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The sustainable development and social tourism

Issue of sustainable development nowadays is very popular and is researched in different studies. During the 90s, the term of sustainability entered a discourse which started to direct the economic and political structures that constitute the present larger context of the tourism system, the industry and its development. This paper explains the concept of sustainability, its definitions and indicators and also deals with the ways in which the concepts of social tourism and sustainable tourism and sustainable development have become increasingly connected. Also further will be discussed the strong relationships between development of social tourism and the sustainable development according reports of European Union.

Keywords: sustainable development, sustainability indicators, tourism, social tourism.

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Устойчивое развитие и социальный туризм

На текущий момент тема устойчивого развития очень хорошо известна и исследуется во многих работах. В 90-е годы, термин «устойчивость» вошел в дискурс, который стал направляющей силой экономических и политических структур, которые сейчас имеют большое влияние на систему туризма, её инфраструктуру и развитие. Эта работа поясняет концепцию устойчивости, её определения и индикаторы, а также демонстрирует взаимосвязанные концепции социального туризма, устойчивого туризма и устойчивого развития. Так же будет обсуждена сильная взаимосвязь между развитием социального туризма и устойчивого развития в соответствии с отчетами Европейского союза.

Ключевые слова: устойчивое развитие, индикаторы устойчивого развития, туризм, социальный туризм.

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Тұрақты даму мен әлеуметтік туризм

Қазіргі кезде тұрақты даму мәселесі бүкіл әлемде жақсы танымал және түрлі ғылымдарда зерттелуде. 90-жылдары тұрақты даму термині дискурске кіріп, қазіргі кезде ол экономика, экология, политика және тағы басқа аспекттермен байланысады. Осының барлығы, әсіресе туризм индустриясына туризм инфрақұрылымына өз ықпалын әкеледі. Бұл мақала тұрақтылық концепциясының мағынасын ашып, тұрақты даму мен туризмнің арасындағы байланысқа көз ашады. Әсіресе әлеуметтік туризмнің дамуы мен тұрақты даму байланысын еуропалық Кеңестің есеп берулерінен карастырады.

Түйін сөздер: тұрақты даму, тұрақты даму индикаторлары, туризм, әлеуметтік туризм.

Sustainability and sustainable development came to prominence in 1987, when the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development, published its report Our Common Future. The central recommendation of this document, usually known as the Brundtland report, was that the

way to square the circle of competing demands for environmental protection and economic development was through a new approach: sustainable development, defined as development that ‘meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs’. Fur-

ther United Nations conferences on the environment and development have included the ‘Earth Summit’ in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, where Agenda 21 was produced. The 40 chapters of Agenda 21 offer an action plan for sustainable development, integrating environmental with social and economic concerns, and articulating a participatory, community-based approach to a variety of issues, including population control, transparency, partnership working, equity and justice [1].

Sustainable development is a difficult and complicated issue to pin down since it encompasses so many different things. Due to the complexity of this subject, it’s important to look at the importance of sustainable development in a holistic way that approaches the issue rationally. There are many definitions of sustainable development, including this landmark one which first appeared in 1987: “Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”— from report Common Future, which about was written before.

But what does this mean? What are the needs of the present? People concerned about sustainable development suggest that meeting the needs of the future depends on how well we balance social, economic, and environmental objectives--or needs--when making decisions today. For better understanding sustainable development subject better to know which indicators are used for counting sustainability [2].

Sustainability accounting has increased in popularity in the last couple of decades. Many companies are adopting new methods and techniques in their financial disclosure and information about the core activities and the impact that these have on the environment. As a result of this, stakeholders, suppliers and governmental institutions want a better understanding of how companies manage their resources to achieve their goals to accomplish sustainable development.

According to common definitions there are three key dimension of sustainability. Every dimension focuses on different subsets (Table 1).

Indeed, using these indicators we can say that development of tourism can bring us to sustainable development, but this will be indirect connection with economic factors and social factors. Over the past decades, the impacts of tourism have received increasing attention in discourses and studies on related development. The industry has a tremendous

capacity for generating growth in destination areas. On the other hand, its increasing impacts have led to a range of evident and potential problems and of environmental, social, cultural, economic, and political issues in destinations and systems, creating a need for alternative and more environment- and host friendly practices in development, planning, and policies.

Table 1 – Three dimensions of sustainability [3]

Environmental factors	Social factors	Economic factors
1. Energy	1. Community investment	1. Accountability
2. Water	2. Working conditions	2. Transparency
3. Greenhouse gases	3. Human rights and Fair Trade	3. Corporate Governance
4. Emissions	4. Public policy and anticorruption	4. Stakeholder Value
5. Hazardous and non hazardous waste	5. Diversity	5. Economic performance
6. Recycling and packaging	6. Safety	6. Financial Performance

The sustainable development is very young topic in the world science. So the methods of estimation update very rapidly. With respect to that we should apply modern specifications and set them as a base line for the further development. For the current moment, the applicable approach was approved in Melbourne, 2011. The method began with a fundamental dissatisfaction with current approaches to sustainability and sustainable development, which tended to treat economics as the core domain and ecology as an externality. Two concurrent developments provided impetus: a major project in Porto Alegre, and a United Nations’ paper called Accounting for Sustainability, Briefing Paper, No. 1, 2008. The researchers developed a method and an integrated set of tools for assessing and monitoring issues of sustainability while providing guidance for project development. The method was then further refined through projects in Melbourne and Milwaukee, and through an ARC-funded cross-disciplinary project^[4] that partnered with various organizations including Microsoft Australia, Fuji Xerox Australia, and the City of Melbourne [4].

