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Derleme Makalesi

EXAMINATION OF CULTURAL ROUTES OF TURKEY IN THE CONTEXT OF DESTINATION MARKETING WITH PEST ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Values such as historical and cultural heritage and natural beauties belonging to a destination are very important in terms of identity creation and marketing of destinations. The attractiveness of these values, which are in the tourism sector, which is developing with a rapidly increasing momentum today, makes great contributions to the destinations. In addition, effective destination marketing provides an economic contribution to the region. In this context, Turkey, which is an important touristic destination with its rich tourism diversity, has important cultural routes. The aim of the study is to examine the cultural routes in Turkey in terms of political, economic, social and technological opportunities with PEST Analysis. According to the results of the evaluation, it has been determined that Turkey has a great potential in terms of cultural routes where millions of visitors walk every year in the world, but sufficient steps have not been taken in terms of tourism and destination marketing. In addition, it was concluded that the routes could not be protected due to the inadequacy of legal regulations and cooperation projects could not be made between the regions, and various suggestions were presented in this direction.

Keywords: *Touristic Destination, Destination Marketing, Cultural Routes, PEST Analysis, Turkey.*

DESTİNASYON PAZARLAMASI BAĞLAMINDA TÜRKİYE’NİN KÜLTÜREL ROTALARININ PEST ANALİZİ İLE İNCELENMESİ

Öz

Bir destinasyona ait tarihi ve kültürel miras, doğal güzellikler gibi değerler, destinasyonların kimlik oluşturması ve pazarlaması açısından oldukça önemlidir. Günümüzde hızla artan bir ivme ile gelişen turizm sektöründe yer alan bu değerlerin çekiciliği destinasyonlara büyük katkı sağlamaktadır. Ayrıca etkin destinasyon pazarlaması bölgeye ekonomik katkı sağlamaktadır. Bu bağlamda zengin turizm çeşitliliği ile önemli bir

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turistik destinasyon olan Türkiye, önemli kültürel rotalara sahiptir. Çalışmanın amacını Türkiye'deki kültürel rotaların siyasi, ekonomik, sosyal ve teknolojik imkanlar açısından PEST Analizi ile incelenmesi oluşturmaktadır. Değerlendirme sonuçlarına göre, dünyada her yıl milyonlarca ziyaretçinin yürüdüğü kültürel rotalar açısından Türkiye'nin büyük bir potansiyele sahip olduğu ancak turizm ve destinasyon pazarlaması açısından yeterli adımların atılmadığı belirlenmiştir. Ayrıca yasal düzenlemelerin yetersizliği nedeniyle güzergâhların korunamadığı ve bölgeler arası işbirliği projelerinin yapılamadığı sonucuna varılmış ve bu doğrultuda çeşitli öneriler sunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Turistik Destinasyon, Destinasyon Pazarlaması, Kültürel Rotalar, PEST Analizi, Türkiye.*

INTRODUCTION

The historical and cultural attractions of destinations have their own unique value. It is thought that the historical and cultural attractions in the tourism industry, which is developing rapidly with each passing day, have important contributions to the destination economically. Culture is one of the most important resources of tourism. Especially, developments in mass media and transportation vehicles fuel people's curiosity to see, learn and recognize different cultures, and this situation, together with the demand for entertainment and relaxation, causes the development of tourism and the strengthening of the relationship between culture and tourism (Emekli, 2006, p. 51).

"Cultural routes" are being created in order to increase awareness of the importance of historical values and to ensure the sustainability of these areas, with the impact of efforts to protect historical environments on an international and national scale, increasing environmental awareness, especially the spread of the concept of sustainable development in all areas, and the development of "sustainability" approaches within each sector. (Keleş Eriçok, 2019, p. 174). The cultural route approach, which started in Europe and is increasingly popular in the world, can be interpreted as a very important opportunity for the development of tourism in developing countries or underdeveloped regions with valuable cultural or natural resources. In addition, networks developed with a holistic approach between these values can contribute to the success of conservation planning as they create connectivity. For example, there are many protected areas (Xhantos-Letoon World Heritage Site, Kaş-Kekova Special Environmental Protection Area, Patara Special Environmental Protection Area, Beydağları National Park, urban protected areas, archaeological sites, and natural sites) on the Lycian road (Görmüş, 2017, p. 129).

