PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABLE MOUNTAIN TOURISM IN PROTECTED AREAS: UTILIZING MOUNTAINEERS' KNOW-HOW FROM ALADAĞLAR

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Planning for Sustainable Mountain Tourism in Protected Areas:

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Aydan Özkil, certify that

- I am the sole author of this thesis and that I have fully acknowledged and documented in my thesis all sources of ideas and words, including digital resources, which have been produced or published by another person or institution;

- this thesis contains no material that has been submitted or accepted for a degree or diploma in any other educational institution;

- this is a true copy of the thesis approved by my advisor and thesis committee at Boğaziçi University, including final revisions required by them.

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ABSTRACT

Planning For Sustainable Mountain Tourism in Protected Areas:

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This thesis presents an alternative view to the typical depiction of tourists in tourism scholarship, which often sees them solely as consumers. Even in cases where tourism is linked to conservation and sustainable development, the tourist is frequently viewed as an individual whose personal interests or lifestyle may not support the collective goal of preserving natural resources and ecosystem functions. In contrast, this study introduces a new perspective, considering tourists as a group capable of impactful collective actions. Although these actions may differ from the traditional image of a 'responsible tourist', they are significant. The focus is on mountaineers, a community with a history of organizing under clubs and evolving into an international network of nature enthusiasts. This thesis examines their collective behaviors and organizational methods through qualitative research, investigating mountaineers' 'codes of conduct' before, during, and following their journeys. The study also examines their reactions to the increasing popularity of nature-based tourism, particularly in the context of Aladağlar National Park, an emerging tourist destination. The thesis argues that mountaineers have actively ‘kept watch’ over and influenced the development of Aladağlar since before its designation as a National Park.

ÖZET

Korunan Alanlarda Sürdürülebilir Dağ Turizminin Planlanması: Aladağlar'da Dağcıların Bilgi Birikiminden Faydalanılması

Bu tez, turizm alanında turistlerin genellikle sadece tüketiciler olarak görüldüğü tipik tasvire alternatif bir bakış açısı sunmaktadır. Turizmin koruma ve sürdürülebilir kalkınma ile ilişkilendirildiği durumlarda bile, turist genellikle doğal kaynakların ve ekosistem işlevlerinin korunması gibi kolektif bir amacı desteklemekten uzak, bireysel ilgi alanlarına veya yaşam tarzına sahip bir kişi olarak görülmektedir. Buna karşın, bu çalışma turistleri etkili kolektif eylemler gerçekleştirebilen bir grup olarak değerlendiren yeni bir perspektif sunmaktadır. Bu tür eylemler 'sorumlu turist' kavramının geleneksel imajından farklı olsa da önemlidirler. Çalışmanın odak noktası, kulüpler altında örgütlenen ve doğa meraklılarının uluslararası bir ağına dönüşen bir topluluk olan dağcılardır. Bu tez, nitel araştırma yoluyla onların kolektif davranışlarını ve organizasyon yöntemlerini incelerken, dağcıların yolculukları öncesinde, sırasında ve sonrasında 'davranış kurallarını' araştırmaktadır. Ayrıca, bir turizm destinasyonu olan Aladağlar Milli Parkı bağlamında, dağcıların doğa temelli turizmin artan popülaritesine olan tepkilerini sorgulamaktadır. Tez, dağcıların Aladağlar'ın Milli Park olarak ilan edilmesinden önce bile aktif olarak alana "göz-kulak" olduklarını ve Aladağlar'ın gelişimini etkilediklerini savunmaktadır.

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and those who dedicated their lives to the conservation of nature

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	Anatolian Mountaineers Union
BAKA	West Mediterranean Development Agency (Batı Akdeniz Kalkınma Ajansı)
BÜDAK	Boğaziçi University Mountaineering Club
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
ÇÜDAK	Çukurova University Mountaineering Club
EU	European Union
FYDP	Five Year Development Plan
GDF	General Directorate of Forestry (Orman Genel Müdürlüğü)
GEEAYK	High Council of Monuments and Antiquities (Gayrimenkul Eski Eserler ve Anıtlar Yüksek Kurulu
GEF	Global Environmental Fund
GEKA	South Aegean Development Agency (Güney Ege Kalkınma Ajansı)
GÜMDAT	Gazi University Faculty of Engineering Mountaineering Club
HÜDDOSK	Hacettepe University Mountaineering and Nature Sports Club
IPROMO	International Programme on Research and Training on Sustainable Management of Mountain Areas
ISTKA	Istanbul Development Agency (Istanbul Kalkınma Ajansı)
İDADİK	Izmir Mountaineering and Nature Sports Specialization Club
İTÜDAK	İstanbul Technical University Mountaineering Club
KUDEB	Protection Implementation Control Bureau (Koruma Uygulama ve Denetim Bürosu)

MDGs	Millenium Development Goals
MoT	Ministry of Tourism
ODTÜ DKSK	Middle East Technical University Mountaineering and Winter Sports Branch
ORDOS	Middle East Search-Rescue, Mountaineering and Outdoor Sports Association
PEB	Pro-Environmental Behaviour
RQ	Research Question
SBINAREK	Institutional Review Board in Social Sciences and Humanities (Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu)
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SPO	State Planning Organization (Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı)
TDF	Turkish Mountaineering Federation
TÖSEK	Tourism Private Sector Council (Turizm Özel Sektör Konseyi)
TTS	Türkiye Tourism Strategy (TTS)
TTYD	Turkish Tourism Investors Association (Türkiye Turizm Yatırımcıları Derneği)
TUGEV	The Tourism Development and Education Foundation (Turizm Geliştirme ve Eğitim Vakfı)
TUROB	The Hotel Association of Türkiye (Türkiye Otelciler Birliği)
TUSEK	Tourism Sector Council (Turizm Sektör Konseyi)
TUYGAR	Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Turizm İşletmeciliği Uygulama ve Araştırma Merkezi

TÜRÇEV	Türkiye Foundation for Environmental Education (Türkiye Çevre Eğitim Vakfı)
TÜRSAB	Association of Turkish Travel Agencies (Türkiye Seyahat Acentaları Birliği)
TVNF	Tourist Association 'Friends of Nature' (Touristenverein 'die Naturfreunde
UDGP	Phased Development Plans (Uzun Devreli Gelişme Planı)
UN	United Nations
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNWTO	The World Tourism Organization
YDK	Yıldızlı Mountaineers Club
YTÜDAK	Yıldız Technical University Mountaineering Club

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a significant economic sector that is heavily dependent on environmental resources and climatic and ecosystem stability. It is a global-scale geophysical force that influences the environment. These views provide an initial grounding for Holden et al.'s (2022) discussion and analysis in their latest paper. The first key aspect of Holden et al.'s understanding of tourism is that it acts as a 'vector' - a conduit or agent - through which human activities interact with and impact the environment. This highlights the role of tourism in various environmental issues, including climate change, pollution, biodiversity loss etc. The second aspect is the recognition of the indeterminate or variable nature of this vector. The outcomes of tourism are not uniform, but vary widely based on different factors related to the social and environmental systems in which tourism operates. These factors can include societal behaviors and attitudes, environmental factors such as local ecological conditions and vulnerabilities, and also institutional frameworks like governance models and policies.

Holden et al. reframe the tourism agenda to focus on nature-positivity and "public responsibility". The core objective is to reduce tourism's carbon footprint. They identify key research themes to help understand and manage this transformation. They also recognize the difficulty of balancing climate change mitigation with the economic and social needs of developing nations. The potential repercussions on equity, should measures to limit tourism (especially air travel) be implemented, are recognized, given the reliance these nations have on tourism. That said, tourism can present significant opportunities for environmental conservation. A

community-oriented approach to tourism can lead to positive economic and scientific outcomes for environmental conservation, particularly when it benefits local and Indigenous populations. Beyond creating job opportunities, revenue from tourism can provide crucial financial and technical support for managing protected areas. This need for financial backing becomes evident when considering the subsidence in nature tourism and subsequent local earning shortfalls due to COVID-19-related restrictions (p.431).

The discussion raises a number of interesting points about the role of both individual action and government intervention in driving environmentally responsible tourism. Given their skepticism about individuals voluntarily adopting nature-positive behaviors, the authors suggest that governmental action might be required to drive changes in behavior. Coercion, in this context, can act as an alternative to relying solely on voluntary behavior change. The Swedish "flygskam" or "flight shame" movement, where people are consciously reducing air travel due to environmental concerns, is discussed as an example of behavioral change, although the authors highlight the necessity for more comprehensive data to fully understand its effectiveness and potential for adoption on a wider, global scale. Otherwise, there is a pressing need for information on new patterns of tourist flows, which could arise from responses to climate realities in various destinations or be due to imposed regulatory limitations. The crux of the discussion appears to center around the necessity of understanding the potential consequences for destinations that might lose tourist dollars due to either climate emergencies or policy-driven changes. The objective perhaps is to illuminate a way forward where such losses, if foreseen, can allow tourism-dependent (local) economies to adjust and adapt to these changed conditions preemptively.

Once again, it is apparent that Holden et al. attribute importance to a sharp 'economic' understanding of potential future scenarios, particularly when dealing with changes in tourism due to climate conditions or policy decisions. This however only minimally interacts with their broader emphasis on degrowing tourism, where economic considerations become intrinsic to environmentally sustainable outcomes. They do reference the concept of a circular economy, but they use it more as a touchpoint than integrating it into their central argument. They outweigh this economic discussion by circling back to the need for behavioral rehabilitation: "the concept of a circular flow is applicable to the enhancing of PEB [Pro-Environmental Behavior] and environmental literacy through nature tourism" (p.440).

While Holden et al. acknowledge the prospect of degrowth and emphasize community-based solutions and local knowledge, they seem to push further into the territory of posthumanism. This perspective dramatically proclaims that current human-nature relationships are dysfunctional or 'broken'. Similarly, their discussion on circular economy concepts comes with a sharp turn, suggesting tourists as 'broken' individuals who need reprogramming. In a way, this creates an image of the typical tourist as a pure 'consumer', resistant to change and deeply in need of personal development, or, more worryingly, immediate healthcare assistance. Their emphasis on the mental health benefits of exposure to natural environments could somewhat portray the tourist as a participant primarily seeking therapeutic benefits.

Vindication of post-humanist ideas is not necessarily out of place, but Holden et al., rather than thoroughly engaging with these well-established areas of research (circular economy, community stewardship, community-driven conservation), regard them more as optional add-ons rather than integral parts of their discussion on tourism. Both the concepts of circular economy and community management are

systemic approaches to sustainability and do not inherently presuppose that tourists are badly behaved consumers. The circular economy model is mainly about creating a closed-loop system where waste is minimized through reusing and recycling, thus greatly reducing the need for consumption of new resources. While it may require changes in consumption behavior, it does not categorize consumers, including tourists, as necessarily pleasure-seeking individuals (Hall et al., 2020). Similarly, community participation is an approach to planning and development that focuses on the use of uniquely placed or community resources to create sustainable outcomes (Mostafanezhad et al., 2016; S. Singh et al., 2003; Tosun, 2000; Tucker, 2016). It addresses the collective actions and responsibilities of communities, and does not single out tourists as persons acting irresponsibly. Instead, it considers tourists as part of the community with a shared responsibility for sustainable development.

Further complications arise when they use the term “cognitive dissonance” to describe a seemingly common aspect of consumer behavior where actions, specifically in the context of tourism, conflict with the awareness of the environmental consequences of those actions. The discovery of this “awareness/attitude gap” (Antimova et al., 2012) likely comes as a letdown for Holden et al., who set out to develop a tourism agenda, with public responsibility and collective action at its keynotes. However, it may be argued that the tourists’ conflicted attitudes are not the real issue here. Since tourists are consumers (of travel services, accommodations, attractions, etc.), the concept of cognitive dissonance applies to them in this capacity.

Ethical tourism has evolved as a dynamic branch of the wave of ethical consumption advocacy that originated in the 1980s. Over the span of his career, Butcher has extensively addressed the implications of consumer politics and the

"cultural turn" in tourism studies (Butcher, 2003, 2014). Again, this development was part of a broader context, one that has seen traditional politics lose their dynamism, causing public institutions to revert to a bland managerial style. The landscape of collective identities across the globe appeared to be fracturing to varying degrees. Within this changing environment, consumer politics is remarkable for its relative autonomy. It operates independently of the grand schemas and associations with political projects that are increasingly seen as outdated or ineffective. With this trend, people have found new ways to explore and express their own identities, different from what has been possible in the past. Furthermore, as consumers, people have been finding they can create a demand for change more effectively than they can through traditional, often discredited, political institutions.