The Circles of Sustainability approach is explicitly critical of other domain models such as the triple bottom line that treat economics as if it is outside the social, or that treat the environment as an externality. It uses a four-domain model - economics, ecology, politics and culture. In each of these domains there are 7 subdomains (Table 2).

Table 2 – Indicators of sustainability by the circles of sustainability method

Economics	Ecology	Politics	Culture
1. Production and resourcing 2. Exchange and transfer 3. Accounting and regulation 4. Consumption and use 5. Labour and welfare 6. Technology and infrastructure 7. Wealth and distribution	1. Materials and energy 2. Water and air 3. Flora and fauna 4. Habitat and settlements 5. Built-form and transport 6. Embodiment and food 7. Emission and waste	1. Organization and governance 2. Law and justice 3. Communication and critique 4. Representation and negotiation 5. Security and accord 6. Dialogue and reconciliation 7. Ethics and accountability	1. Identity and engagement 2. Creativity and recreation 3. Memory and projection 4. Belief and ideas 5. Gender and generations 6. Enquiry and learning 7. Health and wellbeing

Economics. The economic domain is defined as the practices and meanings associated with the production, use, and management of resources, where the concept of ‘resources’ is used in the broadest sense of that word.

Ecology. The ecological domain is defined as the practices and meanings that occur across the intersection between the social and the natural realms, focusing on the important dimension of human engagement with and within nature, but also including the built-environment.

Politics. The political is defined as the practices and meanings associated with basic issues of social power, such as organization, authorization, legitimization and regulation. The parameters of this area extend beyond the conventional sense of politics to include not only issues of public and private governance but more broadly social relations in general.

Culture. The cultural domain is defined as the practices, discourses, and material expressions, which, over time, express continuities and discontinuities of social meaning [5].

The term ‘sustainable tourism’ has come to represent and encompass a set of principles, policy prescriptions and management methods which chart a path for tourism development such that a destination area’s social and environmental resource base (including natural, built and cultural features) is protected for future development [6]. Sustainable tourism policies thus aim to balance the economic, social and environmental aspects of tourism development. Key

aspects are:

respect for the natural environment via public policies or private sector self-regulation;

the embedding of tourism within a sustainable, regionally specific, networking economy;

respect for the social wellbeing of the local population and the employees in the tourism sector, and for the culture of the destination;

participation of the host community in the decision-making and planning process;

the implementation of environmental management systems in intensely visited destinations;

accountability of the public sector as the main stakeholder in maintaining the sustainability of tourism in the region [7].

There are several links that can be identified between sustainable and social tourism. These links refer to all three pillars of sustainability:

The first link is social sustainability, as the practices of both sustainable and social tourism can be understood to be oriented towards a reduction of social inequality, or at least to foster social inclusion. The sociologist Stefan Hradil defines social inequality as differences in access to the means of consumption between social groups that lead to one group appearing superior to others [8]. Holidays can be argued to be such a source of inequality in advanced economies. However, holidaying, mainly because of high cost factors associated with participation, is almost by definition a socially exclusive activity. An important implication here is that as holidays have now become a significant part of contemporary social life in many EU member states, involuntary non-participation has become a common indicator of relative income poverty [9].

The second link between the two concepts addresses the economic aspects of sustainability. Social tourism can help to spread tourism spatially and temporally, extending the tourism season and contributing to employment in tourism destinations. While, traditionally, the development of a ‘tourism for all’ policy would have focused on benefits

such as promotion of intercultural understanding and tolerance, there is a growing literature which suggests that viable economic operations and thus economic benefits to all stakeholders can result from ‘tourism for all’ initiatives [10].

The third link refers to environmental aspects of social and sustainable tourism. Originally, sustainable development principles were developed out of a concern for protection of the environment, and to some extent this perspective remains at the forefront of tourism policy – as with the sustainable tourism ‘labels’, which are often focused on environmental measures/indicators. Font and Buckley describe one of the key aims of eco-labelling as ‘to guide consumers in the choice of more environmentally friendly product choices’. And in terms of social tourism, almost coincidentally, many aspects of these activities are inherently more environmentally sustainable. Examples include the fact that much social tourism is domestic tourism, leading to fewer CO₂ emissions; participants in social tourism often use public transport; accommodation in social tourism is often at the forefront of environmental conservation practices [11].

The European Economic and Social Committee (2006), in its Opinion on Social Tourism, proposes that social tourism is a key measure to increase and maintain the economic, social and environmental sustainability of destinations [12]. According to the European Commission in 2007 there are eight key challenges for the development of sustainable tourism in the EU: reducing the seasonality of

demand; addressing the impact of tourism transport; improving the quality of tourism jobs; maintaining and enhancing community prosperity and quality of life, in the face of change; minimising resource use and production of waste; conserving and giving value to natural/cultural heritage; making holidays available to all; making tourism a tool for global sustainable development [13].

Indeed, the links between social tourism and sustainability have also been recognized at the level of the EU. The three key objectives of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy are: economic prosperity; social equity and cohesion; and environmental protection. In this regard, ‘making holidays available to all’ is explicitly identified as one of eight key sustainability challenges facing the tourism sector. This challenge is primarily identified on the basis of social equity and cohesion, including public health and wellbeing, with the challenges of physical disability and economic disadvantage specifically highlighted. ‘Making holidays available to all’ is also linked to the economic benefits which ‘tourism for all’ may confer, helping to address two other sustainable tourism challenges, namely reducing the seasonality of demand and improving the quality of tourism jobs[10]. Thus, the European Commission explicitly acknowledges accessibility to tourism for all EU citizens as a key sustainability issue currently facing the European tourism sector. It can be seen that social tourism is an integral aspect of sustainability and something that is intrinsic to the competitive future of the tourism sector.

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