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Determination of Demands and Trends of Visitors for the Potential of Ecotourism of Isparta Egirdir and Surrounding

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Abstract

Ecotourism including respectful and ecological-centered approach to nature is a developing phenomenon that came up frequently in recent years in our country and the World. However, considerable problems and some uncertainties are seen on legal, administrative, planning, designing, monitoring and inspectional issues in terms of content of the concept and application. Turkey is a quite rich country in terms of natural and cultural values, tourism supply and tourism diversity. One of the most important potential of this richness is Isparta region. The aim of this study is presenting user profile, natural resources, conceptual approach, demands and trends in ecotourism activities with respect to natural resources belongs to Isparta Egirdir city.

Keywords: Ecotourism; Demands and Trends; Egirdir

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1. Introduction

Plenty of sectors may play significant role for the development and the improvement of a region or a country. At the same time, some sectors might be more important than others by playing leading role regarding to features owned by such places. Especially, tourism sector plays important role by making contribution to social and economic development of the region or the country. Tourism is accepted as smokeless industry which strengthens quality of life and communication in international arena as well as economic welfare of a society and makes socio-cultural exchanges possible [1].

As the concept of “sustainability” reflected to all areas, which is the main topic discussed in the World in recent years, tourism too has been started to be approached in this context. Researches and scientific resources also show that the main theme of 21st century tourism will be efficient and stably use of natural and cultural resources. In 1992, in the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro, emphasizing on sustainable development, an action program had been revealed by signing “Agenda 21” at the end of the conference by 182 countries including Turkey. Here, sustainability as a goal was defined as protection of nature and cultural heritage in all social formations and emphasizing on economic activities. In the program, sustainable development is discussed with all political fields important and fight against poverty, population policy, trade, environment, climate and energy policy, land policy, important findings on technologic and financial cooperation were examined. Although tourism was not mentioned directly in Agenda 21, the protection of ecological, cultural and social environment with the concept of “sustainability” had been thought as a recipe for tourism policy [2].

Sustainable tourism is defined as a tourism which protects and beautifies natural, cultural and social resources and supports economic development in a positive and moderate way. The main goal for the development of sustainable tourism is economic development and protection of natural values as a result of tourism activities. Even though it is thought that sustainable tourism is a synonym for alternative tourism or ecologic (eco) tourism, actually ecologic tourism is a component of sustainable tourism. Alternative tourism, in general, is to evaluate tourism alternatives in order to remove demand congestion in tourism except sun and sea tourism [2].

A sustainable tourism is possible with existence of human and nature together. Main approach is not to minimize human’s effect on natural environment, but to maximize the effect of natural environment on human beings.

Today, as a result of high living standards in parallel with changes in socio-economic and cultural circumstances, types of sustainable tourism have been diversified and called such as sport tourism, mountaineering tourism, tableland tourism, ECOTOURISM, health tourism, congress tourism, nature tourism and culture tourism [3].

Since ecotourism is a type of tourism that needs to be considered together with ecological structure in large areas, avoiding interventions which will ruin their balances is the main objection. In ecotourism, in contrast with mass tourism, to reduce the number of tourists, to spread the tourism throughout the year, to lessen the pressure

done to the natural environment, to make a plan not for fixing the damage but to prevent it and to protect long-term economic interest are more at the forefront. Making people travel as individuals or small groups to unspoiled natural areas for the purpose of learning local residents' life through experience can be made into real by ecotourism tours. Hence, thanks to controlled tours, natural deterioration is prevented and local community makes money [4].

According to WTO, the aims of ecotourism are [5];

- Minimizing the damage given by tourism to natural and traditional environment
- Giving education to tourists and local people for the protection of nature and traditional socio-cultural environment
- Making the tourism encourage as a responsible trade that covers the needs of local people and develops in cooperation with local government and public
- Allocating resources for the management of the (natural and socio-cultural) areas under protection
- Supporting long-term monitoring and evaluation programs in order to minimize the negative effect of tourism for socio-cultural and natural environment
- Making the tourism develop as contributing the livelihood of local population
- Making the tourism develop as increasing the social and environmental capacity of the region
- Doing infrastructure investment in tourism which is environment-friendly, being together with natural and socio-cultural life and protecting the local flora and wild life.