It is possible to manage and market destinations like businesses. Having hosted many civilizations, Turkey has a rich potential in terms of natural and cultural values and is one of the most important development dynamics in terms of tourism potential. One of the most basic studies in destination marketing is PEST Analysis (political, economic, social, and technological developments) for the region. For example, PEST Analysis can be done by examining the political,

economic, social and technological possibilities of a destination (Dülgaroğlu, Aydemir & Avcıkurt, 2019). PEST Analysis is conducted to specify the essential and immediate action by examining the changes and developments in economic, political, technological and social factors and to reveal who and what these factors impact negatively or positively (Kotler, 2008).

Literatürde kültürel rotaları inceleyen çeşitli çalışmalar mevcuttur. Gül vd., (2020) CBS ortamında kültür rotalarının belirlenmesi, Gül ve Yılmaz (2020) yerel kalkınmanın bir aracı olarak kültür turizmi ve kültür rotaları, Keleş Eriçok (2019) culture route proposal in the Van Lake basin, Görmüş (2017) kültürel peyzaj değerlerini korumak için yeni bir yaklaşım olarak kültürel rotalar üzerine araştırmalar gerçekleştirmiştir. Kültürel rotaların destinasyon pazarlaması bağlamında daha önce incelenmemiş olması dolayısıyla alana literatürdeki boşluğu doldurması önemli olarak varsayılmaktadır.

There are various studies examining cultural routes in the literature. Gül et al., (2020) examined determination of cultural routes in GIS environment, Gül and Yılmaz (2020) studied cultural tourism and cultural routes as a tool of local development, Keleş Eriçok (2019) searched culture route proposal in the Van Lake basin, Görmüş (2017) has conducted research on cultural routes as a new approach to preserve cultural landscape values. Since cultural routes have not been examined in the context of destination marketing before, it is assumed that it is important for the field to fill the gap in the literature. The aim of the study is to evaluate the potential of cultural routes in Turkey in the context of destination marketing with national and regional tourism strategies and to present the advantageous and disadvantageous situations of cultural routes by presenting economic, political, technological, and social analysis. In this direction, it is to present a discussion on how the negative aspects can be improved and developed by emphasizing the positive aspects. Thanks to the PEST analysis, a comprehensive situation analysis of the destinations can be presented. In the literature, there has been no study in which cultural routes are studied in the context of destination marketing, and it is assumed that the study will contribute to the field.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Destination Marketing

Tourism destinations are geographical areas that can be attractive to tourists from within the country or from different countries and where all the attractions are offered to contribute to tourism (Baran and Batman, 2013). It is possible to list the elements necessary to talk about a tourism destination as follows (Ersun & Arslan, 2011, p. 232):

- It must have the same culture, climate, and natural conditions,
- It should contain natural and cultural riches,

- There should be activities related to the destination that can be offered to customers,
- It must have accommodation, nutrition, communication, and transportation facilities,
- It should consist of touristic attraction centers offered by corporate services,
- There must be regions with a certain brand and image.

A destination is a designated place for travel or a place a tourist wishes to travel to; marketing, on the other hand, can be defined as a process that satisfies needs and wants through exchange. In this context, it is possible to say that destination marketing is the process of determining and satisfying the needs and wishes of tourists who want to travel to a certain place (Sharma, 2013, p. 20). Destination marketing, which is expressed as place marketing, is defined as 'the whole of the marketing activities carried out to show an area, a region or a place to individuals or institutions and organizations that it is attractive, suitable and special' (Dacko, 2008, p. 389).

Most of the tourism activities take part in destinations and the destination has been the basic unit of analysis in tourism. Nevertheless, destination marketing is a complex subject that requires extensive, holistic, and systematic approach to be understood (Wang, 2011, p. 1). Destination marketing aims to make the natural and cultural characteristics of a region and the identity of the destination more attractive with effective communication channels for potential visitors (Rainisto, 2003, p. 12). However, among the other purposes of destination marketing are not only increasing the number of tourists in the region, but also facilitating the development of tourism and increasing its sustainability (Okumus et al., 2007, p. 254).

