
SUSTAINABLE TOURISM: MEANING AND THEORETICAL GROUNDING

Daniela Koteska Lozanoska

University of Information Science and Technology “St. Paul the Apostle”- Ohrid, Republic of Macedonia,
daniela.k.l.ohrid@gmail.com

Abstract: One of the basic concepts of economic natural resources and the environment is the concept of sustainability or sustainable development. Contrary to the different interpretations that can be found in literature, this concept today belongs at the center of the consideration of the long-term perspective of the survival and progress of mankind. Sustainable development appears as an essential precondition, and as the ultimate goal, for the efficient organization of numerous human activities on Earth.

Promoting sustainable development in tourism is a matter that affects both the public and the private sector in the country. The idea of developing contemporary models of management through the strategic application of the available resources will enable the establishment of a solid basis for successful penetration on the global tourism market.

The aim of this paper is to analyze the real conditions for sustainable development in tourism, in accordance with the opportunities of the society in order to provide the entrance on the global tourism market (in the period of existence of a large number of challenges imposed by the modern way of life). It is about encouraging the need to apply specific tools for managing with the available resources in the field of tourism.

The main research question raised in this paper is based on the fact whether the competent institutions within a society are aware of the concept of sustainable development in the field of tourism, ie, whether there is a possibility of aligning of the behavior with the existing resources in terms of effectively managing them , and thus promoting tourism globally?

It is particularly difficult to penetrate in the basis of this process, but through the application of an appropriate methodological frame conclusions will be extracted which are particularly important for a principled explanation of the essence of the cause - effect relations that are related to the current conditions of tourism promotion and at the same time, the opportunities for sustainable development.

By applying a qualitative methodological framework, ie analyzing the content of the theoretical aspects, reviewing the prepared reports from the domain of this issue and comparative analysis of the possibilities against the contemporary challenges, the effort will be put in place to provide a solid basis for establishing an appropriate approach to the promotion of sustainable development in tourism as a contemporary way of entering the global tourism market.

Keywords: sustainable development, tourism, resources, strategic approach, globalization

1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of sustainable development in tourism means conscious balancing and full unity of economic, social, cultural and environmental demands and principles, which ultimately should result in prosperity and growth in the quality of life in this area, for present and future generations. On this basis, no generation has no right more, nor can it act as a monopoly, guided exclusively by its own interests, visions and needs in terms of resources and with that and the decisions in the domain of tourism. On the contrary, it is necessary strictly to take care about the goals and interests of the present and future generations. Any short-sightedness in this plan can in the long term produce negative implications, which in turn can call into question the continued continuous and sustainable development in tourism in this area and thus endanger the possibility of future generations in a quality way to meet their own needs.¹³³

Sustainable development in domain of tourism is an opportunity to extend the usefulness of resources to a certain level, without limiting the deadline. Although it may to get an impression that today's care about the non-sustainability in the present is in general terms, it covers a complex of problems related to environment protection (climate change, exhaustion of natural resources, pollution, etc.), it is clear that the way of life in the present is unsustainable from the ethnic, economic and social aspect. Consequently, if it is spoken about tourism, the question

¹³³ Марковић, Слободан, Пејановић, Љубо (2012) “Заштита животне средине у политици одрживог развоја“, Факултет за правне и пословне студије, Нови Сад, стр. 32

is to what extent can be sustained its contribution for achieving human well-being and activities which lead in that direction.¹³⁴

The aim of this paper is to present certain tools for promoting sustainable development in tourism in order to facilitate the crossing of the borders of the countries and at the same time to join the global family within which it is easier to reach the realization of the set goals in the field of tourism.

2. THE CONCEPT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

According to Redclift, sustainable development is a process that allows the development to be accomplished without degrading or exhausting the resources on which it is based. Generally analyzed, it is all possible to achieve either through management of resources in a way that will enabled their self-renewal or through greater use of resources whose period of regeneration is shorter. Only through such an approach, resources can serve to future generations to the same extent as the present ones.¹³⁵

The concept of sustainable development is based on three basic principles:¹³⁶

- Principle of environmental sustainability
- Principle of economic sustainability and
- Principle of social and cultural sustainability.

According to the above, environmental sustainability implies storage and redevelopment the biosphere and all its components. The term economic sustainability means the existence of such a economic system that contains a high degree of stability and the ability to create new values as a source for alimination of all types and forms of spending. For social sustainability, it refers to avoiding of a lot of tensions, even serious social conflicts, which may come from a decline of economic activity, employment, and income. Cultural sustainability refers primarily to the prevention of the domination of one culture over another multiethnic community, as well as at the level of humanity. Consequently, the concept of sustainable development should not be understood as a strictly specified definition, but as a process of changing of relationships that are established between social, economic and natural systems and processes. That process can only be gradually achieved, because the goals set before human society are particularly complex. All of this initially refers to the formation of awareness among the competent authorities in relation to sustainable development, increasing the responsibility of the state administration, proper revision of the existing economic and legal order, as well as greater involvement of the science for resolving the current problems in the domain of sustainable resources in tourism.¹³⁷

People view the ecological environment as forever given an object to meet its needs, which result in incompatible pace of growth in the consumption of its elements and possible production of them. The environmental crisis at the beginning of the 1940s warned humanity that mismatch between the elements of the environment and the pace of economic growth can not last forever. For these reasons, the 1980s promoted the concept of sustainable development. Sustainable development tends to "better world," balancing social, economic and environmental factors, taking into account the needs of current people as well as those that are expected in the future.