In *The Holiday Makers*, Krippendorf (1987) presented a bleak view of modern tourism, and his writing served as a call to action for a more 'ethical' approach to tourism. This call has been reiterated in various other works since then. They all express dissatisfaction with the environmental and social impact of mass leisure travel. Krippendorf warned that our personal freedoms could potentially overwhelm us, hence the need for pre-travel education to learn how to travel ethically. Since then, the concept of personal ethics in tourism has become increasingly central, with terms like 'care', 'awareness', and 'responsibility' frequently used to frame tourism's impact. This trend implies that greater awareness could lead to a more meaningful consideration of tourist behavior.

While many discussions on ethical travel urge people to make their holidays more moral, rarely are questions raised about how effective this lifestyle approach to politics is. Ethical tourism has a moralizing effect because it operates under the assumption that consumers or tourists, through their choices and actions, have the

responsibility and the power to effect social or environmental change. This places value judgments on certain types of travel behavior, creating a moral dimension wherein certain choices (like ecotourism) are seen as more "ethical" or "responsible" than others (such as mass, mainstream tourism). Butcher (2015, p. 75) suggests that this form of ethical tourism is problematic because it is ultimately a self-oriented morality. Viewing ethical issues simply through consumption choices is limiting and it does not address the systemic factors that contribute to social and environmental problems. Simply put, opting for a lower-cost package holiday does not necessarily signify a lack of ethical concern. Rather, this choice might represent an understanding that holidays are not necessarily the key instrument for enacting meaningful social change.

A noteworthy contribution to the body of literature on ethical tourism is MacCannell's *Empty Meeting Grounds: The Tourist Papers* (1992), followed by his *Ethics of Sight-seeing* (2011). Instead of presuming tourism to inherently possess moral aspects, he investigates how tourism can establish itself as a field with its own distinct ethical implications. MacCannell believes cultural interactions like those between tourists and hosts can lead to the creation of 'new subjects' (Butcher, 2008, p. 321). The increasing emphasis on market dynamics and consumerism has, in his view, led to a social environment where personal, genuine connections between individuals are increasingly rare, and where human relations are often superficial and transactional. Consequently, he seeks alternatives within episodes of cultural and interpersonal immersion. Lived experience, the existential aspect of leisure travel, is appealing in a political environment where collective solutions appear out of reach. Butcher however identifies this as both a crucial and a limiting factor in MacCannell’s politics of everyday life. The cultural subject has surfaced amidst a

context where large-scale political demands and alternatives to the prevailing social order have gradually receded. The “view of culture as personally experienced” (2015, p. 78), also evident in MacCannell’s work, helps rationalize this condition. What looks promising at first ends up being quite the opposite; “the appearance of agency here may mask the substantial denial of agency elsewhere” (2008, p. 322).

This thesis will center on the theme of collective agency. This focus is motivated not just by the substantial attention given to the 'ethical tourist' within sustainable tourism scholarship. Torkington et al. (2020) argue that the term 'sustainability', as a nominalisation, obscures who or what is doing the sustaining or being sustained. This, combined with its ambiguous and contested meanings, makes 'sustainability' a difficult and potentially misleading term. Referring to 'sustainability' as an autonomous process means it is viewed as a self-driven or independent phenomenon, operating on its own without the direct intervention or control of others. In other words, sustainability is treated as a process that simply happens without clear input, guidance, or responsibility from particular groups or individuals. At times, the term has been hijacked in tourism discourse, being attached uncritically to existing practices that could gain from rebranding. Even though there is a proliferation of phrases that connect ‘sustainable’ with economics, growth, promotion, competition, etc., close scrutiny does not support these as indicators of a caring or stewardly approach. They conclude that new terms may be needed to better express these deeper values and concepts, and to challenge the status quo that makes economic growth the main concern. In their view, ‘sustainability’ has outlived its political usefulness, principally as a result of its typical nominal structure and its excessive application within contexts that suggest it operates as an autonomous

process. In its nominal form, 'sustainability' fails to explicitly assign responsibility for sustainable action.

Torkington et al. thereby strongly argue for suspending the sustainability agenda unless there is a more robust exploration of the question of agency. Similarly, Macbeth (2005) presents a comparable argument in his analysis on tourism platforms and sustainable development. Ethically reflexive scholarship refers to the approach in academic research and theory that encourages constant self-examination and critical thinking about the ethical implications and dimensions of one's work. The goal is to move beyond merely objective or value-neutral perspectives. Dominant paradigms in tourism development often overlook ethics and values due to their focus on scientific objectivity and disinterested observation. This focus can inadvertently push aside critical ethical dimensions of action and decision-making within the field. According to Macbeth (p.963), the issues with current tourism scholarship however extend beyond its positivist foundations, “[the] field is still dominated by a ‘‘frontier’’ ethic that seeks to extend the boundaries of development into uncharted territories (notwithstanding that such an advance is now seen to be undertaken in a more sensitive manner)”. The frontier ethic in tourism development is deeply ingrained and challenging to move beyond.

Macbeth critiques the established platforms (Jafari, 1990) of tourism research and scholarship, in particular the knowledge-based platform. While these platforms have been insightful and representative of diverse views in tourism scholarship, Macbeth points out a significant blind spot: they do not adequately account for the ethical dimensions of sustainable development. This oversight reflects a larger issue in tourism scholarship, where the adoption of sustainable development principles has not led to a substantial change in the field's ethical perspectives. The significant

impact of sustainable development on tourism studies is partly due to its perception as a specific area of knowledge or a domain of planning expertise. In a way, this tendency has led to the "domestication" of sustainable development within the field. The concept has been adapted to fit within the prevailing platforms and methodologies of tourism studies. Therefore, due to this deficiency, Macbeth suggests that sustainable development should be considered as a separate platform in tourism scholarship.

Tourism scholarship is gravitating towards a business-focused understanding of tourism. Sustainable development, as a platform of knowledge, holds the potential to counteract this exclusionary focus. However, the platform, with its various aspects, is deeply politically fragmented, adding complexity to its integration and application in the field. Still, the term, recognized widely in various research fields, has secured a high-profile position and is now indispensable to any comprehensive theoretical framework. Fundamentally, it assumes the importance of human survival. In its most anthropocentric variety, it suggests an inherent compatibility between economic growth and ecological sustainability, reflecting a simplistic understanding of the intricate relationship between development and the environment. Its holistic ideology underscores the need for long-term, global strategy, aspiring to ensure a comfortable standard of living for all. Yet, while it carries a social justice component, it also paradoxically embodies ethnocentric tendencies, often reflecting the perspectives of wealthier societies instead of universally encompassing diverse global realities. As Macbeth puts it, the “paradigm involves power and inequality, is political, and lends itself to slogan misuse” (p.968).

Macbeth argues for the need to extend the scope of sustainable development beyond a purely human-centered, or anthropocentric, perspective. The challenge with

this approach is that it tends to adopt an instrumental conservation ethic. Even though completely moving away from this orientation may be difficult, it is always important to understand the ideological foundations of development models and their environmental ethics. This analysis clarifies exactly which groups stand to gain and lose in resource management decisions. Macbeth then posits that the sustainable development platform may not have the required adaptability to effectively embrace the entirety of these diverse and elaborate concerns. He uses Hunter (1997) as a case in point. Hunter exemplifies an effort to optimize the framework of sustainable tourism. Firstly, he demonstrates that sustainable development is not a one-size-fits-all concept, but instead presents a multitude of possible development paths to consider. Each of these pathways is valid, but their appropriateness depends heavily on local circumstances. Hunter also stresses the importance of transparency in policy decisions. While some pathways are positively avant-garde, they nonetheless showcase the extensive range of possibilities in sustainable tourism, illustrating that the field can adapt to various situations and needs. However, although it is Hunter's "pragmatic hope" that his very strong sustainability approach rivals "the right of the industry to expand indefinitely" (p.972), he does not show any interest in discrediting growth-oriented models. He believes this strategy can provide a politically feasible solution, especially for managing environmental aspects. His emphasis thereby lacks a defined environmental ethic, for the focus is on the political and managerial aspects that make the strategy unique. Sustainable development, Macbeth believes, needs to be superseded by an ethics platform that would offer a more comprehensive and adaptable approach, capable of integrating a wider range of ethical considerations and perspectives. While Torkington et al. significantly contribute by framing the question of collective agency in a more open-ended way, Macbeth offers a critical

reminder. Even with a clear understanding of collective action, the current state of sustainable tourism may not be the most ideal setting for enacting essential social change. True agency should perhaps move beyond surface-level actions and be able to question the very social utility of sustainable development itself.

These reflections on agency have been absorbed into tourism scholarship in a specific manner. For scholars like Torkington et al., agency is set as a decisive factor in continuing or discontinuing sustainable tourism, thereby moving us away from seeing sustainability as a self-governing process. This means sustainability does not just occur naturally, but is a result of collective action and decision-making, it cannot be left to self-regulate. However, many tourism scholars have refocused the issue, simplifying it to a question of mandate. This change in perspective moves the conversation to a discussion of eligibility, trying to identify who is best suited to take on the responsibility for sustainable practices in tourism. These two perspectives on agency and mandate are fundamentally different. The question of mandate is more succinct, focusing on task delegation. Scholars have studied the prerequisites of being a suitable agent for sustainable tourism. These prerequisites can encompass several attributes, capacities, and circumstances that can influence an agent's effectiveness in fulfilling their responsibilities towards the sustainable tourism development. This reflects the understanding that not every agent would necessarily be equally fit or capable for carrying on this role. This allows for a more targeted conversation perhaps, but the nuanced understanding of agency may be lost in the process of simplifying it to mandate. Unlike agency, the question of mandate does not seek to be the deciding factor in potentially doing away with the sustainability agenda.

Macbeth pushes the concept of agency a step further, showing us that real agency should have the capacity to question fundamental assumptions, which in this context, includes questioning the social usefulness and impact of sustainable development. He believes that to truly step beyond the current development framework, more is needed than merely embracing ideas closer to environmental justice, as suggested by Torkington and her colleagues. In his view, it necessitates the creation of an entirely new platform. A platform signifies a collective construct that emerges through combined efforts and contributions within a field of study or practice. Macbeth dedicates considerable attention to the ethical frameworks and ideological assumptions underpinning key assertions in sustainable tourism. There is a call for greater transparency, ethical introspection, and inclusivity in the processes that determine development agendas, especially as they can be influenced by non-neutral knowledge claims. Macbeth distinguishes himself from his contemporaries who share similar views by his insistence for a platform that reinforces the capacity to resist these dominant forces. In related academic discussions, this aspect is frequently downgraded to a matter of instrumentalization.

Saarinen provides a clear example of this tendency in the field. Originally, sustainable tourism developed as a response to the traditional model of large-scale tourism, which often stressed growth at the expense of the environment and community interests. That said, sustainable tourism struggled with translating high-level goals into day-to-day actions and practical tools for limiting tourism's growth in a balanced way. While the concept of sustainable tourism is well-recognized, there is nevertheless this perceived gap when it comes to practical implementation[1].

1 The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) had recognized the tourism industry's potential impact on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). When the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) succeeded the MDGs in 2015, this perspective endured, with a continued emphasis on the tourism

Responsible tourism is often seen as an approach that can fill this practical gap. Responsible tourism grew out of the idea that modern tourists are actually chasing after self-realization and -discovery, gradually transcending from one tier of needs to the next as they seek a positive and wholesome self-identity. This upward trajectory encompasses cognitive needs, where tourists pursue knowledge and understanding, often through cultural exploration and learning experiences. Ultimately, with transcendence, they look to make a difference, shifting from inward-focused enlightenment to outward-focused altruism (Moscardo, 2015, p. 78). As tourists climb this hierarchy of needs, they naturally adopt a more critical and discerning approach to their travel choices. Saarinen points out that the integration of responsible tourism concepts into the sustainable tourism framework is complex, due to serious "contextual differences" between the two (p.4). These differences mean that while both responsible and sustainable tourism aim to create a sector that respects local environments and communities and generates positive outcomes, the ways they approach and achieve these goals can vary significantly.

A key aspect of responsibility in tourism relates to neoliberalism. Neoliberalism promotes the idea that market forces should drive economic policies and reforms. It trusts that the market, if left largely to its own devices, can efficiently guide economic growth and development. These forces are also expected to act as natural regulators, eventually addressing and mitigating the negative externalities of economic growth. However, in practice, this hands-off governance approach often led to policy interventions that allow private concerns to operate in areas that were previously under public discretion. Responsible tourism is very much a part of the neoliberal project as it too reflects the broader trend of privatizing functions and

sector's responsibility to contribute to these global aims. Saarinen's concerns about sustainable and responsible tourism are situated within this official context.

responsibilities that used to belong with the public agencies. The core problem with responsible tourism is that it might not fully address the systemic issues and long-term implications as it largely relies on voluntary measures and personal ethics. As Saarinen (p.8) nicely concludes,

> "the responsibility in tourism becomes situational. This means that the institutional structures and regulative governance models that characterize sustainability in tourism may not apply in responsible tourism."