Destination marketing is a form of management that ensures that the right decisions are made by making all kinds of analyzes and examinations in line with tourism supply and demand, with the aim of maximizing the profits of a destination and presenting the existing touristic products in the target markets. There are two main purposes here. The first purpose is to determine a target market suitable for the resources owned. The second purpose is -after the target market is determined- the creation of marketing and management strategies that will affect the preference process of consumers in this market (İlgaz, 2014, p. 14).

Destination marketing encompasses consecutive activities; product development, pricing, target market selection, effective distribution channels, product presentation, etc. The quality service produced at the destination is an important factor that should not be ignored, as it increases visitor satisfaction. Activities for destination marketing empower the competitiveness of the

destination, and raise the awareness of the region and increase the demand (Yavuz & Karabağ, 2007, p. 16).

In destination marketing studies, many institutions/organizations have duties and activities must be carried out for a common purpose. For this purpose, it is important for the institutions/organizations responsible for destination marketing to have a common purpose, to ensure and maintain the flow of tourists coming to the region. In addition, institutions/organizations belonging to the state and private sector should be in cooperation (Ülker, 2010, p. 27).

Cultural Routes in Turkey

Cultural route can be defined as a local, regional or national scale transportation corridor that has been created nowadays or has actually been used in a certain period of history, carries cultural and / or natural heritage elements on it and gains its importance thanks to this heritage, which can be developed for purposes such as protection, rural development and tourism development (ÇEKÜL, 2015, p.12). Cultural routes, one of the best methods in the presentation of cultural heritage, represent cultural dialogue between regions where the density and diversity of cultural heritage has increased. Cultural routes are a very important tool in terms of discovering, recognizing, protecting and sustaining the heritage values of the region with walking experience and contributing to the region in terms of rural development (Üstündağ & Özer, 2021, p. 429).

When cultural routes are used for tourism purposes, they have become one of the alternative tourism types that bring together different activities and attraction centers and create an opportunity to present them to the consumer within the framework of a certain theme. Although the routes vary in terms of distance and area as local, regional or international, they are good touristic products for the development of underdeveloped regions that have resources that can be evaluated in terms of tourism but cannot use these resources (Kervankıran & Çuhadar, 2014).

The work of the Council of Europe, which was the first organization to make the concept of cultural route heard and to work on this subject, in 1960, with the aim of "raising awareness about the important cultural areas of Europe and the inclusion of these areas in the leisure civilization" revealed the idea of rediscovering the European common heritage through travels (Council of Europe, 2002). Considering the years when the concept of cultural route started to be used in Turkey, while it is possible to talk about the existence of only 2 cultural routes, the Lycian Way created in 1999 and the St. Paul Way put into service in 2004, this number has reached 26 today with the opening of various cultural routes. Cultural routes in Turkey are given in Table 1:

Table 1: Local, National and International Routes in Turkey

Cultural Route	Theme / Activity	Recommended Season	Relevant Institution	Level
Abraham's Path	History, faith	Spring	Cultural Routes Society	International
Sultan's Trail	Nature, history	Spring-Summer	Cultural Routes Society	International
Via Egnatia	Culture, peace	Summer	Cultural Routes Society	International
Lycian Way	Coast, cycling	Spring	Cultural Routes Society	National
St. Paul Trail	Nature, history, horseback riding	Spring-Summer-Autumn	Cultural Routes Society	National
Evliya Çelebi Way	History, cycling, horseback riding	Autumn	Cultural Routes Society	National
Carian Trail	Coast, history	Spring	Cultural Routes Society	National
The Kaçkar	Nature	Summer	Cultural Routes Society	National
Phrygian Way	History, cycling	Autumn	Cultural Routes Society	National
Hittite Trail	History, cycling	Spring	Cultural Routes Society	National
Gastronomy Route	Cycling	Autumn	Cultural Routes Society	National
Mount Ararat Trails	Nature	Summer	Cultural Routes Society	National
Küre Mountains Trail	Nature	Autumn	Cultural Routes Society	National
Independence Trail	Cycling	Summer	Cultural Routes Society	National
Sarıkamış Trails	Nature, cycling	Spring-Summer-Autumn	Cultural Routes Society	National
Between Two Seas	Cruising	Summer	Cultural Routes Society	National
The Sufi Route	Culture, faith, trekking, cycling	Summer	Cultural Routes Society	National
İdyia Way	History, nature; cycling, trekking	Spring	Cultural Routes Society	National
Yenice Forest Trails	Nature, cycling	Autumn	Cultural Routes Society	National
Fethiye Alternative Trails	Nature, culture and history; cycling, trekking	Spring-Summer-Autumn	Cultural Routes Society	National
Ephesus-Mimas Route	History, olive, vineyard; trekking, cycling	Spring-Summer-Autumn	Cultural Routes Society	National
Thrace Routes	History, nature, faith, culture	Spring-Summer-Autumn	Multi-Stakeholder	Local
Mesopotamia Routes	History, culture, belief, nature, gastronomy	Spring-Summer-Autumn	GAP Regional Development Administration	Local

