

The Evaluation of Beysehir Lake National Park (Konya-Turkey) in the Framework Ecotourism

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Abstract—These instructions give you basic guidelines for preparing camera-ready papers for ETP’s journals. International Ecotourism Community defines Ecotourism as a travel and tourism type in which the community protects the environment, monitors the welfare of local people, and has sensation to natural areas. According to the International Nature Protection Union Ecotourism expresses ecotourism as supporting protection of nature and cultural resources, having less visitor effect and gains social favor and trips that won’t damage natural areas. In Beysehir Lake National Park it is important to enable the development and protection of the main resource values, the evaluation, planning and improvement of sustainable tourism opportunities and eco tourism which will contribute to the sustainability of socio-cultural values and the economic development of local people in the protected area. Beysehir Lake National Park is te most biggest national Park of Turkey near Beysehir Lake. There are 40 national parks which have 897 thousand 657 hectare area under the protection of The Directorate of National Parks and Nature Protection. The largest one of these parks is Beysehir Lake National Park. Beysehir Lake, which is shown as the most biggest fresh water resource of Turkey has two national parks called Beysehir and Kızıldag and also Beysehir Lake is shown as one of the most natural tourist attraction in Turkey. The Purpose of this study is to present the tourism activities, tourism effects-tourism profile, benefits and the market opportunities which draw attention to Beysehir Lake National Park. This study is done with the benefit of “The 8 th regional directorate of Forestry and Water, Konya Branch Office, Beysehir Lake National park Sustainable Tourism/ Ecotourism Plan inventory Study” which was previously carried out.

Index Terms—Eco-tourism, sustainable tourism, national park, Konya region

I. INTRODUCTION

Tourism has become a global activity. In 2010, 940 million travelers were recorded all over the world, showing an increase of 9.9% from 2009. Tourism has given a huge economic impact where it involves economical activities of trading goods and services of handicrafts, hotels, restaurants, and amusement centers, furthermore, it also creates many new work fields [1].

Tourism can also have negative impacts. Particular attention must be paid to environmental and social

concerns, as well as pressure placed on non-renewable resources and infrastructure. Assessing and managing these impacts is a core function of the investment promotion process outlined here [2]

The Beysehir region is a tourism center where many alternative types of tourism are implemented in terms of natural, historical, archaeological and cultural aspects with rich potentials for tourism values.

A. General Introduction of the Area

The Beysehir Lake is located between the boundaries of the cities of Konya and Isparta and is the 3rd largest lake of our country and a significant drinking water basin with its spring values.

The area located in the province of Konya, Beysehir District with an areas of 88.750 hectare was declared as National Park as per the Decree of the council of Ministers dated 11.01.1993 and with number 93/4020.

The area is located in the Mediterranean Region, within the boundaries of the provinces of Isparta and Konya. The area is of 170 km to Isparta, 94 km to Konya, 248 km to Antalya, 348 km to Ankara, 544 km to Izmir and 650 km to Istanbul.

The majority of the area is also within the status of Grade 1 Natural Site Area. Rural settlements are within the status of Grade 3 Natural Site Area. The mounds and islands in the area however are within the status of Grade 1 Archeological Site.

TABLE I. MANNER OF USE OF AREA

USE	AREA (HA)	PERCENT (%)
Forest	14.820	16.8
Agriculture	9.527	10.7
Space	2.000	2.2
Rock	3.870	4.4
Swamp	1,000	1.1
Shrubbery	700	0.8
Reeds	1.254	1.4
Meadow	5.500	6.2
Settlement	980	1.1

Furthermore, the Beysehir Lake and its surroundings can be evaluated as an “ecological reserve” from many aspects. The region is quite suitable for biological productivity activities and educational organizations. These are areas where rare or endangered fauna and flora types are preserved in their natural habitats. Furthermore, the area has undergone changes with effect of humans and opportunities have been granted for improvement of

the natural ecosystem after such influences. These features are sufficient descriptions for assessment of the area as an ecological reserve area [3]. The manner of use of the area is shown in Table I and Fig. 1.