Particularly, ecotourism is the most important subcomponent of sustainable tourism due to being nature-oriented and caring the natural and cultural resources [6, 7]. Ecotourism, which had been started accelerating in 1970's, thought as a new solution because the interest of environmental protection movements and increasing the negative results caused by tourism. As a result of emergence of discomforts related to mass tourism and increasing the environmental interest, less developed countries especially adopted ecotourism as a tool for both conservation and succeeding the development goals [8].

But according to some people, ecotourism came up as an enlargement activity of tourism market and then developed [9, 10, 11]. Developments related mass tourism, environmental problems and alternative tourism enabled ecotourism to be discussed in academic field as well. According to UNEP's (United Nations Environment Program) research, ecotourism is one of the fastest growing stages of tourism industry. According to a research done by WTO in 1997, the nature trips, admitted as a form of ecotourism, covers 7% of whole tourism expenses. According to World Resource Institute (WRI), while average annual growth rate of overall tourism was 4% in 1990s, this rate was 30-40% in nature trips. Similarly, WTO indicates the annual growth rate of travel expenses in ecotourism as 20% [12].

Continuously developing ecotourism trend in the world has been emerging as an important phenomenon and becoming popular day by day particularly in protected areas. Although discourse about the concept of ecotourism is very well and attractive which didn't gain clarity in terms of content, it can be said that the

probability of making it happen is really low especially in protected areas. Because of this, the content and scope of ecotourism phenomenon has to be revealed and understood well and needed to be clarified the issue where and why it will be done [3].

In this research, current situation analyses in terms of ecotourism had been done and a survey study had been realized to determine the view of ecotourism, demands and priorities of visitors/respondents in these fields. According to survey results, suggestions had been made to the local administrators in line with demands of visitors/respondents in the region about ecotourism activities.

2. Material and Method

2.1. Material

2.1.1. Development of Tourism in Egirdir and Surroundings

2.1.1.1. Resource Values

Isparta city located at the West Toros part of Mediterranean Region has incredible beauties with its forests, mountains, vegetation cover, wild life, caves and tablelands as well as its great lakes such as Egirdir, Burdur and Beysehir. It is in a very strategic location in terms of domestic and foreign tourism and especially ecotourism due to having features such as being close to important tourism regions Mediterranean and Aegean, being on the route, being as a position of backyard of Antalya the tourism center and embodying a wide variety of prehistoric civilizations, having regional attraction centers [13].

Egirdir region in Isparta is very important location for tourism. The most significant resource value of Egirdir region is Egirdir Lake which is 4th largest Lake of Turkey, with 487 square km. The altitude of Egirdir Lake is 917 meter and it has an average depth of 10-12 m. The deepest point of the lake is 16.5 m. While greatest distance from North to South is 50 km, the greatest distance from East to West varies between 3 and 15 km. Partially smaller part named as Hoyran stands in North, larger part in the South is called as Egirdir. Egirdir Lake is the second biggest fresh water lake, which also covers partly the drinking water needs of Isparta [14].

There are two small islands in the lake. One of them is Can Ada and the other one is Yesil (Nis) Ada. Can Ada which doesn't have any settlement, is used as only picnic area. Yesil Ada has pensions, hotels and fish restaurants. Egirdir Lake has so many features in terms of drinking water, fish farming, irrigation water, recreation and landscaping as well as sportive tourism activities such as swimming, sailing, and surfing.

Water area surrounded by maximum water elevation of Egirdir Lake is determined as "1st grade natural protected area". 300 meter area starting from maximum water elevation is admitted as "3rd grade natural protected area". Egirdir Lake is in the list of "A Grade Wetland Area" [15]

In the Basin of Egirdir Lake, there are Kovada Lake National Park and Gelincik Mountain Natural Park. Kovada Lake which is quite rich in terms of flora and fauna has important potential for open area sports.