Mysia Routes	Nature, cycling, trekking, camping	Spring-Summer-Autumn	Bursa Nilufer Municipality	Local
Peninsula Travel Routes	History, nature, trekking, cycling, olive	Spring-Summer-Autumn	Izmir Metropolitan Municipality	Local
Tolerance Way	History, nature, trekking, cycling	Spring-Summer-Autumn	Cultural Routes Society	National

Source: Görmüş, 2017; Cultural Routes Society, 2020.

The Council of Europe cultural routes passing through Turkey can be listed as follows:

1. Jewish Heritage Route
2. Olive Tree Route
3. Thermal Cities Route
4. Iron Curtain Cycle Route
5. European Industrial Heritage Route
6. Ceramic Route.

Kervankıran and Çuhadar (2014) listed the benefits of establishing cultural routes in a region as follows (p. 579);

- They contribute to the economic, social and cultural development of the region and contributes to the improvement of the quality of life.
- They directly or indirectly affect the employment increase of the region positively.
- They increase the attractiveness of the region.
- They help the points on the route gain an identity, image and meaning.
- They are the activity that prolong the stay of tourists coming to the region. The activities of the tourist in the region (accommodation, shopping for local products, etc.) positively affect the economic development of the region.
- They contribute to the development of the infrastructure and service sectors of the region.
- They help to market the villages and towns that do not have an attractiveness on their own.
- They bring together various activities and touristic attractions in the region.

Turkey has plenty of cultural routes that present rich and effective examples of the world's heritage. These routes provide important chances for

sustainable local development with their economic, social, environmental and cultural impacts (Gül & Yılmaz, 2020, p. 1855).

Research Design and Methodology

In this study, descriptive analysis method, one of the qualitative research techniques, was used as a data analysis method. While performing the descriptive analysis, a framework was created for the descriptive analysis, the data were processed according to the thematic framework, the findings were defined and these findings were interpreted (Coşkun, Altunışık, Bayraktaroğlu & Yıldırım, 2015, p. 324). While using descriptive analysis, PEST analysis provided an advantage in terms of comprehensive analysis by revealing political, economic, socio-cultural and technological factors within the scope of the impact of cultural routes on tourism.

In the study, mainly Google Search Engine was used to collect, analyze and synthesize large amount of secondary data obtained from reliable sources such as periodicals, websites and various publications. Then, those with scientific research on the topic were isolated and new information was combined with existing information gleaned from academic research to generate useful findings.

PEST analysis is carried out to analyze the business and its environment from political, economic, social and technological perspectives, to determine the important needs that need to be taken action as soon as possible and to determine the positive or negative effects of the findings obtained as a result of the analysis. This analysis method is accepted as a useful method in determining the environmental factors that the business is affected by in the period it is in (Arabacı, 2010, p. 40). Table 2 shows the elements of the PEST analysis:

Table 2: PEST Analysis

<p>Political</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associations such as local, regional, national or European Union, international legal associations and cooperations, trade restrictions • Laws such as tax and employment conditions • Relationship between the government and the organization • The attitude of the state against monopolization and competition in the industry • Security of destinations and tour routes/Terrorist incidents around the destination • • Crime rates in the region 	<p>Socio-cultural</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in culture and values • Changes in life-style • Work and leisure habits • Education and health • Demographic changes • Income distribution
<p>Economic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total GDP and GDP per Capita • Inflation 	<p>Technological</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment policy of state • Identification of new research initiatives

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consumption expenditures and disposable income• Interest rates• Currency fluctuations and exchange rates• Private venture and foreign investment in the region• Conjuncture• Unemployment status• Energy, transportation, communication and raw material costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New products and patents• Rate of adaptation to new technology• The level of investment of organizations for R&D• Expected development in other industries
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Source: Lynch, 2003, p. 92.