In other words, the assumed moral autonomy of the individual overturns sustainability as a collective good. In a world of personal ethics, it is difficult to find a place for broad societal or group benefits. Notably, even when the "moral turn in social sciences" critically confronted the deepening market relations, "it has also further fueled the role of individuals in creating change" (p.7). In such situations, proponents of the moral turn are likely responding to a very specific understanding of market relations, similar to the initial perception surrounding the 'responsible tourist.' This perspective holds that consumer choices can significantly influence the tourism industry's behavior. As environmental consciousness increases in society and among consumers, so does the demand for responsible tourism services, compelling businesses to adapt and meet these expectations. Market relations, in this context, are seen as practical tools, not necessarily reflecting a particular economic logic. The moral turn's critical analyses manage only to concede that the use of market mechanisms to attain certain desired social outcomes could risk subverting their original instrumental function.

Responsible tourism primarily allows tourists to influence change through their purchasing decisions. This approach positions responsible tourism as heavily reliant on market-driven solutions to address environmental challenges. Secondly, the concept of sustainability as a collective benefit appears to be at odds with the

principles of responsible tourism. This is because responsible tourism emphasizes the moral autonomy of the individual, predominantly in the capacity of a consumer, even to the extent of limiting their role to this singular function. Clearly, the mountaineer does not fit this profile.

The present-day discussions on sustainable tourism is at a crossroads, with some scholars suggesting that navigating past the binary of the 'ethical/responsible consumer' versus 'irreformable consumerism' is imperative. A more effective approach, in their estimation, may lie in directly addressing the design and implementation of tourism products themselves. Here, in the typical style of business management, consideration quickly changes to canvas ‘best practices.’ Why does the current scholarship around sustainable tourism often restrict our understanding to two problematic options? On the one hand, the enlightened, ethical consumer who is aware but may still choose to act irresponsibly while on vacation, or the uninformed consumer, yet to be awakened to sustainable tourism. On the other, the model of privately operated conservation tourism. The second alternative can be distilled into a simple formula. Tourism inherently carries environmental risks, yet through the adoption of a thoughtfully structured framework, it can also aid in conservation. Notably, a few front-running ecotourism operators can lay the groundwork for such frameworks by exemplifying model conservation techniques (Buckley, 2010, p. 9).

In finding it tempting to refer to them as ‘independent developers’, this thesis posits the mountaineer community as an intriguing middle ground, which calls both approaches into question. The purpose of this study is to explore the full-weight of this in-between place. Mountaineering, as a form of cultural mobilization, resist subsumption under the ontologically privileged personal ethics. In later chapters, this aspect is analyzed within the context of ‘club culture’. The issue with a product-

centric approach is more straightforward. Sustainable tourism products often face an issue of exclusivity, primarily because they come with additional charges that can be prohibitive for many travelers. These extra costs as a means to achieve responsible environmental and social outcomes can potentially limit access to a more affluent demographic. Addressing the exclusivity of sustainable tourism products, on the other hand, carries its own unique set of problems. While it is beneficial to make sustainable tourism more inclusive, doing so can inadvertently scale up the level of tourism activity. This trend can, in turn, result in a greater environmental impact.

Buckley (2012a, p. 105) puts his spin on this complicated matter through his discussion of recreation in public protected areas: “if visitation to particular [US] parks has leveled off, this does not mean that parks are unpopular. It means that these parks are full.” Later in the text, he surmises that individuals can sense when carrying-capacity limits are about to be breached and might consequently choose international outdoor tourism over domestic recreation.

However, it is not just crowding that is at play here. Buckley's analysis stands out due to its unique framework, where the stage is set with five distinct groups of actors. At the center to this ensemble are park agencies, which are surrounded by a diverse array of constituencies that Buckley divides into factions with differing interests: “existence values, conservation and global ecosystem services; local ecosystem services such as drinking water supplies; individual recreational opportunities; and commercial opportunities, such as tourism” (2004, p. 6). Protected areas require the goodwill of these groups for their continuity, yet the constitution and urgency of “conservation concerns” (Buckley, 2012a, p. 104) differ markedly among them. Also, not all support is equally impactful. The support from the first tends to be broad but scattered. In contrast, the second group's relevance is limited to

a small subset of protected areas, where their impact or support is more direct and tangible. While the recreational group is large and may be a strong source of support, their activities can create substantial management issues due to their immediate impact on these environments. The support of this group is dependent on their ability to enjoy the outdoors in an unfettered manner, and it can quickly erode if opportunities for such activities are scaled back or discontinued. The recreational user base is diverse. This diversity requires park agencies to adopt a versatile management style to accommodate a wide variety of recreational needs, which can be difficult to achieve. Moreover, there are often conflicts that emerge both among differing recreational groups and between independent visitors and commercial groups. Finally, the promise of substantial economic returns from operating within protected areas has led tourism operators to take an interest in their control. Big tourism companies, industry associations, and government tourism bodies have come to realize the importance these areas hold for tourism-related activities. As a result, these groups are pushing for wider admission to and greater operational freedoms within these areas. At times, their ambition extends beyond mere access; they call for a hand in the setting of management agendas. Here the idea of 'partnership' is ringed out to hint at a benign, mutually beneficial working relationship. Buckley argues that the absence of convincing evidence of net positive outcomes for the protected areas and the general public makes the partnership proposition less credible and potentially problematic.

In his five-actor model, public protected areas alone must contend with forces that could compromise their very survival. This is particularly incongruous given that the case for these places is predicated on the broad and critical claim of ensuring human survival. Buckley distinguishes the emerging partnership model from the

concession system, a long-established arrangement wherein private developers provide specific services or facilities within public parks. Concessions are often seen by park agencies as an efficient and prudent solution to meet visitor needs. Certain national parks in the USA have even chosen to subcontract all of their visitor services to a single concessionaire. Individuals working for such subcontractors find themselves in positions where their work schedules can vary greatly and receive compensation comparable to hospitality industry standards. It is these employment patterns that park agencies seek to exploit but cannot unless through a third-party arrangement. Buckley's reason for exploring these matters is perhaps too obvious; he intends to maintain a strictly transaction-based relationship between park agencies and tourism operators (2013b, p. 237) because in such an arrangement, there would be no necessity for either side to alter their traditional approach. It worries Buckley that governments around the world are asking park agencies to raise their financial reliance on the proceeds from tourism-related projects. To comply with such requests, park agencies would likely need to see changes in their establishing legislation. The tourism industry is evidently on a mission to ensure the implementation of such changes, which Buckley believes is self-defeating: “This would have negative consequences for conservation, for public recreation and for commercial tourism” (2013b, p. 240).

Parks serve a more valuable purpose through conservation than through tourism and recreation, “so in theory, park agency budgets should only reflect conservation management costs, visitation rates should be irrelevant” (2012a, p. 105) is Buckley’s last word on the matter and makes it seem as if he has also landed on a solution to the inclusivity issue. Yet Buckley never admits this, choosing, in its place, to begrudge political authorities their power-brokering. Because conservation policy

is too embroiled in politics, parks often do not receive the necessary budgetary support, which then compels them to impose higher fees on visitors. An antecedent point he makes is, “[v]isitors create costs for conservation through ecological impacts … and by diverting conservation budgets to recreation management” (2012a, p. 103). Answers never trickle out as to why managing recreation within parks cannot also be a significant public concern that potentially warrants its own financial support. Politics may not be the complicating factor, especially since political factors did not stop Buckley from framing conservation in this manner. We end up with the peculiar proposition that people are not really inconvenienced by raised fees (or by parks becoming privileged retreats) once they have the cheaper option of traveling overseas.

Butcher (2015, p. 74) insists that questioning the actual impact of ethical travel choices may be a better use of one’s time than merely seeking ways to travel more ethically. This practical methodology could be equally applied to Buckley's ecotourism products, demanding we assess the true impact of ecotourism-guided conservation programs. In keeping with this perspective, we submit that Aladağlar National Park is named a site for sustainable tourism (Orman ve Su İşleri Bakanlığı 7. Bölge Müdürlüğü Niğde Şube Müdürlüğü, 2013); however, there is some ambiguity surrounding its sustainability credentials. Specifically, the park's qualifications as both 'low cost' and 'low impact' have yet to be determinately verified. Here we also ask -If the mountaineering community in Türkiye were to adopt an idea comparable to the German TVNF (Touristenverein 'die Naturfreunde - Tourist Association 'Friends of Nature')'s ‘social hiking,’ what would its programmatic structure be. As the 'social hiking' idea had found practical application (Williams, 2011), we can and will speculate on how ‘social mountaineering’ would

materialize and be woven into a destination management plan for Aladağlar. This could greatly improve our understanding of the ongoing situation of ecotourism-for-conservation in Aladağlar.

Accordingly, this study adopts 2 main research questions (RQ), supported by 2 sub-questions each:

- RQ1: How does knowledge of mountaineering inform sustainable and socially responsible tourism?
    - How are traditions and moral standards of mountaineers consistent with sustainable social and ecological principles?
    - To what extent are mountaineers attentive to issues of global environmental sustainability and sustainable development?
- RQ2: What would be the key attributes of a destination management policy for Aladağlar National Park that reflects the experience and input of mountaineers?
    - What are mountaineers' perspectives on current management approaches in place at Aladağlar National Park?
    - What are the mountaineer community's proposals for long-term strategies and methods to manage Aladağlar National Park sustainably?

As schematized in the Figure 1, the question set first explores how mountaineers' culture and travel practices aligns with sustainable and social tourism, and later how their collective experiences can translate to valuable insights.

In the next chapters, first, sustainable tourism studies will be shortly evaluated. It will be followed by local tourism policies and its implications to natural

areas in Türkiye. Later, the case study area will be introduced, followed by the methodology adopted in the study, its original findings, discussion and conclusion.

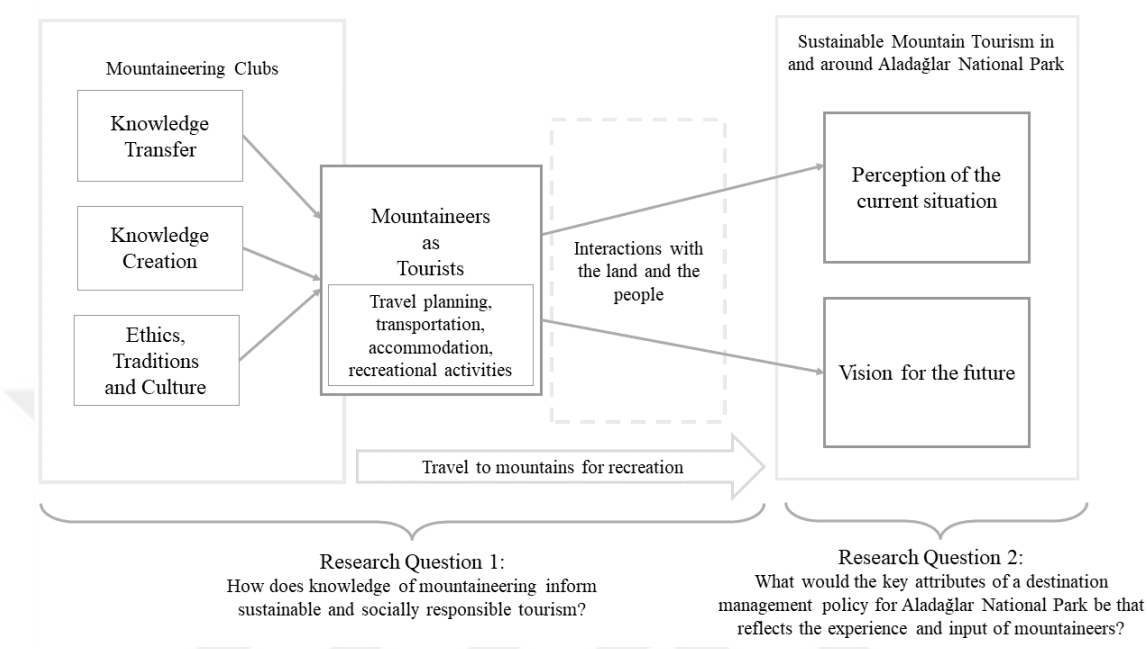


Figure 1. Schematization of research questions (RQs)

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Bramwell (2015) explores the theoretical contributions in sustainable tourism research through a developed typology of eleven strategies associated with conceptual and theoretical work. The study methodically assesses a sample of articles from three impactful journals from 2012 to 2014. The work not only exemplifies each strategy with sustainable tourism research articles but also applies the typology to conduct in-depth reviews of four highly theoretical papers. The findings highlight a diverse array of research strategies employed in sustainable tourism research and significantly contribute to understanding the theoretical as well as methodological landscape of this academic field.