Furthermore, artificial “Kovada Canal” that connects Egirdir and Kovada Lakes to each other carries out the agricultural irrigation of the region [16]. Gelincik Mountain Natural Park, in fact has rich opportunities for excursion use areas, hiking, paragliding and mountain climbing [17].

Kasnak Oak(*quercusvolcanico*) Natural Protection Area where is the unique place in our country in terms of including oldest and so many Kasnak Oaks which is a significant endemic type, is another resource value. However, Epigraphic Canyon Nature Park, Kızıldag and Beysehir Lake National Parksare the other protected areas close the region. Other cultural and natural properties [18] of the region are shown in Table-1 below.

Table 1. Cultural and natural properties [18]

Natural Protected Areas	Eğirdir Lake
	Kovada Lake
	Yeşil Ada
	Can Ada
	Kasnak Oak Nature Protection Area
Archeological Sites	Egirdir Castle
	Ic Kale and Dundar Bey Medrese
	Mallos Antique City
	Prostanna Antique City
	Bagören Church Ruins
	Kaletepe Church Ruins
	SerpilKöyü Antique Path
	Denizatı Mevkii Antique Settlement
Mosques	Ada Mosque
	Aga Mosque
	ÇeşnigirPasaMosque
Graveyard and Tomb	Baba Sultan Tomb

	Seyh Muslihiddin Tomb
	El-Berdai Tomb
	Yeşil Ada Graveyard
	Eğirdir Martyrdom
Medrese (Theological School)	Dündar Bey Medrese
Caravanserai	Egirdir Caravanserai
Hamam (Turkish Bath)	Esmâ Sultan Hamam
	Yeşil Ada Hamam
	EskiHamamRuins
	BarlaHamam
Official Building	Eğirdir Station Premises
Bridge	Barla Ottoman Bridge I
	Barla Ottoman Bridge II
	Barla Roman Bridge
Church	Aya Georgios Church
	Aya Stephanos Church
	Kocapınar Region Church Ruins
Natural Monuments	Senirkent (Barla, Garip)
	Eğirdir (Kırıntı)
Civil Architecture Sample House	10 Houses in Yesil Ada and 32 houses in different parts of Egirdir

2.1.1.2. Current and Potential Situation of Tourism in Egirdir

There are two tourism operational licensed and 7 municipality operational licensed hotels in Egirdir and around. Bed capacity of tourism operational licensed hotels is 200, bed capacity of municipality operational licensed hotels is 568. In addition, there are 19 pensions with a capacity of 313 beds. When accommodation statistics are analyzed between 2005 and 2009, it is seen that while the number of tourist accommodated in the

region was 42269 and 50% of it were foreign tourist in 2005, 26.50% of 26980 total number of tourist accommodated in the region. Besides foreign tourists, the number of local tourists decreased as well [19].

Ecotourism is classified in accordance with various criteria. This criteria varied as vehicles used in tourism (bicycle, balloon, raft, horse), nature of visited place (mountain, tableland, cave), character of the activity (river, hunting, science, trekking). Activities within the scope of ecotourism can be listed as follows. The events that are done and thought that it will be done are quite diverse [20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25]. These activities can be seen in Figure 1.

