valuing natural tourist attractions and preserving their heritage for future generations to enjoy. We believe that this type of tourism has a strong relationship with natural tourist attractions, as each serves the other and helps to preserve the natural environment. We believe that ecotourism derives its components from the surrounding environment in all of its forms and elements, and that it is therefore necessary to take better care of the environment so that it does not become an impediment to the growth of the eco-tourism sector. Tipasa has many natural ingredients that qualify it as a tourist attraction and provide fertile ground for the revival and revitalization of ecotourism in a way that ensures the best use of these qualifications. As a result, we arrived at the following conclusions:

- ❖ Ecotourism is significant because it is clean tourism based on visiting natural areas and preserving and sustaining them environmentally.
- ❖ Ecotourism is significant in many ways, including economic, social, political, cultural, social, and political.
- ❖ The tourism sector, like the agricultural and industrial sectors, helps to raise the level of

local development in Tipasa, but its contribution is small in comparison to the state tourism potential. As a result, despite the state's abundance of tourism potentials, which could turn it into a pole of eco-tourism par excellence, it focuses on one type of tourism: beach tourism.

- ❖ Ecotourism is one of the best tourist patterns in Tipasa because it has many natural ingredients, as well as mountainous areas and other factors that contribute to the adoption of this type of tourism.

Suggestions

- ❖ Increasing interest in the elements of Tipasa's natural tourist attractions.
- ❖ Work to increase the importance of ecotourism in all aspects.
- ❖ Considering the rules of eco-tourism in the state of Tipasa as a strategy for tourism investment.
- ❖ Environmental tourism awareness is being developed as a concept and approach in the Wilayat of Tipasa.

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