

Promoting Sustainable Tourism in Coastal Cities and Their Hinterland : The Case of Turkey's Bodrum Peninsula

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout the world, coastal zones provide the ideal conditions for housing, recreation, agriculture, industry, transport and communications, and, consequently, socio-economic development has been more rapid in coastal zones than in any other geographic part of the world (van der Plas, 1993). This has, however, generated increasing friction between the natural dynamics of coastal zones and the various demands of the humans who exploit them. Coastal use has become the subject of conflicting claims from multiple user groups, with many incompatible uses and large vested interests at stake. Coastal zone management is thus fraught with difficulties. Some of the conflicts that emerge in the coastal zones of the world are resolved through the operation of the market. For others, there is no mechanism through which resolution can be found, and so conflict persists. The popular tourist destination of the Bodrum Peninsula in Turkey is thus not alone in facing ongoing conflict and difficulties in the resolution of complex issues in coastal development.

Integrated coastal zone management development on the Bodrum Peninsula is urgently needed because at present the zone is being fundamentally altered. Land use characteristics have been greatly modified and continue to change. In relation to this, environmental quality has also changed.

Turkey, in general, is becoming more and more important as favourite holiday destination for Western and Northern European tourists. Prices are low, and Turkey still offers rather unspoiled beaches, beautiful natural landscapes and fascinating historical sites. Among these resorts, the Bodrum Peninsula has become one of the most important. Located at the juncture of the Aegean and the Mediterranean Seas, the region has experienced a burst of growth in tourism over the last 10 years. These tourist areas are mainly concentrated along a narrow coastal belt, where recent developments have resulted in significant changes in the natural and cultural landscape.

As a consequence of the seasonality of the tourist industry on the peninsula, the population explodes annually from its permanent 57,000 inhabitants in the winter to approximately 350,000 residents during the peak summer season. Many tourists come to enjoy the beaches and the sun as well as the nightly entertainment, which is fast becoming a trademark of Bodrum. This rapid increase in population creates enormous pressure on the existing physical and social infrastructure. While the limited capacity of the physical

infrastructure is sufficient for the resident population, it becomes largely inadequate during the peak tourist season.

Tourism development on the peninsula is concentrated in the city of Bodrum itself and its hinterland. In the early 1970's, before the development of the tourism industry, people migrated from Bodrum because of its then high level of unemployment. Agriculture was unable to meet the basic needs of families. However, with the development of tourism, a reverse in this migration pattern has occurred; tourist development has given many farmers the opportunity to sell their land for tourism purposes and to change their occupation from farmer to employee within the tourism sector. Nevertheless, there is still a labour shortage, and labour for the construction of houses and for the hospitality industry must be recruited from far away towns such as the cities in Eastern Turkey.

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF INTEGRATED COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT

In order to cope with this situation and to ameliorate its worsening trend, it is necessary to approach the conflict situation of environment versus man on Bodrum Peninsula through the concept of sustainable tourism within a planning framework of integrated coastal zone management. As a basis of evaluation of the existing planning system and as a reference point for any new approaches to management, a definition of integrated coastal zone management can be formulated specifically for Bodrum Peninsula as:

A stakeholder process for coastal resource management consisting of the legal and institutional framework to ensure that development planning and management integrates environmental and social goals, with the participation of those involved to achieve a sustained yield of economic and environmental services from the coastal zone.¹

Integrated coastal zone management attempts to resolve land-use conflicts on one hand and to protect coastal environmental resources on the other. (See Figure 1 for a summary of the factors affecting environmental impacts in Bodrum.) Balancing the interests of various development sectors (horizontal integration) with those of different institutions in society (national government, local authorities, the private sector and NGOs via vertical integration) is a key element of successful integrated coastal zone management.

Integrated coastal zone management gives important roles to specialized agencies, both at national and local government levels, to research institutions, to users and owners of the coastal zone and to the general public. The key to success is incorporating the long-term interests of as large number of stakeholders as possible (Sorensen and McCreary, 1990).

¹The basic elements of this definition are:

- The safeguarding of resources for subsequent generations;
- The assurance that integrated coastal zone management is a stakeholder process;
- The consideration of both environmental and economic goals;
- The consideration of both planning and ongoing management; and
- The institutionalization of coastal zone management in existing organizations and laws.