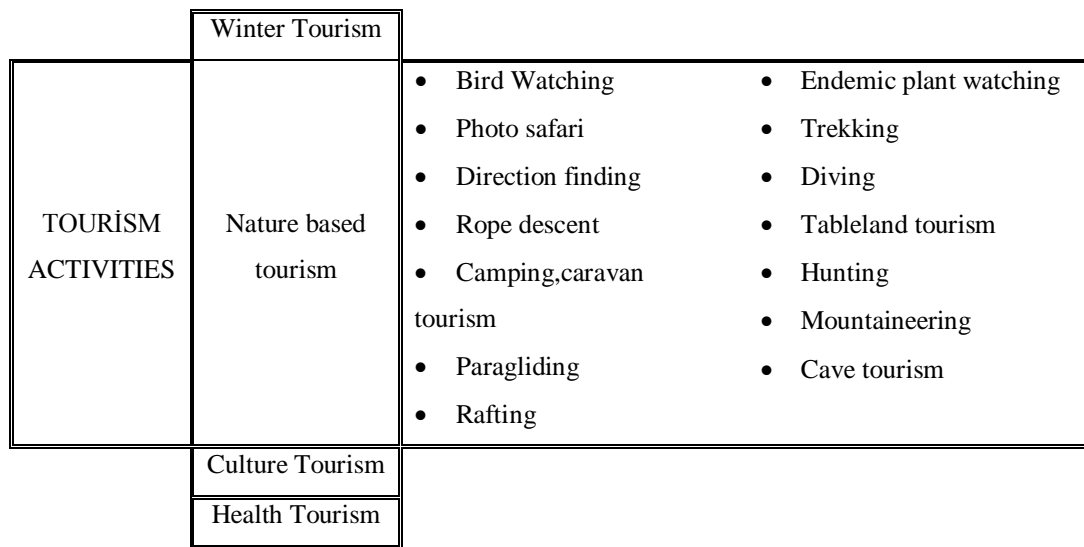


Figure 1: Tourism activities can be experienced in the region

Isparta province is determined as Lakes Region Tourism Development Zone and Ecotourism Zone in the scope of Turkey Tourism Strategy Action Plan (2007-2013) published in Official Gazette in 02.03.2007, with the decision of Higher Planning Council dated 02.03.2007 and numbered 2007/4 [26].

Beside this, Egirdir Lake Management Plan which started in August 2006 and completed in March 2008, is prepared by an expert team including university and other institutions under the chairmanship of Isparta Governorship and in coordination with Provincial Directorate for Environment and Forest and it is approved by National Wetland Commission in March 27, 2008 and entered into force. The issues about the development of tourism were given place in ideal targets and decisions of Management Plan.

The activities determined by Provincial Directorate for Tourism and culture about the target “Ensuring the sustainability of tourism activities in the form of ecotourism, agro tourism and faith tourism around the lake” which is among ideal targets of Egirdir Lake Management Plan [27] is seen below;

- Creating and implementing photo safari and bird watching programs around the lake and implementing them
- Planning and building bird observing towers and viewing platforms and making informative boards
- Creating and implementing nature sports programs in and around the lake,
- Creating and implementing tour plans to the faith tourism centers for local and foreign tourists
- Training the groups dealing with agro tourism and showing them examples.

Studies for the activities mentioned above have begun. For example, in accordance with the decision of Egirdir Lake Management Plan, development of some of current nature sports such as mountaineering, paragliding, and water sports such as swimming, sailing, canoeing, surfing, rowing and triathlon was decided in the meetings held with stakeholders (related institutions, and non-government organizations (nature sports societies)) defined in Plan in order to create and implement Nature Sports Programs in and around the lake between the years 2008 and 2012 [28].

2.2. Method

In this study, demands and trends for ecotourism in Egirdir were identified by putting forth the conceptual framework of ecotourism in the light of local and foreign source data. For this purpose, thoughts of visitors about ecotourism and ecotourism activities were tried to be understood by the survey conducted in the field of study and Isparta city center. The survey was conducted 350 people randomly selected.

3. Research Findings

3.1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

51% of people who took part in survey are male and 49% are female (Table 2).

Table 2. Gender status and the percentage of visitors

Gender Status	Visitors (%)
Male	51
Female	49
Total	100

Looking at the distribution by age group, 20% of visitors are 24 and below age group, 15% in 25-34 age group, 18% in 35-44 age group, 20% in 45-54 age group and 27% in 55 and above age group (Table 3).

Table 3. Distribution according to age group and percentages of visitors

Age Group	Visitors (%)
24 and below	20
25-34	15
35-44	18
45-54	20
55 and above	27
Total	100

Considering the level of education of visitors surveyed, it is observed that undergraduate and above 51%, high school/vocational schools 45%, secondary school 3% and 1% is primary school graduated (Table 4).