Strategists can determine effective strategies in predicting the future correctly according to the changes in the prediction of the future in political, socio-cultural, economic, technological, etc. issues. Thus, detailed interpretations can be made by considering the political, economic, social and technological analyzes of the sector.

Political Factors

One of the important factors affecting the tourism demand is the political situation in the tourist's own country, in the country he visits, and between these two countries. When examined in terms of political factors, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, local governments, the Cultural Routes Society, universities, research institutions and the private sector continue to work on many (active and passive) cultural routes. On the other hand, there are deficiencies in the legislation on the management and development of cultural routes, protection in archaeological and natural conservation areas, visitor management and signage and expression in the areas. However, the lack of coordination between relevant institutions in the protection of cultural and natural areas is among the situations that negatively affect cultural routes. The lack of decision-making power of local governments, the lack of personnel who are knowledgeable about cultural heritage management and can speak foreign languages, again emerge as politically disadvantageous situations regarding cultural routes.

Due to the Syrian civil war, the image of instability in the southeast of Turkey and the perception of insecurity especially in traveling to these regions (the tour operators' lack of travel insurance to this region) adversely affected the country's tourism (General Directorate of Promotion, 2020).

Economic Factors

Cultural routes have a wide range of benefits, including enabling the development of new tourism products, economic efficiency and the development of local communities (UNWTO, 2015). The strong tourism sector, which ranks 6th in the world, provides economic growth, job employment and social participation, professional tour operators oriented towards cultural tourism, and the diversity of

accommodation opportunities are among the advantages that Turkey has in this field. Universities' training of young and qualified professionals in the fields of tourism management, hotel management and gastronomy, as well as the fact that universities focus more on intangible cultural heritage studies contribute to the awareness of cultural routes. However, there is a need to increase the budget of the Ministry proportionally to the developed culture and tourism sector. Again, economic fluctuations in the country can affect tourism negatively from time to time. The development of cultural routes of the Tourism Development Agency (TDA) can provide financial resources to a large extent.

The desire of local people (especially women) to participate more in order to generate income from tourism is among the advantageous aspects of Turkey. It is emphasized that through cultural routes, practices such as cultural tourism interaction and dialogue between cultures, protection of historical monuments and places, reducing the harmful effects of mass tourism, reproducing local handicrafts with new themes, and boarding houses with local characteristics can contribute to regional development and the country's economy at a higher rate. (Ugur, 2008, p. 120).

Socio-Cultural Factors

Tourism contributes to the travel of people to different geographical places and to the establishment of social relationships between people who would not otherwise meet. Tourists experience different cultures in the countries they visit in consequence of different cultures, ethnic structures, religious groups, values, lifestyles and languages. When examined from a socio-cultural point of view, it can be stated that Turkey is a very important destination with its tangible and intangible cultural heritage richness, Anatolia's cultural accumulation that has hosted many civilizations, its geographical location and climate. In addition, it has riches such as natural protection areas, diversity of agricultural products, and rich gastronomic culture. The country's 3 products registered in the EU database (Gaziantep baklava, Aydın fig and Malatya apricot), 17 new product applications and the presence of 17 active towns in the Citta Slow network from Turkey increase its socio-cultural importance. On the other hand, Turkey's perception of a sea-sand-sun country (mass tourism), which appeals more to the lower-middle income group, and the relatively low interest in cultural tourism and alternative tourism, restricts it from getting the necessary share from tourism. It is among the disadvantageous situations that local museums have problems such as the urgent need to improve and make them attract the attention of visitors. In addition, the negative impact of climate change (with effects such as flood, drought, temperature increase) on cultural heritage is among the problems that need to be resolved. Improvements to be made in this regard will directly affect the contribution to tourism.