3. ESSENTIAL FRAMEWORKS OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

The term of development indicates to the development of the economy, the construction of market centers or green spaces, and because of what in the literature very often is used the term "sustainability". Tourism as the most dynamic world process is the first major user of sustainable elements of the environment, but also the only protector of these elements. Sustainable tourism is defined as a model of economic development that is created to advance the living conditions in a particular community, to meet the needs of the tourists and to maintain the quality of the environment.¹³⁸

The sustainable development of tourism provides satisfaction of economic, social and aesthetic needs. In other words, sustainable tourism should make minimal influence on the environment and local culture, while

¹³⁴ Јовичић, Д., Илић, Т. (2010) "Индикатори одрживог туризма, Гласник српског географског друштва", Београд, вол 90, бр. 1, стр. 295

¹³⁵ Redclift, M. (1993) "Sustainable Development! Needs, values, rights", Environmental Values (Vol, 2), pp. 56

¹³⁶ Baker, S. (2006) "Sustainable Development", Routledge, London, pp. 113

¹³⁷ Vukonić, Boris, Keča, Ksenija (2001) "Turizam i razvoj". Zagreb: Mikrorad, pp.276

¹³⁸ Tribe, John (2000) "The Economics of Leisure and Tourism", Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, pp. 421

allowing for the acquisition of earnings, new jobs and the protection of local ecosystems. Namely, it is about a responsible tourism, which is behaving "friendly" towards the natural and cultural heritage.¹³⁹

There is not yet a single accepted definition of sustainable tourism, which is presenting not only a respect for the principles of sustainable development, but an ethical change among all participants in the tourist process. On the basis of this, the simplest definition is that sustainable development is to mean any kind of tourism that contributes to the protection of the environment, social and economic integrity and promotion of natural, created and cultural values on a permanent basis. The key goal of this type of tourism is to enable people to enjoy and acquire knowledge about the natural, historical and cultural characteristics of the unique environment, through preserving the integrity of the place and encouraging the economic development and well-being of the local community. Sustainable tourism covers all segments of the economy through guidance of criteria that means a reduction in the influence of the tourist traffic on the environment, especially using of non-renewable resources.

Individual authors point out that sustainable development is precisely the development that meets current ones needs, so that account is taken of the rational use of limited resources, and it will not be questioned their future use in order to satisfy the needs of the next generations. That is, sustainable development is a harmonious relationship for ecology and economy, whereby natural wealth will be available to present and future generations. It can be said that sustainable development means a general direction, a desire to create a better world, with balancing of social, economic and factors for environmental protection.

According to the interpretation of the World Tourism Organization and the United Nations Environment Program, this means such development of this activity with help of which are respected and satisfied the needs of the tourist, as a bearer of the demand and the tourist areas as bearers of the offer, and at the same time, not to disturb the possibility of achieving these objectives at the same or at higher level in the future period. In other words, the concept of sustainable development should be the basic direction for management in the tourism industry, which will enable achievement of economic, social and aesthetic goals, through simultaneous protection of cultural values, social integrity, key environmental processes and biological diversity.¹⁴⁰

The goal that it is necessary to strive and which should be maximally supported is maintainance and alignment of development of tourism, based on an integrated and complex approach that puts equal emphasis on 5 components: preserving the environment, affirmation of social integrity, nurturing cultural features of the local population, optimal satisfaction of the tourist needs and realization of economic profit.

Considering that unilateral economically oriented tourism can lead to good economic results in the short term and satisfy many tourist needs, however, on the other hand, it can produce negative consequences for the environment and the life of the local population. However, it is a question of how tourism has often developed over the last few decades, relaying to services that enable the economic organization, primarily hospitality, traffic and a travel agency. In this direction, the economic indicators: profit, employment, participation in the gross national product and the satisfaction of the tourists are marked as the basic element for determining the level of development of tourism. In spite of this, it should be kept in mind that the quality of the environment, the social integrity and cultural identity in certain key areas represent the basis for the realization of the tourism activity, which through the sustainable development will contribute to their affirmation, while stisfying the economic criteria and the needs of the visitor.¹⁴¹

4. CONCLUSION

Contemporary economic development can not be imagined without thinking about globalization. It works in all parts of the world economy, influencing also on regional integration, and more and more on countries in transition. Modern trends of world tourism, highlighting the globalization processes, mean not only the expansion of work in tourism enterprises of developed and developing countries, but also changes in tourist demand. Under the influence of the globalization processes in the tourist offer, it comes to diversification of its own activities within the boundaries of the tourism economy, and outside of them it works to meet the needs of the tourist demand.

¹³⁹ Vukonič, Boris (2002) "Rethinking of Educations and Training for Tourism", Zagreb: Graduate School of Economics & Business, pp. 512

¹⁴⁰ Muller, H.R. (1993) "Challenges in Our Time and Their Consequences for Tourism Management", Reserch Institute for Leisure Time and Tourism, Berne, pp. 15

¹⁴¹ Knowles, T., Diamantis, D., El-Mourhab, J. B. (2001) "The Globalization of Tourism and Hospitality", A Strategic Perspective, London: Continuum, pp. 67

Because of globalization processes, there is an aggravated possibility of selecting tourist destinations in a different region, regardless of their separation. In that sense, it is necessary to mention the progressive technological progress, which is also a prerequisite for occurrence for globalization processes, and with that and the development of tourism in a certain destination loses its importance.

Sustainable tourism development is an especially important aspect of crossing national and regional borders and at the same time entering the global tourism market. In this way, is seen the need of finding the most appropriate way for each society to manage the available resources, from an economic, environmental, social and cultural aspect, in order to achieve consistent sustainability of the same.

Within this paper, an analysis of the promotion of sustainable development in tourism was provided. Thinking about future generations means proper management of available resources. Consequently, promoting the tourism in global frameworks means respecting international rules, but also taking care of the domestic resources that are of great importance for tourism affirmation on the global market.

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