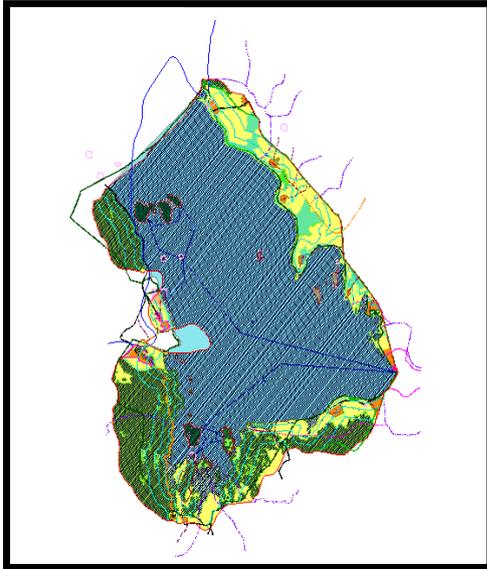


Figure 1. Manner of use of area.

II. ECO TOURISM ACTIVITIES IN THE NATIONAL PARK

Paragliding: The paragliding field of Beysehir was made by the Beysehir Municipality during the summer of 2009. This area, which could be used at any time on a free of charge basis by professional and amateur parachuters is in a position that dominates Beysehir and the Beysehir lake. It is of 6 km distance to the city center, located at Yakamanastir locality and it is also possible to make long distance flights referred to as cross-country. Proximity of the region to the city is a significant advantage for emergency interventions that could be needed in case of accidents. Flights can be made with the view of the Beysehir Lake with matchless nature and insatiable beauty of Beysehir. The ascending points are very safe as there are no obstacles.

Motor Parachuting: Another parachute related activity that could be done in Beysehir is motor parachuting. The location and ground of Soğla is convenient for this. A sportsman wishing to benefit from this place of service must bring along the equipment necessary to perform this sport.

Surfing: The Beysehir Lake is suitable for surfing, which is considered as one of the most enjoyable sports in the works. Of course, one can exercise windsurfing anywhere where there is wind. The Beysehir Lake has wind during 5 months of the year and it will soon become the new favorite location of those who love windsurfing.

There are many areas that are very suitable for windsurfing in the Üstünler beach and many coasts of the lake. The Üstünler-Yarbaşı beach with a sandbank of 1 km also allows the opportunity for those who don't know how to swim to be able to surf because the lake doesn't get deep for a long distance.

Scuba Diving: The Beysehir Lake is the 2nd largest freshwater lake in Turkey. Its deepest part is 12 meters deep and you can enjoy scuba diving with your equipment and discover the creatures that live in fresh water. The bays of the Beysehir Lake are very clean and suitable for diving. The bottom of the fresh water lake is very clear and incredibly fascinating; therefore you can shoot with your underwater camera and prepare documentaries. The Municipality established a professional Underwater Search and Rescue Team comprising of the Municipality. The underwater team also made discovery tours in the depth of the lake.

Mountaineering and Trekking: You can go on trekking along the lake in Beysehir and watch the sunset. You can climb to the Yakamanastir picnic area in a short time and eat meat and fish in this mountain restaurant. You can also have a picnic by the cedar tree if you have your own food with you. The place between Dumanlı-İslibucak-Kurucuova is ideal for taking walks with their tracks that don't make you tired, clean air and forests. You can take walks by using the forest roads there. There are people who practice transhumance here during the summer. You can taste the natural cheese and yoghurt made by these people who practice transhumance and rest there.

Amateur Fishing: Beysehir hosts the luckiest living creatures in the world. The water in the lake is one of the rare resources that can be used as drinking water. The carps living in the lake live in the cleanest water in the world. Perhaps that is the reason why they are so tasty. It is also possible to enjoy amateur fishing by the lake side since the beginning of April until the time when the weather gets cold. It is possible to catch mostly carp, tench and dace by the shore. The west coasts of the shore are more suitable for bass. On the other hand, you have a higher chance to catch all kinds of fish from the islands.

Photo Safari and Tourism Photography: Beysehir is a significant address for those who love photography. The Beysehir Village is accepted as the place where the second best sunset photos are taken and each year thousands of domestic and foreign tourists come to the district. Beysehir has all necessary natural and cultural objects including light, which are necessary for art of photography.

Horse Races: Horse races have a significant place in the culture of Beysehir. The district has a historical connection with amblers and the Horse Riding Center of the Beysehir Municipality was established with the initiative of the Municipality. The Beysehir Village festival held each year in the Soğla locality of Beysehir hosts the race of amblers. People from all parts of Turkey who have devoted themselves to this sport come together in Beysehir each year. The district has areas that are very suitable for horse races and the area where the races are organized is of 1 km distance to the city center.

Off-Road: The matchless nature of Beysehir is suitable for off-road organizations held with 4x4 terrain vehicles, held in the nature under difficult conditions. You can easily discover the nature and increase your level of adrenaline with 4x4 terrain vehicles in Beysehir.