The aging of the village population in Turkey and the decrease due to migration, the lack of a well-equipped population in the local area, the decrease in the village population due to migration due to the fact that the local people do not

take part in the decision-making mechanism on issues that will affect them and the gradual disappearance of intangible cultural heritage practices with adaptation to the modern world reveal socio-cultural weakness. Despite this, Turkey's location, its historical and cultural ties with neighboring countries and its openness to new cultural routes, its rich cultural and tourism heritage has many alternative tourism types such as health/thermal tourism, ecotourism, agro (agricultural) tourism, religious tourism, gastronomic tourism. The fact that it provides opportunities for all types of income groups and that there are many experienced tourism agencies in the field of culture and nature tourism also increases the competitiveness of the country.

Technological Factors

Today, technological factors have greatly influenced the tourism and travel industry. Regarding the technology factor in the context of cultural routes, the fact that natural and cultural heritage was given special importance in the 2020 Presidential program in Turkey, and the establishment of the Tourism Promotion and Development Agency are among the indicators of the importance that the country attaches to tourism. However, the ministry has inclinations to develop cultural routes with the theme of thermal, gastronomy and religious tourism. The increasing interest of local governments and local tourism professionals in the concept of cultural routes provides positive contributions in this direction. However, excessive construction in all areas (roads, bridges, hydroelectric power plants/hotels, holiday villages, summer houses/shopping malls, etc.) can cause negative consequences because of the disappearance of the original characters of towns, villages and archaeological and cultural heritage. By preventing this situation in line with the developing technology, it can be ensured that tourism can operate more effectively.

CONCLUSION

There are many destinations in the world with various attractions. Effective destination marketing plans are required in order to differentiate these destinations among their similars. In this way, tourists can have experiences specific to that place. Because it is aimed to get a share for the tourism market with the different services offered to the tourists in the destination places.

Cultural routes, which are generally created by combining the paths, ancient areas and natural beauties in rural areas, are the common meeting point of both those looking for an isolated holiday away from the crowds and history buffs. Cultural routes present a new perspective to protect cultural heritage as well as natural and cultural values with a holistic approach.

There are 26 cultural routes in Turkey, which has a great potential in terms of cultural routes where millions of visitors walk around the world every year.

However, failure to take adequate steps to preserve and sustain alternative opportunities that make significant contributions to Turkish tourism, especially the Lycian Way and the St. Paul Way, leads to the loss of the world's most beautiful hiking trails with their historical and geographical values. While many countries from Europe to Asia take action on the cultural routes that host millions of visitors every year, Turkey, which experiences crises from time to time in tourism, cannot adequately utilize this unique potential it has. It is observed that the routes cannot be protected due to the inadequacy of legal regulations and cooperation projects cannot be made between the regions. For example, footpaths, forest roads, etc., used by local people today. Considering the Lycian Way, which passes through ancient cities and ancient roads, as a cultural and tourism heritage, and being registered by the regional councils for the protection of cultural assets, it will prevent many destructions that affect the environment and even the cultural remains on this road. A management and maintenance committee should be established under the leadership of the Cultural Routes Association, which was established with the advice of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and the said committee should be responsible for the municipality, forest, culture and tourism, transportation, etc. It should ensure that the maintenance, cleaning and repair works on the Lycian Way are carried out by working in partnership with the relevant local and national public units.

It is very important to benefit from different disciplines while analyzing Turkish tourism. While developing tourism policies, the country's economy and political situation can have important effects on tourism policies. Tourism policies should be developed by considering the factors in different disciplines and the tourism industry should be shaped according to these factors. Accurate analysis of the socioeconomic, socio-political and socio-cultural structures of the elements that make up all tourism stakeholders will be able to prevent the damages that may be experienced in the tourism industry. It will have an increasing effect on Turkey's tourism revenues, thanks to the emphasis on the cultural aspects of tourism together with the cultural routes. By focusing on the cultural aspect of tourism, tourism stakeholders will both contribute to the preservation of historical and cultural assets, and increase awareness in the protection of these assets, increasing their income in terms of income. Accordingly, a successful destination marketing process can be realized. In this context, recommendations for the sector are presented below:

- Implementation actors should be determined and an action plan should be prepared.
- Information meetings should be held with the locals.
- Visitor management strategies should be established.
- Promotional strategies should be created.

• Promotional strategies should be realized through printed materials, website and social media infrastructure application.

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