Table 4. Level of education and percentages of visitors

Level of Education	Visitors(%)
Undergraduate and above	51
High School / Vocational School	45
Secondary School	3
Primary School	1
Total	100

Occupation of visitors surveyed includes different occupational groups with 30% retired, 19% academician, 16% government officer, 15% university student 11% self-employer and 9% worker (Table 5).

Table 5. Occupational Groups and Percentages of Visitors

Occupational Groups	Visitors (%)
Retired	30
Academician	19
Government Officer	16
University Student	15
Self-Employment	11
Worker	9
Total	100

3.2. Conceptual Approach

65% of the respondents said yes and 35% said no when the question “Do you have any information about ecotourism?” is asked (Table 6).

Table 6. Having information about ecotourism and percentage of visitors

Do you have any information about ecotourism?	Visitors(%)
Yes	65
No	35
Total	100

Visitors answered the question What ecotourism means as 12% tourism that describes the nature and teaches practically, 12% tourism includes tours and activities about nature, 21% environment-friendly tourism, 17% tourism that protects the nature and brings prosperity to local people, 13% tourism for learning different cultures and traditions, 7% tourism that sportive activities are carried out, 5% tourism that offers uncomfortable, simple, modest opportunities, 4% tourism which is in fashion and offers an expensive travel, 9% any activity done in the nature is ecotourism (Table7).

Table 7. Ecotourism definition and percentages of visitors

Definition of Ecotourism	Visitors (%)
Tourism that describes the nature and teaches practically	12
Tourism includes tours and activities about nature	12
Environment-friendly tourism	21
Tourism that protects the nature and brings prosperity to local people	17
Tourism for learning different cultures and traditions	13
Tourism that sportive activities are carried out	7
Tourism that offers uncomfortable, simple, modest opportunities	5
Tourism which is in fashion and offers an expensive travel	4
Any activity done in the nature	9
Total	100

When “What kind of activities could be ecotourism activities?” asked, of visitors 77% gave an answer of trekking, 69% riding bicycle, 62% endemic plant watching, 61% historic and archeological trip, 60% adventure

and sport tourism, 56% photo safari, 55% bird watching, 55% camping, 54% abseiling, 53% paragliding, 53% festivals, 51% watching wild life, 47% sportive hand-line fishing, 44% orienteering, 43% scuba diving, 41% horse riding, 37% yacht tours and 27% hunting activities (Table 8).

Table 8. Suitability in terms of ecotourism activities and percentages according to visitors

Ecotourism Activities	Fits (%)	Partly Fits (%)	Does Not Fit (%)
Trekking	77	14	9
Riding Bicycle	69	24	7
Endemic plant watching	62	27	11
Historic and archeologic trip	61	31	8
Extreme and sport tourism	60	29	11
Photo safari	56	34	10
Bird Watching	55	35	10
Camping	55	40	5
Abseiling	54	39	7
Paragliding	53	32	15
Festivals	53	31	16
Wild Life Watching	51	36	13
Sportive hand-line fishing	47	40	13
Orienteering	44	47	9
Scuba diving	43	45	12
Horse riding	41	49	10
Yacht tours	37	33	30
Hunting	27	25	48

When visitors are asked about the contribution of ecotourism activities to the region, they answered as 24% economic, 20% promotion of the region and increasing of its prestige, 17% protection and improvement of cultural values, 16% improvement of sub-sectors of tourism, 14% protection and improvement of flora and fauna and 9% enhancement of social relations (Table 9).

3.3. Demand and Trends

32% of the visitors stated that they attended activities related ecotourism.

28% of the visitors attended a trekking activity, 13% photography, 10% fishing, 8% historical and archeological trips, 7% nature watching, 7% camping, 6% orienteering, 5% mountaineering, 5% riding bicycle, 5% bird

watching, 3% paragliding and 3% plant watching such that these activities are performed in Egirdir and around (Table 10).

