



# 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

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