This analysis spotlights a collection of papers selected particularly for their emphasis on theoretical activity. It suggests that a proportion of sustainable tourism research does not completely adhere to previous critiques that cited a deficiency in focus on theoretical activity in tourism research. However, an intriguing observation is that this theoretical work is more situated in the realm of conceptual frameworks and concepts rather than grounded in the bedrock of ‘big’ social theories that seek to identify the fundamental constituents of the social world and mechanisms that govern social change. Also evident from the considered articles is the somewhat sidelined application of theoretical ideas from natural science disciplines. Explorations into the latter fields remain largely peripheral, offering a mere backdrop to the “social science ideas” (p.215).

Bramwell's work critically addresses a long-standing concern in the field, highlighting that sustainable tourism scholarship has possibly lingered too long in the realm of practical and descriptive research. This delay in theoretical development, Bramwell suggests, reflects an overemphasis on descriptive case studies that offer specific examples and narratives, but possibly lack the depth and scope needed to build and engage with complex theoretical ideas. Bramwell suggests a second impediment to theoretical development in sustainable tourism scholarship. He observes that the field of tourism often looked predominantly within its own boundaries and specialized emphasis, thereby overlooking the benefits of cross-pollination with wider social science debates.

Bramwell's perspective is deeply insightful. It emphasizes the necessity for active interplay and continuous exchange of ideas among various academic fields. He underscores that each field of study, while a specialty in its own right, should not exist in isolation. Instead, it should serve as a resourceful body of knowledge that can impart valuable insights and understanding to outsiders and other disciplines. As such, specialized knowledge is basically "summarized results of work in one research area in the form of theoretical notions which can be transferred to others" (p.206).

In this section, we shall actively trace the influences and imprints of diverse disciplines on sustainable tourism as a specialized field of study. Bramwell's assertion that inter-disciplinary exchange brings a certain dynamism to the field resonates with our perspective. We propose that this dynamism can be construed as a three-directional interactive process. Through this framework of co-exposures, we aim to comprehend the evolution of sustainable tourism scholarship. Our structural

analysis of this evolution will be guided by Saarinen's (2006) *traditions of sustainability.*

Saarinen discusses three different traditions in sustainable tourism scholarship, each with its own understanding of the limits to growth. The resource-based tradition is predicated on the idea that there is an objective and measurable limit to the resources available in an environment for sustainable tourism. However, if tourism development is to continue beyond these limits, it should not primarily involve expanding the use of the resource base. Instead, the more sustainable approach would involve better management of tourist behavior and numbers. The resource-based tradition evaluates the limits of growth in the tourism industry relative to the resources used and the initial (non-tourism) condition of these resources. It upholds an objective view of these limits, in terms of the resources' original characteristics - that is, what the environment would be like without the influence of tourism. Ontologically, it posits that there is a natural or original state of the resources, and that the level of changes or impacts due to tourism are quantifiable in relation to this state. Epistemologically, it defines the limits of growth through comparison and evaluation. It compares the condition of the resources utilized in touristic activities with a similar space that is not subjected to such activities (potential resources). Defining the original non-tourism conditions of a destination's resources can be a challenging task however. This is because it involves attempting to understand the state of the environment, including its natural and cultural resources, before tourism activities began. The complexity arises because such conditions can rarely be observed in their untouched state. Also possibly, many details might change and evolve naturally even without the influence of tourism.

The activity-based tradition focuses on development and industry-oriented solutions. It suggests that there are limits to growth in terms of how much the tourism industry, or specific tourism activities, can expand before reaching their maximum capacity. Growth in tourism is managed not by altering tourist behavior, but by modifying the environment and resources to accommodate increased tourism. The tourism area life cycle model, proposed by Butler (1980), is a theoretical model that presents a sequence of stages that a tourist destination goes through from discovery to possible decline. The implication of the model is that a destination's carrying capacity can evolve, increase or shift based on how the tourism industry and destination managers respond to growth. This means that as the industry evolves, so too do the perceived boundaries of sustainable growth—these are not static, but dynamic. A key part of this approach involves changing and developing the tourism product, this might involve developing new tourist activities, upgrading or increasing accommodations, improving infrastructure, or marketing to different tourist demographics.

The push towards a more collaborative approach in tourism studies originated from the realization of the discrepancies in the activity-based and resource-based understanding of sustainability. As Saarinen notes, “development actions may, and often do, overstep the resource-based capacity to change” (p.1129). This discrepancy led to the development of what is termed community-based sustainability or the community-based tradition. This tradition implies that sustainability should not be solely dependent on industry needs or resource limits. Much of this shift has aimed at recognizing that local communities should have a more significant role and voice in the planning, development, and management of tourism activities that impact them. But the limits of tourism growth are a reflection of collective decisions. The

community-based perspective recognizes that decisions about what constitutes acceptable tourism development and where the 'limits' lie are not invariably physical or objective constraints, but are often influenced by socio-political dynamics. A community comprises different individuals and groups. It is essential to note that these elements are not always wholly unified or integrated in their viewpoints or actions, and that decision-making often proceeds even if there is severe marginalization within the community.

Sustainable tourism studies embody a diverse range of perspectives, each providing unique interpretations of sustainability. As these perspectives have matured into distinct traditions within the field, they have reflected the influence of specific source disciplines. The resource-based tradition is rooted in positivism and natural sciences, as well as geography. The activity-based approach tends to align with economic analysis. The community-based view invites insights from political ecology and political economy due to its attention to socio-political context and power relations. However, the influence of these disciplinary orientations goes deeper than simply taking advantage of certain technical competencies. It informs the fundamental philosophies, methodologies, and analytical frameworks of each tradition. In our review, we will organize these contributions according to their disciplinary orientations. This approach not only appreciates the range of analytical tools put to use but also acknowledges the profound influence of these disciplines on the evolving discourse of sustainable tourism studies.

Garrod and Fyall (1998) show concern about the established industry codes of conduct for sustainable tourism. These codes allow for substantial interpretive ambiguities and fail to provide concrete metrics or specific benchmarks to evaluate sustainability levels. Garrod and Fyall advocate for a shift in academic debate from

merely defining sustainable tourism to devising actionable strategies for its real-world implementation. They propose implementing a methodological approach, developed within the discipline of environmental economics, that can be used to measure and evaluate sustainability conditions. One method they discuss is the *constant capital rule*.

Where resource use is unavoidable, it is crucial to ensure appropriate compensation measures are in place. As it relates to resource use, compensation implies that for every resource utilized now, we should strive to either replace it or provide an equivalent value through other means that will benefit future generations. The ‘constant’ in the ‘constant capital rule’ refers to the idea of maintaining a steady, unchanging level of capital over time, focusing on the preservation of the total stock of capital. The rule purports that for the present development to be sustainable, the total amount of capital handed down to the future generations should not be less than the amount that we have today.

The composition issue in the context of applying the constant capital rule refers to the problem of defining what makes up the 'capital stock'. The controversy revolves around whether it is justifiable to substitute one capital type with another as a form of compensation. Many argue for the special consideration of natural capital (resources in nature), particularly when there is a proposal for its substitution with human-made capital. A variety of theoretical stances exist on this issue.

Some argue for the necessity to conserve the total amount of capital resources. They believe in high resource substitutability, which suggests that the use of non-renewable resources today can be offset by passing on an increased stock of different resources. This increased stock can be a combination of human-made and renewable natural capital. Given the expectation of a linear trend in technological

sophistication, this position views human-made and natural capital as capable of substituting for one another.

There are perspectives that align with a similar reasoning, though they insist any replacement of natural capital with human-made capital should only happen with careful consideration of ecological balance. They argue that there are crucial life-supporting natural resources, also known as *critical natural capital*. Due to their essential nature and unique roles in our ecosystem, they cannot be adequately replaced by non-critical forms of capital. Relying on technology as a fallback option for these services would be highly risky and is generally not considered a sustainable or reliable approach.

There exists a more stringent perspective, arguing that the current generation should not exploit non-renewable natural resources unless there is a guarantee of significantly improved reserves of renewable resources for future generations. This viewpoint prioritizes conservation of natural capital, taking into consideration the extensive complexities and unpredictability that comes with understanding and managing ecosystem dynamics. Just as with those who advocate a more flexible approach, its proponents deny any substitution of essential natural resources. However, they also suggest expanding the definition of what is considered 'critical', to recognize not only the practical benefits that essential natural resources can provide to humans but also the value these resources have in their own right, irrespective of their utility to us. Supporters of very strong sustainability, on the other hand, argue that it is unnecessary to exploit non-renewable resources. They advocate for a reliance on renewable resources and suggest that the economy should function within the strict constraints imposed by the natural environment. The ultimate aim is to attain a balanced, or steady-state, economic system.

Garrod and Fyall stress the importance of effective measurement in the practical application of sustainability principles. Without proper measurement of relevant capital stocks and flows, it is impossible to confirm with certainty whether there has been any change over time, no matter the approach chosen. They then suggest that discussions about what form of sustainability the tourism industry should adopt may be premature, since there is currently no established means of tracking compensation outcomes.

The *macro approach* involves the use of balance sheets to measure and evaluate sustainability conditions. Ideally, balance sheets track the stocks and flows of both human-made and natural capital. In the macro approach, *good sustainability* outcomes are typically those that demonstrate a maintenance or enhancement of capital stocks. A sustainable outcome would indicate that tourism activities are not causing a net depletion of these capital stocks. In contrast, *bad sustainability* outcomes would be those that show a depletion or degradation of the capital stocks. This might indicate that the rate of use of these resources is faster than their rate of renewal. Both the monetary valuation of natural capital and the compatibility of accounting techniques between human-made and natural capital present significant challenges however. While human-made capital is routinely measured and recorded in most countries for economic accounting, the integration of natural capital into these accounting systems is not straightforward.

The *micro approach* refers to a modified form of cost-benefit analysis which makes evaluations of sustainability at the level of individual investment projects. This is in contrast with the 'macro' approach which assesses sustainability at a sector-wide level. In standard practice, investment appraisal techniques are commonly used to evaluate the economic and social desirability of projects. These techniques often

focus on direct economic costs and benefits and sometimes take into consideration social impacts or indirect economic effects. However, such appraisals traditionally do not thoroughly account for the environmental costs and benefits. As a consequence, projects that may have significant negative environmental impacts might still appear attractive when evaluated solely on economic grounds.

To adapt cost-benefit analysis for sustainable tourism, Garrod and Fyall, following Pearce *et al.* (1989), propose two key changes. Firstly, environmental impacts need to be included in the analysis. This means the costs and benefits of environmental changes should be assigned monetary value and considered alongside traditional economic factors. As the second modification, Garrod and Fyall propose including a screening device to rule out projects that fail to meet specific sustainability conditions. The *cost-benefit rule* involves forecasting the monetary values of all costs and benefits associated with a project over its lifetime, then discounting these future amounts to provide present value equivalents, which are then summed. The project is socially efficient if the total present value of benefits outweighs the total present value of costs. In applications where estimating costs and benefits over a project's entire lifetime is possible and where the parameters for net benefits can be appropriately defined to incorporate socio-environmental concerns, this rule could indeed serve as a reliable model for socio-environmental welfare.

Garrod and Fyall identify two significant challenges with the adapted cost-benefit rule. The first issue is related to the rule's inability to inherently ensure the maintenance of aggregate capital stock. Specifically, if the difference between benefit and cost factors in the analysis is due to consumption, the rule may not necessarily guarantee adequate compensation for net environmental costs. On a different note, as it stands, the rule could theoretically validate projects as socially acceptable despite

them incorporating net environmental costs. Yet, with strong sustainability, the preservation requirement is supposed to apply to any given time frame during a project's life cycle. To resolve the problems with the adapted rule, Garrod and Fyall suggest adding a 'sustainability constraint'. This constraint involves introducing *shadow projects* such as afforestation or wilderness conservation programmes into the original investment scheme. The inclusion of such projects aims to ensure that any net environmental costs caused by the parent project are fully compensated for by the net environmental benefits provided by the shadow projects.

Wells (1997) suggests that using economic methods to manage protected areas and nature tourism spots can be useful in identifying strategies to maximize financial or economic gains. However, a significant challenge in managing tourism lies in striking a balance between deriving benefits from visitor use and maintaining the environmentally significant aspects of the location.

Nature tourism is described in this study as a form of tourism that primarily focuses on visiting natural attractions of ecological importance. These can include state-run protected areas, privately owned, or communally owned lands. While protected areas frequently serve as nature tourism sites, the concepts are not synonymous. Not all protected areas are established with tourism in mind or are viable for nature tourism. Similarly, nature tourism activities often happen outside of protected areas. In the context of sustainable development, nature tourism is essential as it mobilizes private sector resources, contributing to both local and national economies. It also incentivizes conservation and funds biodiversity, a compelling prospect especially for developing countries with limited rural development alternatives and inadequate biodiversity investments.