Table 9. Contributions of ecotourism activities to the region according to visitors

Contributions of Ecotourism Activities to the region	Visitors (%)
Economic	24
Promotion of the region and increasing of its prestige	20
Protection and improvement of cultural values	17
Improvement of sub-sectors of tourism	16
Protection and improvement of flora and fauna	14
Enhancement of social relations	9
Total	100

Table10. Tourism activities done in Egirdir by visitors

Tourism Activities in Egirdir	Visitors (%)
Trekking	28
Photography	13
Fishing	10
Historical and Archeological Trips	8
Nature watching	7
Camping	7
Orienteering	6
Mountaineering	5
Riding Bicycle	5
Bird Watching	5
Paragliding	3
Plant watching	3
Total	100

The question of “What are the factors affecting the preference or choice of ecotourism activities” was given to visitors. 15% of them answered learning natural beauties of the region, 13% being alone with the nature, 12% passion for adventure, 10% understanding the richness of the nature, 10% doing activities that they did not

experience before, 8% discover himself/herself, 7% doing recreational activities, 7% having a different holiday, 7% making new friends, 6% having idea about this field and 5% scientific and social curiosity (Table 11).

Table 11. Factors affecting preference and choice of ecotourism activities

Factors affecting preference and choice of ecotourism activities	Visitors (%)
Learning natural beauties of the region	15
Being alone with the nature	13
Passion for adventure	12
Understanding the richness of the nature	10
doing activities that they did not experience before	10
Discover himself/herself	8
doing recreational activities	7
Having a different holiday	7
Making new friends	7
Having idea about this field	6
Scientific and social curiosity	5
Total	100

55% of the visitors who came to Egirdir said that they preferred summer term for visit, 34% spring term, 7% autumn term, 5% winter term (Table 12).

Table 12. Visiting Terms for the activities held in Egirdir by visitors

Visiting Terms	Visitors (%)
Summer term	55
Spring term	34
Autumn term	7
Winter term	5
Total	100

When duration of stay of visitors surveyed is questioned, 37% of them told that they stayed 2-3 days, 25% 1 day, 20% more than 3 days and 15% excursion (Table 13).

Table 13. Duration of stay of visitor in Egirdir

Duration of stay in Egirdir	Visitors (%)
1 day	28
2-3 days	37
More than 3 days	20
Excursion	15
Total	100

26% of the visitors expressed that they spent 201-400 TL, 23% 1-200 TL, 21% 401-600 TL, 15% of 601-800 TL and 15% 800 and above to the question of “What is the average amount of daily spending (transportation, accommodation, food, shopping etc.) for ecotourism activities during your stay in Egirdir?”(Table 14).

Table 14. Average amount of spending of visitors for ecotourism activities in Egirdir

Average amount of spending in Egirdir	Visitors (%)
1-200 TL	23
201-400 TL	26
401-600 TL	21
601-800 TL	15
800TL and above	15
Total	100

Visitors surveyed were asked about where they want to accommodate in Egirdir when they stayed overnight.21% of visitors answered bungalows in forest, 18%country house, 17% pension, 18% hotel, 14% caravan and12% tent (Table 15).

Table 15. Accommodation choices of visitors in Egirdir

Accommodation choices in Egirdir	Visitors (%)
Bungalows in forest	21
Country house	18
Pension	17
Hotel	18
Caravan	14
Tent	12
Total	100

What the factors are that they think important for accommodation was asked to the visitors. 19% of visitors gave an answer to be safe, 17% to be peaceful environment, 16% to be in an environment and appearance that doesn't harm the nature, 16% to be cheap, 13% to have recreational activities, 12% to be places that are managed by local people and culture could be introduced, 6% to be easy for transportation and 3% to be luxury (Table 16).

Table 16. Factors affecting the preference in accommodation

Factors affecting the preference in accommodation	Visitors (%)
To be safe	19
To be peaceful	17
To be in an environment and appearance that doesn't harm the nature,	16
To be cheap	16
To have recreational activities	13
To be places that are managed by local people and culture could be introduced	12
To be easy for transportation	6
To be luxury.	3
Total	100

Answers given to statements by visitors surveyed about ecotourism can be seen in (Table 17).