Lovers of Off Road meet in the club named Bey Off-Road 42, which is established in Beysehir. The Bey Off-Road club hosted many organizations since the day it was founded and was able to bring together many people who loved adventure. They make shows in special tracks and the in the nature.

Swimming: The Beysehir lake, which is the third largest lake of Turkey, which is also a fresh water lake allows the opportunity for different water sports in addition to its magnificent view. The bays of the Beysehir Lake are clean and suitable for swimming. All natural environments exist in order to exercise water sports by the lake. The sides of the lake are not very deep and the water is clean and all of these make swimming enjoyable in the lake. There are beach areas where people can swim and enjoy water sports in the district center, by the lake.

Mountain Bicycle: Beysehir is a natural track for mountain bicycling. When you set out to discover Beysehir, you will see the highlands, mountains, forests, and historical areas of Beysehir, you will forget your tiredness and will be unable to hide your admiration for the beautiful scenes you come across. You will sometimes come across the culture of the people in the region and sometimes witness history with the magnificent view of the Beysehir Lake. The ecotourism value schedule attached refers to the areas suitable for mountain bicycling.

Mountain Board: Mainboards, which can be used in all kinds of grounds with their 10-inch wheels and epoxy boards give adrenaline to their ever-increasing fans in the world. The board is similar to a snowboard, it has 4 wheels and can be used on all grounds except for snow. Mountain Boards can be used on earth, stone and asphalt grounds and its users can enjoy the view and live extreme levels of excitement and this board has also attracted the attention of people in Beysehir. The foreign pilots that came to Turkey within the scope of the first paragliding festival organized by Beysehir Municipality also enjoyed the ski sport called mountain board in the takeoff flight track located at the peak of the Yaka Monastery. [4].

Speleology: Caves are clearances and spaces underground, which have connection with the surface and allow at least one person to be able to get inside by crawling. Beysehir is among the richest areas in Turkey in terms of caves. The researches conducted have revealed that there are 39 caves in Beysehir. Also, approximately 45 caves were discovered around Beysehir [5]. The majority of these caves are located in a basin.

III. PRESENTATION OF TOURISM PROFILE IN THE NATIONAL PARK – EFFECTS OF TOURISM – BENEFITS AND MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

Significant conclusions were reached in the research conducted by Güngör and Arslan'ın (2003) about tourism and recreational opportunities in the district of Beysehir and its periphery. Definition of Tourism product assessment criterions of Beysehir (product–market matching) was made. This study is a tourism research technique that establishes a relationship between the product and the market and ranks usage according to their

level of importance or potential. It is the series of criterion that is used to determine which kind of tourism product has higher potential. The method comprises of a product matching table and collection of the tourism product under the below written main headings.

- Activities based on presence of snow,
- Activities based on presence of water,
- Land activities,
- Tours.
- Services.

This stage allows the person having carried out the analysis to assign a numeric value for each tourism product and provides summary information for the area. The below written results have been generated from this analysis:

- Land and water based activities have received the highest point.
- There is lack of transportation with airline and railway.
- It is understood that accommodation facilities are insufficient. However, the area can be used as a point of attraction by using the accommodation facilities in the neighboring cities.
- The number and quality of restaurants are insufficient. Sales of local handicrafts and authentic food are at sufficient levels.
- It has come to light that the region of Beysehir has a many tourism products and potential. These usages are highly significant and have large potential. They have high market value. Activities based on profit in the basic five groups can be implemented in all mountains with Dedegöl, close the region, ranking first. There isn't sufficient infrastructure and investment despite the fact that there is a high potential.
- Potential of activities based on water was very high with the existence of the Beysehir lake and the existing brooks around it. It will be possible to generate high income from the tourism market with some simple infrastructure expenditures.
- The land activity potential is quite high with different usage potentials spread to 4 seasons.
- Services are types of use that have high potential in the country in general but could not receive the necessary interest until date. Provision of individual credit opportunities and encouraging investments promises a high potential for the future.
- There is no direct flight to the area although it is close the airports in Antalya, Ankara and Konya. Transportation by commercial or private cars and buses is very easy. There is no railway. Transportation by using bicycles is possible in the district and in its peripheries, however bicycles are not suitable for long distance travels such as an excursion around the lake.
- Contests and festivals that could be organized for promotion of the district will help the area to become a point of attraction. By development of accommodation possibilities in the region, it is

possible to establish film plateaus in the region where the existing historical texture and natural beauties of the region.