The use of economic analysis in nature tourism helps address several key problems associated with this fast-growing market. For a start, “nature tourism's continued expansion will inevitably expose more ecologically-important areas to the opportunities and risks associated with greater numbers of visitors” (p.2). While nature tourism is often seen as a means of incentivizing biodiversity conservation, in practice these benefits may not materialize. Another concern is whether concentrating mass tourism in already developed areas is environmentally better or worse than spreading nature-focused tourism across lesser-known, pristine areas.

Understanding the difference between actual expenditures and hypothetical maximum prices that tourists may be willing to pay is crucial in economic analysis of tourism. Current expenditures refer to the amount that tourists actually spend on services. The current prices are determined by the market and reflect what tourists pay at the time of their visit. Hypothetical maximum prices refer to the maximum amount that tourists are willing to pay for their experience. It reflects the personal value that each tourist places on the experience. This may be higher than the current market price. The difference between this hypothetical maximum price and the actual price paid is known as the *consumer surplus*. If the prices were to increase, some tourists, who value the experience highly, might still be willing to pay the higher price. Hence, this concept is used to understand the potential for increasing revenues from tourism, possibly for reinvesting in conservation and local community development. “Willingness to pay, or total economic value, therefore includes both actual expenditures and consumer surplus” (p.17).

The valuation methods for willingness-to-pay identified in the paper include the *Travel Cost* method and the *Contingent Valuation* method. The travel cost method calculates the value of a site by determining how much visitors are willing to pay to

travel to the site. It is based on the idea that the time and travel cost expenses that people incur to visit a site represent the price of access to the site. Therefore, if a visitor has chosen to visit the site, it implies that the benefit they receive from the visit is greater than their travel costs. Contingent Valuation method directly asks people, in a survey, how much they would be willing to pay for specific environmental services. This technique can be applied in scenarios where market prices are not applicable. This method is more subjective as it relies on individuals being able to estimate their own willingness-to-pay, and it might be influenced by various biases.

The findings from studies applying these methods have demonstrated that visitors may place a higher value on their experience than what they are charged for park entry. In essence, these willingness-to-pay studies allow policymakers and park managers to understand how much visitors value the experience of visiting the park. When visitors' willingness to pay is greater than the current entry charge, it suggests that there is potential to increase entry fees without necessarily reducing the number of visitors significantly. By adjusting prices to better align with the value that visitors place on the park experience, policymakers and park managers have the opportunity to capture more of the economic value of tourism.

Also, nature tourism attractions often generate *joint products* – a range of benefits apart from the direct revenues from tourism. These can include “ecosystem functions” (p.18), like carbon sequestration, biodiversity conservation, and watershed protection, alongside indirect benefits such as local employment, community development, and cultural preservation. Cost-benefit analysis can be used to capture the full range of these benefits and costs. It can help policymakers and managers make informed decisions by highlighting the total economic value of nature tourism.

It helps ensure that all relevant factors, including those not typically included in market transactions, are considered in the decision-making process, supporting more sustainable management strategies for nature tourism attractions. However, Wells acknowledges that while the concept is comprehensive, in practice it can be challenging to measure certain benefits, especially indirect and non-use values. So, in making land-use decisions, policymakers often need to compare the easily measurable net benefits of conservation (including nature tourism revenues) against the opportunity costs, which are the benefits foregone from not pursuing the most attractive alternative land use.

Increasing prices is a common approach to enhance “benefit capture” (p.25) especially for unique or differentiated products that attract a dedicated set of visitors. Arguably, revenues from increased fees might not be reinvested in the very park from which they were generated. When those in higher authority divert the revenues towards different priorities, it creates a significant mismatch between the source of the funds and their intended use for the maintenance and conservation of parks. Lastly, there is a potential for backlash from tourism industry interest groups who may oppose increases in fees or any measures that can restrict tourist access.

In context, when there are no regulations to limit the number of tourists or tour operators in a nature tourism destination, intense competition can drastically drive down prices and profits, leading to overcrowding and potential environmental harm. The alternative proposed is a situation of regulated entry, where access is limited to a fixed number of operators. In such scenarios, these operators have the potential to operate as semi-monopolies, having the freedom to charge above the marginal cost. This brings about 'economic rent', a surplus value that arises due to the scarcity and unique value of a resource.

After examining various methods to increase economic benefits from nature tourism using higher admission fees and creating rents, Wells transitions to another crucial topic, which is the "local support for conservation" (p.33). The inhabitants residing near protected areas often face inherent challenges in extracting advantages from the development of nature tourism. The establishment of cooperative relations with neighboring communities is most critical to protected area managers, conservation organizations, and the local, regional and national government agencies overseeing environmental and tourism policies. Moreover, such relationships are also crucial for the local communities themselves, as symbiotic association can lead to enhanced economic opportunities.

Ranking different tourism enterprises in the context of community development can provide insights into which types of ventures potentially yield the most benefits for the community. It helps in both quantitative comparisons like revenue generation and qualitative comparisons like equitable distribution of benefits and conservation outcomes. Access to capital is often a key constraint for communities. Joint ventures can help overcome that barrier as they often involve partnerships with entities that have access to necessary funding or resources. In a joint venture, a private company or government agency brings their financial resources, technical expertise, and market access to the table. The ability to charge above-average prices however is vital for the financial sustainability of joint ventures in tourism. These higher prices can help ensure that there are sufficient profits to be shared between the entrepreneurs and the local community, providing a necessary incentive for private sector partners to participate in such joint ventures.

Administrators or managers should be adept at recognizing and harnessing these incentives to drive sustainable practices. Although economic analysis in the

field of nature tourism development extends beyond purely financial returns, an economically responsible decision-making process entails an initial evaluation of financial returns against opportunity costs. Without detailed knowledge on benefit capture strategies, authorities are justified in using traditional cost-benefit analysis as a reliable starting point. Indeed, the efficient use of consumer surplus and proper fee collection mechanisms are key components of good governance. If handled properly, these resources can help secure the cooperation of private interest groups. Even though private operators may initially resist changes like fee revisions, a well-regulated market can foster a more accepting attitude towards collaborative efforts. Proper alignment and manipulation of incentives, therefore, can play a significant role in promoting the broader economic benefits of sustainable nature tourism. Yet again, in endeavoring to capture as much consumer surplus as possible through pricing strategies or value-added services, park managers and operators may encounter practical limits. Market dynamics usually result in a division of the net benefit or consumer surplus between consumers and producers, rather than it being fully captured by one party (p.20).

Employing an economic strategy can help optimize gains from protected areas and nature tourism sites. That said, economic benefits can be prioritized over aspects that are harder to quantify, like future use or conservation values.

> So the economic solution poses a dilemma for destination managers. The dilemma arises because the economic approach sets values based on the summed preferences of individuals' willingness to pay, and these are unlikely to coincide with the social and political values which generally underlie the establishment of conservation priorities. The optimal economic solution will probably only coincide with the conservation objectives of a protected area when constraints are added to maintain a defined standard of environmental quality (p.39).

Wells finds formulating a practical constraint set challenging. Ecological carrying capacity refers to the maximum number of visitors that a site can handle before negative impacts start to occur. It is a common strategy used in managing tourist visits, especially in ecologically sensitive areas. The concept assumes a direct, linear relationship between the number of visitors and the level of environmental impact. However, in reality, the relationship might not be linear and can vary based on numerous factors. The environmental damage due to tourism often occurs in unpredictable and non-linear increments. This makes it tricky to pinpoint a definite carrying capacity.

Managing environmental impacts is not solely about limiting visitor numbers due to ecological carrying capacity constraints. Instead, the focus perhaps should be on managing the impact per visitor. Factors such as visitor behaviors, types of activities, and adherence to regulations substantially influence the level of environmental impact from each visitor. Improvements in on-site management, visitor education, regulation enforcement, infrastructure, etc., can enhance a tourist's individual 'carrying capacity'. Thus, Wells seems to equate negative visitor impact primarily with poor tourism management rather than sheer visitor numbers.

Private sector tourism operators may be more likely to invest in practices that mitigate tourist impacts if their access to the market is regulated and limited. When access to a tourism market is unrestricted, competition can often lead to cost-cutting measures, which might include neglecting environmental responsibilities. However, when access to the market is regulated and more exclusive, operators may see value in differentiating themselves by investing in "additional management" (p.40).

Those who advocate for wider community participation in decision-making generally do so in response to more top-down methods of management or other

scenarios where decision-making powers are more concentrated. They often argue against these models holding that they can lead to less sustainable outcomes or negative impacts for local communities. In this sense, they are promoting one ideal (wider participation and inclusive decision-making) in contrast to, or as an alternative for, other equally idealistic scenarios (like efficient but possibly less inclusive top-down management). As Bramwell (2010) puts it,

> The literature on engaging diverse actors in tourism policy-making within local destinations has often considered this in relation to the objectives of sustainable tourism … Sustainable tourism is a normative approach, so it is unsurprising that research on governance and sustainable tourism often also adopts a prescriptive position (p.239-240).

The significance of "the knowledge of tourism among the community" (p.240) stems from the direct experience local residents and actors have with tourism's impacts. Being on the 'front lines', they can offer unique and crucial insights that might not be apparent to external or higher-level decision makers. Furthermore, community knowledge and participation can help ensure that tourism development aligns with the broader development goals of the community, which can lead to a more sustainable and acceptable form of tourism development. This integration of local knowledge is core to decentralizing tourism development and enhancing its benefits at the community level.

Communities can act as special interest groups in tourism planning, countering business-driven agendas. They represent their areas' interests, essentially acting as custodians, given their inherent stake in the future of their home territories. This role allows communities to influence decisions, ensuring that plans align with local needs and conditions. Importantly, this participation also provides communities a means to control and potentially mitigate the impacts of mass tourism.

The view that community support is vital for successful tourism development is rooted in the belief that residents, being directly impacted, have a vested interest in tourism's outcomes. Community engagement is seen as a way to foster this support. Active participation in decision-making processes can develop feelings of responsibility and commitment among local residents. When tourism development and planning fail to cater to the ambitions and capacities of local communities, it can lead to considerable backlash. It is important to note, though, that while community engagement can aid in the development of tourism, it does not guarantee its promotion in a manner that respects sustainability concerns.

In the field of tourism governance, two major forms of involvement are often discussed: *community engagement* and *local partnerships*. Community engagement refers to voluntary activities carried out by locals. These activities could take the form of spontaneous self-governance, where locals manage their affairs autonomously. Alternatively, they might also involve responses to decisions taken by those outside the community but with local consequences. Community planning enables locals to collaboratively make decisions. It essentially embodies democracy functioning at grassroots, local level. Local partnerships operate as a relatively formalized mode of participation involving routine, face-to-face interactions between multiple parties, guided by a set of consensus-based rules and a shared commitment to tackle mutual issues. These collaborations often involve actors from public and private sectors, environmental advocates, and community groups, providing a platform for consultation and policy-making for the management and development of tourism.

Additionally, they have the potential to enhance capacity-building among participants. Community and collaborative-based tourism planning can be

understood as specific instances of “communicative planning” (p.241). This approach values the utilisation of an array of different knowledge sources for decision-making in planning. Community forums and partnership create a platform where each party can express their perspectives, understand others' viewpoints, and collaboratively work towards a decision that factors in these diverse views and has shared acceptance.

According to Bramwell, there is a tendency in research on participative planning and governance for sustainable tourism to over-idealize or paint an overly optimistic picture of the potential outcomes. This unrealistic expectation also extends to the studies of tourism partnerships. These tend to place heavy emphasis on the internal organizational processes that promote consensus-building. They often focus on the sequence and arrangement of collaborative activities that lead to joint decision-making and agreements. Having “a representative spread of actors” (p.241) is one of the foremost success factors. The idea is that all relevant parties, who have an interest or role in the development and management of tourism, are adequately represented in the partnership. This body of work certainly recognizes the presence of conflict and power imbalances. However, it tends to overlook how deeply ingrained and irreconcilable these attitudes and differences can be. Bramwell contends that these processes should be critically examined. The realities of participative planning and governance, including the occurrence of conflicts and power dynamics among actors, should be factored in more thoroughly in research to provide a more accurate understanding of these processes.

In consensus-building processes, exclusion can transpire in three ways: Firstly, certain actors might be discriminated against on account of their potentially dissenting opinions. Secondly, exclusion can arise when certain contentious issues

are neglected to focus attention on matters providing 'common ground'. Lastly, exclusion happens when mere superficial agreements are reached instead of striving for substantial action and implementation. Under these circumstances, the best that can realistically be hoped for is a “pragmatic consensus” (p.242).