Table 17. Thoughts of visitors about Egirdir

STATEMENTS	I agree (%)	I partly agree (%)	I disagree (%)
Egirdir and surroundings with natural values is a suitable location for ecotourism.	76	16	8
Transportation possibilities and existing facilities (infrastructure) of Egirdir and around is adequate and appropriate for ecotourism.	22	54	24
Being close to Antalya of Egirdir and around is an advantage.	73	22	5
Appropriate facilities should be made to Egirdir and around.	81	11	8
Environment should be conserved and improved in this region for the development	83	13	4

of ecotourism.			
Tourism that will develop in this region should be compatible with environment.	82	14	4
Development of tourism in this region will not harm the nature.	60	30	10

The question “Do you think that ecotourism activities will have positive effect on the economy and environment of Egirdir” was answered as yes by 95% of visitors and no by 5% (Table 18).

Table 18. The case whether ecotourism contribute the development of Egirdir or not

Ecotourism is helpful for the development of Egirdir.	Visitors (%)
Yes	95
No	5
Total	100

75% of respondents said yes to the question of “Will you involve in any activity voluntarily for ecotourism” and 25% of them said no (Table 19).

Table 19. The case involving in an activity voluntarily for ecotourism

Will you involve in any activity voluntarily for ecotourism?	Visitors (%)
Yes	75
No	25
Total	100

Visitors were asked that what they can do for the improvement of ecotourism in the city. 39% of given answers were showing tourists around, 21% pensioning, 18% making and selling handcrafts, 16% selling agricultural products and 6% cooking and selling local dishes (Table 20).

What your expectations are from the applications of ecotourism was asked to the visitors. 21% of answers were to contribute to social and economic development of the city, 19% to contribute the city and surrounding area to be more beautiful, 16% to contribute to improvement of the tourism in the city. 15% to contribute to the

development of job opportunities, 14% to contribute to the promotion of the city, 11% to earn side income, and 2% no expectations (Table 21).

Table 20. Activities could be done in order to contribute to the improvement of ecotourism

Things to do in order to contribute	Visitors (%)
Showing tourists around	39
Pensioning	21
Handcrafts	18
Agricultural products	16
Cooking Local Dishes	6
Total	100

Table 21. Expectations of visitors from ecotourism

Expectations from ecotourism	Visitors (%)
To contribute to social and economic development of the city	21
To contribute to the city and surrounding area to be more beautiful	19
To contribute to improvement of the tourism in the city	16
To contribute to the development of job opportunities	15
To contribute to the promotion of the city	14
To earn side income	11
No expectation	2
Total	100

When the issues about problems faced in ecotourism activities done in Egirdir and surrounding area or negative circumstances were questioned to the visitors, 55% of them stated that the most important problems are scarcity of ecologic accommodation facilities and being facilities in resting points such as WC, cafe, restaurant insufficient and unclean, 50% lack of touristic facilities and lack of public services (health, communication, social services etc.). 45% of respondents agreed that lack of road signs and information boards is serious problem, 42% absence of various handcrafts and activities reflects cultural identities, 37% lack of guides, 30% having negative perspective towards tourists and lack of informative publications and maps of touristic areas, 25% natural hazard and environmental pollution and transportation problems (rough, unplanned and inadequate roads). While the majority of respondents (%45) do not see lack of informative publications and maps of touristic areas as a problem, they think that the transportation (rough, unplanned and inadequate roads) is partly the problem (Table 22).

Table 22. Problems that visitors faced in Egirdir and negative issues

STATEMENT	I Disagree (%)	I Partly Agree (%)	I Agree (%)
Transportation problems (rough, unplanned and inadequate roads)	30	45	25
Scarcity of ecologic accommodation facilities	20	25	55
Lack of touristic facilities	15	35	50
Natural hazard and environmental pollution	40	35	25
Scarcity of road signs and information boards	20	35	45
Public services (health, communication, social services etc.)	17	33	50
Lack of informative publications and maps of touristic areas	45	25	30
Lack of guide	25	38	37
Having negative perspective towards tourists	35	35	30
Absence of various handcrafts and activities reflects cultural identities	28	30	42
Being facilities in resting points such as WC, cafe, restaurant insufficient and unclean	10	35	55

Visitors surveyed were asked about their thoughts to visit the region again. 85% of the respondents said yes, 15% said no. This indicates that Egirdir was largely liked and preferred by visitors (Table 23).