- Different methods were analyzed for determination of landscape potential for tourism and recreational use of the area of use and their advantages and disadvantages were compared [3]. Assessment with Touristic and Hotel Management Function

Assessment with Touristic Function Rate; The tourism function rate expresses the accommodation potential that a region can present to the tourists in any time (T) and the relationship with the population in the region. Touristic function ratio is a significant criterion to determine the investment decision. This is due to the fact that this criterion puts forward the relation between tourism and demographic conditions. High or low population in a region affects the tourists that come.

The values that the touristic function ratio can have are as follows:

- Tf (t)=0 :A place with no accommodation potential,
- Tf (t)=less than 1: The status of touristic function is bad and tourists have almost no influence on economic life,
- Tf (t)= less than 10: A weak touristic function,
- Tf (t)=35: The conditions that touristic station must have other than camping in order to be included in classifications,
- Tf (t)=40: Touristic function ratio comprising of the number of beds that should be present in hotels,
- Tf (t)=100: A lively touristic station,
- Tf (t)=greater than 100: An old touristic station or large hunting, winter, thermal tourism stations,
- Tf (t)= ∞ : Places with no accommodation potential [6].

$$Tf (t)= \frac{L.100}{P}$$

Tf (t): Touristic function ratio,

L: Total accommodation potential (number of beds),

P: Continuous population.

It is possible to calculate the touristic function of the Beysehir region according to this formula

(Population and number of beds for 2011 were used)

Tf (t)=179.100/34.741 =0,51. This result leads to the conclusion that the touristic function of the region is bad and that tourists have almost no influence on the economic life of the region.

On addition to the touristic function, it is also necessary to make an assessment by using the hotel management function.

Assessment by Hotel Management Function: When the touristic function ratio is calculated in terms of touristic hotels, the hotel management function rate is calculated and is expressed with Tf (H).

$$Tf (H)= \frac{NL.100}{P}$$

NL: It refers to the number of beds in touristic hotels. This ratio is accepted as 1.78 in metropolitan regions [6].

Hotel management function ratio in Beysehir;

Tf (H) = 80.100/34.741=0,23. This ratio is much lower than the ratio of 1, 78. If this ratio is low in a region and if the efficiency of the existing hotels is low in such a case, this would be a misleading condition. For this reason, it is necessary to calculate the need of number of hotel rooms in the region.

For Beysehir; Ratio of number of beds /number of rooms; 96/179=0, 53

There should be 179/0, 53=337 rooms.

IV. CONCLUSION

New legislation has expanded the amount of property foreign investors can procure, providing one more reason to spend time in Turkey. Another hot market for foreign investors is real estate [7].

There is one UNESCO World Heritage Site (Neolithic Site of Çatalhöyük) and three sites in UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List in Konya (Konya - A Capital of Seljuk Civilisation, Anatolian Seljuk Madrasas and Eşrefoğlu Camii-Beysehir) [8].

In order to form the grounds on which such nature tourism types an ecotourism and plateau tourism would develop, tourism infrastructure related to activities of the these types shall be evolved with qualities increased [9].

Tourism sector may cause to the used resources to get damaged as it could contribute to maintenance, asset of environmental value it sold as touristic product. Before touristic products are eradicated by public authorities, nongovernmental organizations and tourism operators, they should be maintained and their usage should be planned. This practice is of vital importance for sustainable tourism. A great many of studies were conducted for sustainable tourism but the importance of local touristic assets for sustainable tourism was not emphasized much. Research data was obtained by asking the poll questions prepared related to these assets to tourists who came to Beysehir [10].

337 hotel rooms are needed in Beysehir for year 2012. Since only 42 of these 337 rooms are present, it has been observed that currently Beysehir needs 295 hotel rooms. Even if the facilities holding municipal certificates are included in these calculations, still 241 rooms and 482 beds are needed. This research has been conducted for a general tourism potential, however ecotourists are also included within the scope of tourism statistics. However, since ecotourists are within the scope of a special area of interest, the accommodation need can be assessed not only has hotels but also as hostels, caravan, camping etc.

One of the most important reasons why people visit the National Park in the Beysehir Lake is to spend their free time and the interest people have for natural resources. The visitors that come often request guides and maps that include directions and instructions about places of interest and the points of attraction. The visitors come because the region is “a place known and recognized” and factors such as clean air, natural and cultural values,

opportunities for walking, climbing, watching views etc. also influence people to come and visit the area.

The main ecotourism activities held during visits made to the National Park of Beysehir Lake include trekking, photo shooting and visiting historical and cultural areas. The majority of visitors wish to visit the area again and recommend the area to others.

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