On the other hand, deliberative policy-making is largely a product of the present era. Since the 1970s, there has been a noticeable resurgence of anti-statist thinking. This change in perspective has significantly influenced how many governments perceive and perform their roles. Traditional state-based governance models have been enhanced or even supplanted by a mix of collective management strategies, private-public partnerships, delegated authority schemes, and models of community-based governance. Even though governments and their corresponding agencies continue to hold substantial power, local communities and non-governmental organizations have assumed some of these roles. These kinds of institutional changes could potentially lower the responsibilities and related financial pressure on the state. This “devolving of power” (p.242) can also be a source of political legitimacy, enhancing the likelihood of these policies being accepted and successfully implemented. The increased emphasis and excitement around participatory decision-making in tourism is in step with these very evolutions in governance and policy-making.

Bramwell reflects on the widespread acceptance of anti-statism among not only policymakers but also the public. Changes in governance over the past thirty years, he notes, may as well be in response to an increasing dissatisfaction among individuals with traditional representative democracy. The advent of globalization has enabled individuals to handle and react to a wide range of information, a trend referred to as *'social reflexivity'* (Giddens, 1994 as cited in Bramwell, 2010). As a

result, individuals are becoming increasingly critical of the traditional social order and are growing more despondent about politics and political institutions. Demands for political reform, anti-corruption legislation, and general disenchantment with conventional political mechanisms are all expressions of this heightened social reflexivity. The disillusionment has pushed people to get involved in local community decision-making and policy-making forums.

While local participatory settings may seem to represent a devolution of power from the central government to local communities, the reality can often be quite different. The central government can utilize these very structures as channels to subtly consolidate and reestablish its control. By controlling access to critical resources, the central government can create a measure of dependency among local actors or communities. As governments transition towards a downsized model, there is a real chance for these local arrangements having to bid over a much more limited resource base. In this context, nothing much stands in the way of "actors with more influence and more resources" (p.243) consulting directly with higher-level authorities. This typically unfolds without much regard for local issues.

In developing countries, these pro-market, anti-statist tendencies provided space for a "number of community-based, tourism-related projects … established and assisted by national and international development agencies or NGOs, international financial institutions, donor agencies and private companies" (p.243). What is intriguing about these projects is that while they are community-based, much control over them resides outside the local communities. Bramwell points out a potential issue that arises when the intention to decentralize management to local people is already oriented towards specific types of outcomes. The orientation of community-based natural resource management towards specific outcomes related to ecotourism

in particular often undercuts the notion of local control. Butcher (2013) expresses a similar opinion:

> Its radical credentials and the rhetoric of empowerment and democracy mask the fact that local participation is normally about involving people (and incentivizing people) in playing a role in seeing through a predetermined project (p.108).

Elsewhere Butcher (2013, p. 46) suggests that the broader discussions about power dynamics, such as those between nations, between developed and developing worlds, and between social classes, are often overlooked in contemporary conversations about community participation in ecotourism. This implies a gap in the comprehensive understanding of these projects' context and impact — particularly the socio-political aspects. Bramwell's perspective, which situates individual experiences within larger, global power structures and socio-political trends, differs significantly from the focus of much ecotourism research, placing him arguably in the minority.

Bramwell (2010) acknowledges that community-based planning can depoliticize local decision-making and economic development, however, he argues this need not detract from "the ability of the less powerful to have agency despite the various constraints" (p.244). Such settings can still provide opportunities for traditionally disenfranchised actors. Therefore, he sees varying impacts of depoliticization based on specific situation dynamics.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO RESPONSIBLE TOURISM IN TÜRKİYE AND THE SUBJECT AREA

3.1 Responsible tourism in Türkiye

The term 'pleasure periphery' typically relates to locations that are geographically on the edge of major tourist-generating regions such as Western Europe, and that attract tourists with their natural beauty, climate, and cultural allure, often at a lower cost. Türkiye's position in this category was due to its location, attractive coastal resorts, rich cultural heritage, and competitive pricing, which made it a sought-after destination for European travelers, particularly during the 1980s. However, environmental consequences of Türkiye's rapid evolution into a mass tourism hotspot became evident with instances of marine pollution, destruction of natural habitats, and unsuitable construction practices in coastal areas. The construction of accommodation and tourist facilities often occurred without proper research or adherence to regulations. The influx of tourists often outpaced the development of adequate infrastructure.

In the 1990s, the Turkish government altered its tourism policies, emphasizing the conservation of natural and cultural resources, responsible planning, and the improvement of tourism infrastructure. The government started giving priority to small family-run lodging establishments, and insisting that tourism investments comply with environmental and cultural protection guidelines. The Sixth Five-Year Development Plan[2] (FYDP) marked a notable change by not prioritizing

[2] Covers the period between 1990-1994

mass tourism, as had been done previously, and instead gave emphasis to the protection of natural and cultural values. New policies were put in place for tourism establishments, requiring them to have the necessary complete infrastructure to be granted operation licenses.

Also, there was a stipulation that investment licenses would not be approved in regions where physical planning had not occurred or investors were required to accept the construction of necessary infrastructure as part of their development projects before they could obtain their licenses. Modifications were made to how tourism incentives were provided. The Development Bank, which assumed responsibilities of the Tourism Bank, introduced research programs to guide its lending policy and started to incorporate environmental considerations into its assessments for loan eligibility. In 1988, the Ministry of Tourism (MoT) released the 'Tourism Objectives' document, which detailed goals, principles, and strategies for developing tourism. Key among these were establishing regional ecological carrying capacities and updating physical plans accordingly, and implementing corrective measures in areas where the carrying capacity had already been surpassed. Additionally, Environmental Impact Assessments became a requirement for physical plans and large projects. The document further emphasized rural and nature tourism, preservation of regional architecture, and local community involvement. Specific action programs targeted at problem areas, such as conservation zones and environmental projects aimed at combating pollution, were also implemented.

In this setting, tour operators played a critical part in promoting and adapting to this new model of tourism. Operators with an environmentalist approach were particularly responsive to the changes. They recognized their potential role in protecting socio-cultural and natural environments and took actions consistent with

this belief. Wholesalers, particularly from the UK, who served as a key link to the Turkish tourism market, started to provide advice to tourists on respecting local culture and places. Tour leaders were seen as responsible for educating tourists about local lifestyles and culture, helping to create more meaningful and respectful interactions between visitors and hosts. Before all this, tour operators were more inclined to focus on selling Türkiye as a mass tourism destination, emphasizing the low cost of visiting the country rather than the quality of the experience or its impacts on the local environment and society. It was common for the UK operators to accommodate their customers in either cheap, often half-built hotels or those located near unsightly construction sites. The marketing focus on Türkiye's low costs left potential visitors with a one-dimensional and unflattering image.

These observations belong to Cooper and Özdil (1992). In their opinion, Türkiye's approach to tourism development was more insular, driven by its own experiences and challenges, rather than by learning from the experiences of other countries in the Mediterranean region that faced similar issues. This might have led to a series of reactive measures, addressing problems only after they had become apparent within Türkiye's own context. Cooper and Özdil perceptively recognize Türkiye's distinctive circumstances, suggesting they represent an emerging trend of "responsible tourism". They are forthright in their analysis, attributing the primary cause behind this process to evolving consumer preferences. They are convinced that tourists, in their role as consumers, wield considerable influence.

> Sheer pressure of consumer opinion and market veto may well be the most influential agent of change in tourism development in the 1990s (p.386)

The findings reported by Mundt (1991), based on a 1987 study, highlight a significant awareness and self-reflection among European (especially West German)

tourists, regarding the environmental impact of tourism. On one hand, the majority (8 out of 10) believed that alternative destinations should be chosen over those facing environmental problems. On the other hand, three-quarters of the same respondents acknowledged a general apathy among tourists towards the environmental consequences of their travels, yet they personally accepted responsibility for contributing to these negative impacts. Despite this high level of self-criticism, the same study showed that only a small fraction (2.7%) of the surveyed population acted upon news coverage related to pollution and associated problems in travel destinations over the past three years. According to Mundt, the lack of action among consumers is not due to a lack of concern or a psychological disengagement from the issue, but rather originates from a lack of sufficient information. The absence of "ecological market transparency" (p.60) does not however lead Mundt to conclude that responsible tourism is destined to disappoint. He identifies the ECOTRANS project, jointly managed by the Dutch Stichting Milieu Educatie and the German Studienkreis für Turismus, as a progressive solution. This initiative aims to establish a documentation and consultancy center dedicated to meeting the information needs of travelers regarding the environmental quality of destinations and tourism products. It also intends to profile existing "best practices", sharing these models with operators to facilitate their adoption in business operations. The expectation is that by promoting positive examples, less sustainable practices will be naturally phased out. Mundt then proudly announces that the ECOTRANS project fully syncs with free market economics. Cooper, Özdil, and Mundt offer early analyses of the evolving situation in Türkiye. Both predict that the impacts of this change will extend into the 1990s and possibly further.

One might wonder about the timing of the release of these two particular publications. The interval between 1989 and 1991 was a time of considerable difficulty for Türkiye's fledgling international tourism economy. There was a lack of specific inventory studies on investments, leading to mismatches in supply and demand, such as unplanned increases in bed capacity (Seckelmann, 2002). Insufficient reliable data, including unclear statistics about accommodations and the level of staff training, checked the ability to make informed decisions and maintain a competitive edge. Due to the government's attractive incentive scheme, investors rushed to create surplus capacity, with expectations that each bed would fetch a minimum of DM200. The actual developments, however, were a stark contrast to the hopeful forecasts (Özdemir, 1998, pp. 28–29). Inadequate investment planning subdued competitiveness abroad, with operators locked in stiff competition domestically and internationally, often forcing them to price their services below their operational costs. The decision to offer bargain prices also operated on the assumption that tourists' extra spending on side services will recoup initial financial losses. The strategy of competing on low prices, however, led to compromised service standards, which detracted from the overall tourism experience in Türkiye. The representatives of the sector responded to these occurrences with several distinct approaches or attitudes. Businesses opted to forego applying for operation licenses, making do with just their investment licenses. Acquiring an operation license would trigger the requirement to commence repayment of their loans (p.32). The next step was a plea for marketing support, with accusations that the government's inadequate promotional activities were responsible for the weak demand (p.201). Within Türkiye's context, however, exploring new sources carried the potential to displace existing demand. Some establishments and intermediaries diversified into ‘side

services', which detracted from their main managerial and investor obligations (p.202).

The final measure, which is not a favorite with local owner-managers, is effectively articulated by Kasım Yaman, a hotel proprietor, in an interview with Anatolia (Kozak, 1991, p. 39).

> Equity alone is insufficient for these types of investments. Originally, external funds were believed to offer a medium-term financial solution at 30% interest, but with monthly accruals, this rate has climbed to 82.75%. The proceeds from a fully occupied hotel at current profitability levels are only sufficient to cover half of the interest owed. It is not technically possible to pay both the interest and the principal under these conditions. Therefore, it is necessary for the interest rates to be reduced to a more manageable level, with the excess above that level potentially being forgiven. Otherwise, if the Development Bank proceeds with its measures, the hotels may have to be surrendered to the bank. Alternatively, in the quest to secure international partners, there's a possibility of divesting the hotels to foreign investors at markedly reduced rates.

It is evident that the demand shortfall during that period, and likely the following one, was a consequence of surplus capacity created earlier, not because of Europeans rejecting unsustainable tourism. Özdemir (1998, p. 30) notes that after foreign operators canceled bookings in 1989, the response was to adopt an overbooking policy in 1990. This approach was arguably premature, since the operators' crafty actions from the preceding year had already established the bargain rates they were after. This appraisal does not question the merit of the government's tourism incentives, but rather the manner in which they have been carried out. Perhaps the incentives were too enticing, causing private businesses to invest too ambitiously in tourism. Meanwhile, the liberalization measures in place provided an opening for international actors to use this situation to their advantage, pushing local businesses to set their accommodation rates at levels that caused them to operate at a loss.

Göymen (2000) discusses tourism development in Türkiye with a nuanced perspective. Tourism has contributed to local development within Türkiye, a country

marked by significant social and economic differences across its regions. As tourism activities extended into the less developed areas, they upgraded essential infrastructures, which provided advantages for both travelers and the resident population. Still, these improvements have not abolished the existing imbalances among regions. Over time, tourism in these regions gave rise to “new actors”, including volunteer organizations, guides, and city officials, all ready and capable of working alongside the national government. As they validated their capability for increased responsibility, they were gradually entrusted with more authority in the spirit of decentralization (2000, p. 1029). Not all actors were content with their newly acquired relative autonomy, nor were they fully prepared to manage it effectively. The majority of professional tourism organizations continued to support the idea of ongoing active involvement by the state, especially in terms of financial assistance.