Table 23. Desire for visiting Egirdir again

Desire for visiting Egirdir again	Visitors (%)
Yes	85
No	15
Total	100

4. Results and Conclusions

It is obvious that how much great potential Lake Egirdir basin carry in terms of tourism with the quality of the natural resources it has and the wide variety of facilities it offers. Egirdir Lake is itself a resource value. Kovada Lake National Park and Gelincik Mountain Nature Park located around the lake increase its value. Nature-based tourism activities such as bird watching, trekking, paragliding, hiking, mountaineering that could be performed

in these areas, water sports such as sailing, canoe, rowing, agricultural tourism possibilities and faith tourism tours shows that how much the region is valuable in terms of tourism.

To evaluate this potential, it is needed to reveal the supply and demand in a correct way.

The results and suggestions obtained in this study which aimed to determine current situation analyses of ecotourism and priorities of Egirdir can be summarized in this way;

- Features of Egirdir such as presence of natural and cultural values and diversity, accessibility and location brought out that it is in a position undiscovered yet and very important in terms of ecotourism supply and marketing product.

- Survey results reveal that Egirdir region is still at the beginning phase in terms of ecotourism. This case causes the emergence of a vast number of weaknesses of the region. Determined weak points for Egirdir can be summarized in this way below;

- Not having point and areal action plan of ecotourism activities
- Not being an organizational structure which will coordinate, organize, monitor and inspect the ecotourism activities done in natural areas
- Not being institutionalization in dialogue and cooperation between ecotourism stakeholders and lack of participation mechanism
- Lack of promotion, advertising and marketing facilities for ecotourism activities
- Being weak on touristic identity and image and lack of finance, investment incentives and entrepreneurship
- Not to be fully detected of ecotourism concept and its frame and lack of information
- Lack of touristic and ecologic accommodation facilities
- Not being products and activities which reflects the identity of the region

- Determining of weak and strong points that Isparta region has, will make processes which will be decided in the future such as managerial policies and strategies, planning and design, implementation, control and monitoring, marketing the product and its dynamics to be done successfully and in a holistic manner possible.

- Having high potential for alternative type of tourism, possibility to obtain side income and job for local people in rural areas, the presence of the academicians and students capacity of Suleyman Demirel University are important opportunities for Egirdir. These opportunities, in the future, will play an important role for the improvement of strong points and achieving the targets.

5. Suggestions

- Regional guides should be trained for ecotourism activities that will be done Egirdir and surroundings. These guides should be specialized on ecotourism.

- Egirdir and surroundings are mostly visited by societies dealing with nature sports and photograph clubs from different parts of Turkey. Through making contact with these clubs and societies, informative, promotional and educational brochures about ecotourism activities in the region can be given them.
- While constructing facilities for ecotourism in the region, there should be take care of being compatible with the nature and environment. In this direction, renewable alternative energy sources could be preferred.
- Low-interest and long-term credit facility should be provided by government to local people who are interested in an ecotourism activity in the region. Thus, new employment opportunities can be created.
- Development of camping tourism can be achieved in case qualified, conforming to standards and having a good infrastructure campsites are established in the region. While establishing campsites, arrangement should be made according to the definitions in the regulation relating to certification and qualification of tourism facilities issued in official gazette dated 21.06.2005 and numbered 25852.
- When “In case of what you give up to come to Egirdir?” is asked, 56.8% of visitors answered that they may give up to visit if environmental problems come out and natural resources run out. As it can be understood from the given answer, the main reason that the region is the tourism attraction center is presence of natural attraction resources and environmental conditions. In case they run out and die, Egirdir and surrounding will lose its attraction. The most important reason to be able to done ecotourism and its existence is natural resources and nature. Therefore, while creating the infrastructure of ecotourism, the concept of sustainable tourism should be taken as a basis.

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