Türkiye’s experiences with tourism development resonate with the framework established by Brohman (1996) to study tourism-related issues in developing countries. Despite active campaigns that originally downplayed the negatives in favor of tourism's economic benefits, concerns over the spatial imbalance between the well-off coastal regions and the disadvantaged interior generated outcries for a more diversified approach to tourism. For communities thriving from tourism, a positive perception is common, however, for those on the losing end, a sense of isolation or resentment is likely to surface. In various parts of Türkiye too, a feeling of disenchantment exists, based on the view that the economic gains of tourism are cornered by powerful conglomerates and non-locals, alongside a concern that areas once openly accessible, such as the coast, forests, and leisure spots, are now off-limits. In one particular aspect, Türkiye might still be considered

an outlier. Most tourism investment comes from indigenous capital and entrepreneurs, with less foreign dependency.

The Tourism Incentive Act (No. 2634) of 1982, actually enacted by the military regime of the time, marked the beginning of a new, more liberal period in Turkish governance. It sought to address numerous issues, such as the disorganized interactions between different tourism-related bodies, the challenges in procuring appropriate land for investment, and the excessively protracted bureaucratic processes. The law's provision was to ensure that "priority districts" were the favored recipients of tourism investment. Upon taking office after the 1983 elections, the civilian administration dedicated itself to creating a market-based economic system. Public investments in tourism superstructure were suspended, and steps were taken to start privatizing existing properties. The government relinquished its role in price determination for tourism establishments and replaced it with an elaborate system of incentives implemented by the Ministry of Tourism and the Tourism Bank. As part of the incentive plan, between 1983 and 1997, state authorities circulated 18 land listings, which led to 297 investors receiving plots for 95,178 beds, spread over 139 designated Tourism Areas and Centers. From 1983 to 1990, private investors acquired credits worth approximately $454 million from the state, with a further investment of more than $1.1 billion from their personal capital during these years. New to the scene from 1989 to 1994, the Development Bank provided financial resources that led to the creation of 75,000 additional beds. In Türkiye, the ratio of tourism-related investments to total fixed capital investments grew from a modest 0.7% in 1977 to 5.8% twelve years later in 1989. With the government's liberalizing agenda, the public-private balance significantly tilted towards the private sector. The

latter’s share in the sum of tourism investments, initially 38% in 1977, had jumped to 72% by 1996.

In three specific instances, Göymen presents a distorted representation of Türkiye’s situation. According to Göymen, the issue of foreign control and dependence does not weigh heavily on Türkiye, as a large portion of tourism capital is raised nationally, which may be attributed to Türkiye's history of non-colonization and a historical hesitancy towards foreign investment (p.1030). Alternatively, a periodization of tourism development by others suggests that, in the post-1980 era, there is a clear trend of actively bidding for foreign investment. In this matter, the analysis by Özbiçer (1994, p. 112) turns out to be quite useful. Starting in 1960 and continuing to the mid-1970s, tourism investment was on a smaller scale and locally driven. The years from the mid-1970s to 1983 were a transition towards the rise of large corporate holdings in the sector, with investment beginning to flow from outside the immediate region as well. From 1983 to 1991, the trend continued towards a consolidation by major capital groups, inclusive of investors from outside the region and abroad.

One can find more information that is relevant to the discussion in Kuşluvan's (1994) research. The Incentives Act extended significant incentives for tourism investment to international investors, which can be split into three categories: baseline assurances and privileges, incentives related to the investment period, and incentives applicable in the operating stage. Included in the general guarantees are the following: Companies that are entirely or partially foreign-owned are eligible for the full range of privileges and incentives that are extended to domestically owned businesses. Guarantees are in place for the remittance of profits, service charges, and royalties. In the event of dissolution, the repatriation of invested capital is also

permissible. There are no limitations on hiring non-Turkish nationals in management and specialized technical positions.

Projects in designated tourism zones receive government-provided infrastructure, including utilities and services, as per the MoT's plans, free of charge to private investors. When chosen locations for tourism projects fall outside current tourism development zones, the Ministry holds the authority to designate these sites as such. The MoT also provides investors with government-owned land as a component of its incentive program. This land is leased on a long-term basis, ranging from 49 to 99 years. Lessees are required to pay an annual fee of 0.5% of the land's value to the MoT. Moreover, for properties under the Ministry of Forestry's jurisdiction, an annual fee of 3% of the land's total value is payable to the Ministry of Forestry. Investors can obtain extended maturity loans with reduced interest in both local and foreign currency options. The MoT annually sets the conditions of the loan, including the grace period, repayment schedule, interest rates, and eligibility criteria. The loan amount can vary from 25% to 75% of the total project cost, based on the accommodation's type, size, and location. If investment tools and machinery are on the Global List, they are imported duty-free, and if purchased locally, the government reimburses 20% of their cost. Among the incentives during the period of operation are minimum tariff rates for electricity, gas, and water services, as well as a five-year exemption from the annual property tax, typically calculated at 0.6% of the property's value. To qualify for these entitlements, investors need to acquire a tourism investment and operation license from the MoT and a tourism encouragement license from the State Planning Organization (SPO).

The rest of Kuşluvan's analysis establishes convincingly that there was nothing misconceived about the incentive plan, both regarding its provisions and its

method of implementation. The examination of MoT data up until the year 1990 showed that out of 54 establishments in total, foreign investors had full ownership in 11 (20%), majority ownership in 15 (28%), minority ownership in 24 (44.5%), and joint ownership in 4 (7.5%). Aggregating all forms of foreign equity interests, from partial to full, they accounted for 4% of the entire pool of licensed accommodation premises and 12% of all tourist beds. The bulk of these investments, tallying 37 firms or 69%, took place in the period following 1980. The total count of contractual deals, on the other hand, reached 16 by 1992, broken down into 9 management deals and 7 franchise agreements. In terms of market entry patterns, Türkiye stands apart from other developing countries. Equity investments are the dominant entry mode, comprising 77% of foreign activity, far exceeding the 31.4% seen in other developing economies. Management contracts as an entry mode is more modest in Türkiye at 13%, compared to 44% in other developing regions (p.201). The evidence, therefore, implies that the liberal approach to policy making was indeed intentional and clear in its ambitions. It is unexpected and quite perplexing that Göymen, in discussing the rise of new local actors, keeps editing out the influence of international ones.

Göymen insists that the push toward diversified tourism reflects the frustrations of communities that felt sidelined in the time when mass tourism was sweeping across Western Türkiye. Nevertheless, alternate evidence points to diversification being chiefly a strategy to combat the overinvestment crisis of the time. The then-Tourism Minister, Abdülkadir Ateş, made no secret of this perspective (Ateş, 1992). Yalçındağ (1994) reflects on the government's mountain tourism agenda, intended as their leading alternative to mass tourism. Twenty unique alpine meadows (yayla) in the Eastern Black Sea Region were selected as "tourism centers"

by the MoT between 1987 and 1991. The Ministry decided to proceed with environmental plans (çevre düzeni planı) for a select twelve of these locations that have been nominated as most significant for the initial phase of mountain tourism. An array of activities including climbing, winter sports, hiking, white-water rafting, and game hunting were conceived for development, with plans for demarcating trails for nature tours. Landscaping studies rolled out campgrounds, spaces for day-to-day use, verdant zones, pastoral coffee shops, and installations for seasonal sports activities. Provisions, reportedly modest, were also made for commercial and residential usage. Establishing a working relationship with relevant government agencies to expedite the delivery of essential infrastructure and superstructure services at these sites denoted another critical project of the Ministry. Audits were completed in the provinces; during assemblies chaired by governors, attended by public investment authorities, "Action Programs" for 1991 were laid out. Naming these places as "centers" was an integral move to maintain fidelity to the mandates of Law No. 2634. In generating development proposals for these sites, which are legally non-registerable, largely consisting of highlands and pastures not on record, and partially extending into forest zones, the Ministry was hopeful that Public Works and Housing authority would sign off on its approval, and in consequence, vest in them the rights of operation within these areas. Following this, the Ministry would delegate these rights to either public institutions or private parties for tourism-related projects, by arranging fixed-term easement rights.

Yet, as Yalçındağ (1994, p. 52) reports, the Ministry of Public Works and Housing officials were unaccommodating, stalling the MoT's demands for two consecutive years. The avowed reason laid out legal factors, but behind the scenes, representatives from Public Works were confident that the environmental impact of

these tourism schemes would be significant and negative. Within the bureaucratic ranks of the MoT, however, there was a sense that these places were primed for tourism, an outcome waiting to happen, and they insisted that careful planning and governmental control were indispensable in restraining the most serious impacts. Interestingly, both agencies seem to use environmental issues as a pretext, with one resisting and the other promoting the diversified tourism agenda. It is possible that the real motives of both agencies were not strictly environmental[3], especially with figures like Özdemir (1998, p. 280) questioning the reliability of tourism diversification in resolving the crisis (seemingly working under the not-too-fantastical presumption that each proposal from the Ministry at that point must be for the purposes of crisis intervention). A still more plausible inference is that the MoT could have been aspiring to repackage the Tourism Encouragement Law as a framework for environmental sustainability and social fairness to revive it, and to address concerns about past inadequacies or the credibility of their approaching bailout operation.

Göymen's third misjudgment is evident in his assumption about the endpoint of the ongoing tourism governance reforms. Göymen reports on the faint enthusiasm among some new actors, particularly professional tourism associations, when presented with greater autonomy. Apparently, there is some discomfort with the tempo of policy change as they are not used to the state relinquishing control so quickly. The takeaway here is that stages in tourism development are not distinctly separate and can frequently overlap within a particular country's context (2000, p. 1029). That said, the inception of organizations such as TUROB (the Hotel Association of Türkiye), TTYD (the Turkish Tourism Investors Association),

[3] See Özden et al. (2004) for a review of later developments in the area.

TUGEV (The Tourism Development and Education Foundation), and the more venerable TÜRSAB (the Association of Turkish Travel Agencies) presages a time where the state's influence in tourism is expected to steadily decline (p.1035). Indeed, Göymen stresses that several aspects including the environment, promotion, infrastructure, and training, had already seen emerging cooperation and interaction among these tourism actors. In relation to environmental factors, the MoT has mandated impact assessments for every investment, a requirement clearly linked with the choice to distribute land under the new incentive program. TÜRÇEV (the Foundation for Environmental Education)'s creation helps in making environmental policymaking more inclusive, which is essential for the faithful progress of the sustainable/responsible tourism model. Nevertheless, Göymen concedes that a definitive outcome on this issue awaits the point at which "various policy-areas" line up in a conflict-free manner (p.1041).

The SPO's expert tourism report of 1995 hinted at the government's omission of full-scale legal guidelines targeting environmental protection in tourism (Tosun, 2001, p. 297), while the environmental specialist group in 1994 admitted there was a significant implementation gap in legislative action. The Seventh FYDP[4], on the other hand, made it clear that it was essential to update constitutional articles related to environmental issues so that they comply with the requirements of sustainable economic development. Reiterating Göymen's exact perspective, it was proposed that the Environment Act No. 2872, Forest Act No. 6831, Tourism Incentive Act No. 2634, Zoning Act No. 3194, Shore Act No. 3621, and the Conservation of Cultural and Natural Assets Act No. 2863 should similarly undergo revisions and modifications. Yet, it would be incorrect to think that these pieces of legislation

[4] Covers the period between 1996-2000

worked at cross-purposes and had been without a unifying logic. Further, it would be doubly simplistic to conclude, following Göymen, that both the so-called legal incongruities and the delays in resolving them were down to the new elites' inexperience or their not yet having found the methods to fuse altruistic motives with self-serving ones (2000, p. 1040).

In looking at these laws, one must admit that a number of critical environmental regulations have features that helped avoid the full immobilization of the Tourism Incentive Act by their codes (Arslan, 1995). The permission for certified establishments to operate in areas of natural and historical significance (Art. 6), alongside the concessional allocation of Treasury lands within Tourism Districts (Art. 3) upon the Ministry's recommendation and the Council of Ministers' ruling (Art. 8), appear to be the foremost functional necessities of the Tourism Incentive Act. Under the National Parks Act (Art. 2), it is permissible for private parties to develop tourist facilities within public protected areas, without their needing to be gazetted as tourism centers and upon leave from the Treasury and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, provided these developments meet public interest criteria and fit within the established zoning plans. In terms of planning, the Act (Art. 4) required the formulation of "development plans" for conservation areas, with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry being responsible for their realization and enforcement, and their submission to associated ministries for input. In the case of specific plans, it was necessary to work in consultation with the MoT (Art. 3). The Shore Act also permitted the use of coastal areas for tourism purposes in accordance with Article 7 of the Tourism Incentive Law. Within Article 2, the Act describes the physical locations it applies to and the legal aspects it governs. Seas, natural and artificial lakes, riverbanks, and surrounding coastlines fall with its geographical purview.

Legally, it codifies the conditions under which the public can access and use these areas. This part also gives place to planning and design considerations as it lays down rules for zoning, environmental management, and issuing construction interdictions and building codes. Again, the Incentive Law appears to be the exclusive carve-out to these planning directives (Art. 10). Arslan (p.74) also remarks that, by arrangement, the Tourism Incentive Act does not make use of environmental impact assessments, instead delegating this function to alternative public organizations. It would appear that the legal system meant for conserving the environment and public areas is purposefully made impotent in its capacity to regulate tourism-related projects.

3.2 Protected areas in Türkiye: management and planning approaches

This section offers a retrospective on Türkiye's approach to the governance and strategic planning of protected areas, tracking the policy developments after 1980 with a trio of different scholarly perspectives. We lead with an account of the significant 2019 Parliamentary Hearing testimony by Nevzat Ceylan[5], who contended with a proposal to terminate the General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks. Ceylan's remarks before the Parliamentary Environment Commission introduce a key piece of historical context all-important to keeping up with the remainder of this section's analysis.

According to Ceylan, the General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks holds a significant responsibility for the conservation and

[5]Consultation on a Proposal to Reinforce Operations by Unifying the General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks with the General Directorate for the Preservation of Natural Assets. Parliamentary Commission (10 / 102, 461, 682, 977, 981, 982) Term: 27th Legislative Year: 3 Date: 10/10/2019.

management of Türkiye's diverse ecosystems. It oversees a considerable portion of the country's protected areas, including 45 national parks, and it has been active in this capacity since 1958. This organization contributes to the protection of Türkiye's biodiversity and natural heritage, ensuring that approximately 5 percent of the country is under some form of protection. The body became a general directorate in 1976. Downgraded to a department during the September 12 military coup, it was restored to general directorate in 1991. It now presides over environmental conservation efforts through its 15 regional directorates, branch directorates in 82 places and upwards of 150 chief and subsidiary offices. Management of protected areas falls under the jurisdiction of not just the directorate however.

> Back in 1986, plans were underway for a hotel development[6] in Dalyan İztuzu, but significant pushback from environmental groups, concerned for the 'caretta caretta' sea turtles in the region, prompted a change in course. Prime Minister Turgut Özal ultimately called off the construction. There is considerable push from the EU [sic] and Türkiye's own NGOs to turn this area into a national park. Mr. Özal has given the word to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Affairs to forge ahead with the project. Alas, the departmentalization has led to a diminishment of its roles, and as a result, the National Parks authority was struggling to expedite the process. Amidst delays, Mr. Özal intervened by proposing a legal amendment to the Environment Act for the immediate protection of İztuzu and Dalyan regions. He shortly after extended these protections to Göcek and Gökova. Fast forward to '89, this whole operation is upgraded to this special environmental protection board, and by '90, Türkiye's prized spots are locked down as protected areas. These special environmental protection zones received an additional lever of control, that is, they are given physical planning authority, which is not the case in national parks. That was done with the approval of the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization at that time, and that framework is still in place today. This situation emerged because the General Directorate of National Parks was downsized into a department. As a result, we have ended up with a split system: on one side, there is the General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks under the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and on the other, the General Directorate for the Protection of Natural Assets sits with the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization.

[6]See Özhan (1991) for an excellent account of the events surrounding the Kaunos Beach Resort project by the Kavala-IFA-DEG consortium.

Türkiye presents a unique case in its management of protected areas, as it essentially operates under a bi-headed system. This has led to considerable overlap in jurisdiction, with close to half of the protected territories falling under the purview of both administrations. While the combined coverage claimed by the two bodies accounts for about 8% of Türkiye's land, eliminating the double entries reveals that the actual unique protected land amounts to only about 4 to 5%. Following its reconstitution in 1992, the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization absorbed the natural heritage sites from the Ministry of Culture and, through new legislative directives, was entrusted with the land registry responsibilities for areas consecrated by the General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks. This development is seen as a deviation from standard administrative practice, as typically, one ministry does not certify the actions of another. Most particularly, Ceylan asserts that rather than dissolving the National Parks authority, it would be more prudent to consolidate the two into one big agency, creating affiliated bodies in the process. The General Directorate of the Protection of Natural Assets, does not have its own regional administrators and is inefficiently run due to central management, particularly in the case of special environmental protection zones. In contrast, the General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks operates through a comprehensive provincial organization structure and is thereby more effective in its duties. With approximately 5,000 highly trained employees, merging the two would seem to be a sensible move. Even if a merger does not happen, the General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks should undoubtedly persist as an autonomous affiliate.

Sarı (2021) examines a number of pioneering environmental legislative measures from the post-1980 era. The United Nations Environment Programme

(UNEP) created an Action Plan for the Protection of the Mediterranean Region, commonly known as the Mediterranean Action Plan. The plan was part of UNEP's Regional Seas Programme and aimed to address various environmental issues in the Mediterranean Basin, such as pollution and the conservation of marine life and habitats. It was later approved at the Intergovernmental Meeting in Barcelona in 1975, which also led to the adoption of the Barcelona Convention, formally titled the "Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution." This convention, and the protocols that followed, set the framework for Mediterranean countries to cooperate in reducing pollution in the region and to protect its marine environment and coastal areas. After joining the Convention in 1981, Türkiye, for the first time, legislated for special protected areas, coastal planning, and biodiversity conservation.

Türkiye ratified the UNESCO "Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage" in 1983. In the wake of ratification, the development of area management plans became a requirement, a critical step in adapting Türkiye's legal structures to international benchmarks. Enacted through Law No. 2863, which provides a comprehensive legal structure for protection measures, the year 1984 saw the inception of the "High Council for Immovable Cultural and Natural Assets" alongside regional councils, marking the genesis of the devolution process in conservation activities. By adopting the Conservation Development Plan (Koruma Amaçlı İmar Planı), the Act created a legislative milestone that linked conservation approaches with formal planning. Following this, protected areas began to be governed by their own bespoke plans. This development, however, bifurcated the planning system into standard zoning plans and specialized conservation plans,

opening the door to potential disparities in the planning outcomes of the two methodologies (p.408).

The adoption of the National Parks Law No. 2873 in 1983, reinforced by the National Parks Directive of 1986, extricated national park management from the prevue of the Forest Act and presented it with a unique, self-named regulation. This Law establishes clear definitions for the categories of national parks, nature parks, nature conservation areas, and natural monuments, thereby providing a legal basis for their identification and management. In the beginning, the management of national parks was centered on landscape aesthetics and recreational use (i.e., intricate planning procedures were unnecessary for parks of modest size). As national parks agenda evolved to protect biological diversity, planners updated their strategies, which reintroduced phased development plans (Uzun Devreli Gelişme Planları/ UDGP) in the 1990s. Following the "Türkiye Protected Areas Management Planning Guide" published in 2006 and the "Protected Area Planning and Management" book in 2007 by the General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks, plans for an array of protected areas began to rapidly materialize. The timeline for such activities shows a substantial increment, from 31 UDGP prior to 2012, to a jump of 136 in the ensuing five-year span.

The Environment Act, on the other hand, not only casts a wide net for the protection of natural resources but also specifically mandates the creation of Special Environmental Protection Areas (Özel Çevre Koruma Bölgesi) to conserve ecologically sensitive landscapes and seascapes for posterity. The Act (Law No. 2872) was followed, ten years later, by the introduction of the first Environmental Impact Assessment regulation in 1993.

With the introduction of Law No. 5226 in 2004, which amended the Protection of Cultural and Natural Assets Act, new legal definitions for terms such as "management area", "management plan," and "connectivity corridors" were established. The Law insisted on adopting participatory management styles in the creation of conservation development plans. It stipulated that local governments responsible for creating or commissioning such plans are required to convene meetings with relevant professional chambers, non-governmental organizations, and citizens who could be impacted by the planning decisions. With the legislative amendment, a management plan was articulated to mean an outline that specifies both the annual and five-year implementation phases, along with budgetary requirements, for the conservation and development project. The plan's purpose is to ensure the ongoing protection, sustainability, and evaluation of the management area.

In Türkiye, forest planning is oriented to optimize wood harvests for the timber trade. According to Önder Özşeker (2022), the value of forested areas is regularly condensed to numerical data, principally the quantity of timber that can be yielded from the tree stock. However, as Türkiye has progressed further into a free market economy, especially since the 1980s and increasingly in the 2000s, the role and perception of forests have evolved. Forests have emerged as assets beyond their wood production capacity, supporting a diverse array of economic functions.

Although field and planning officers have side methods to generate extra yield, the legal pretenses for these practices are eroding. Even as this situation develops, the yearly planning process unerringly fixes harvest quotas and selects specific tracts for clearance. Yet Önder Özşeker's analysis points to an inflexible policy path, reinforced by the fiberboard industry's consistent and high demand. Industrial afforestation too operates in a dubious management gray zone. Trees like

red pines are harvested at 30 years rather than the natural 80-year cycle, applying evenly spaced, dense plantation schemes. Such practices portend inevitable product losses in the near future. In the past, both the projected intermediate yields and plan forecasts were reported with caution, factoring in uncertainties and potential complications. However, more recently, professionals have noted significant administrative pressure to maintain higher yield targets.

Önder Özşeker also cites several instances where incursions are caused by different demand factors. In 2020, the extent of 'non-forestry allocations' stood at 748 thousand hectares, making up 3.3% of the total forested areas. The majority of these allocations, specifically 66%, were authorized between the years 2004 and 2020 (p.165). In Turan (2009)'s study, the topic of forest-land redistribution is given thorough analysis. Turan opens with a distinction between the acts of planning and altering plans, and other techniques of liquidating or converting public land, and correlates each to the generation of 'urban rent'. During the early 1980s, the responsibility for city plan approval moved from the Ministry to the municipal councils. According to Law No. 3194, plans are divided into regional plans and zoning plans, with zoning plans further subdivided into master and implementation zoning plans. Moreover, nestled between the two is an environmental planning layer. While regional plans receive approval from the State Planning Organization, the Ministry of Public Works and Settlement is the
approving authority for environmental plans. In accordance with the Provincial Administration Law No. 5302, passed in 2005, the approval of provincial environmental plans falls within the jurisdiction of the provincial general councils. The responsibility for master zoning and implementation zoning plans is retained by the local municipalities. At first glance, the urban planning hierarchy might suggest

chaos, yet it follows an exclusive logic, as certain privileged institutions and organizations possess special planning rights, which they use to create distinct urban enclaves (sites governed by individualized, inimitable plans). The Ministry of Public Works, meanwhile, wields the authority of a disciplinarian. Under Zoning Law No. 3194, the Ministry is accorded the capacity to develop, outsource, amend, and unilaterally approve zoning plans when necessary. The system's operability is however recuperated not by adopting a universal planning solution (as any superimposed plan is only universally applicable in a nominal sense), but through an assertive tactic – self-conflicting localized planning approaches are in danger of being axed, failing to attain even a single one of their ambitions. Turan's immediate conclusion is that the underlying criteria for proper planning—public interest, civic service, and urbanism—are being habitually endangered (p.132). Planning processes unfold in an ad-hoc, compartmentalized manner, with continuous revisions made to accommodate daily demands. Since 2003, urban renewal and resource development activities show this trend, typified by a planning style that disregards the broader urban context, isolates different parts of the city, even proceeding to the fineness of individual plot planning.

Turan, much like Önder Özşeker, is concerned more with the fragmentation of ownership in public land holdings.

> ...government-owned land is either being converted into private ownership through different mechanisms or it is being availed for the use and benefit of private parties. The matter is typically studied in administrative law textbooks under categories synonymous with 'ways of utilizing public assets' or 'public enjoyment of state properties,' but here it is explored exclusively from the perspective that engenders private property … In fact, as a general category, the concept of transfer (paid transfer-free transfer) can be used to describe this process. However, in addition to this, concepts like sale, allocation, establishment of easement rights, usufruct rights, superficies rights, the establishment of in rem rights on property, and leasing are used in both practice and legal regulations … multiple methods can be encountered in the area slated for hands-on management, and each of these methods ultimately

> leads either to the complete relinquishment of ownership or ends in a monopoly regarding the exploitation and gains from the property. (pp.133-5)

Appropriately, Turan separates ‘allocations’ into a standalone classification. The term signifies the no-cost transfer of use of state-governed properties to organizations with dedicated funding (such as municipalities, provincial special administrations, and villages) for the purpose of conducting public services. Special laws also prescribe that allocation be used to place properties under the administration of relevant general or annexed budget institutions for the benefit of rightful claimants. Although there is a standing principle that locations governed by forest, pastures, and national park legislations are not eligible for allocation, the exceptions that have been made allow for cases where this rule is not applicable. Traditionally inalienable public holdings such as meadows, woodlands, farmlands, and coastlines can shed these restrictions, and be up for ownership change (p.137).

Turan remarks that, due to the face-paced rural-to-urban migration, those relocating to cities have commonly taken up residence on the agricultural land, pastures, and forests near the urban fringes. Still, it is trivially true that the main thrust of recent legal reorganization is largely to settle matters related to public ownership and evolving legal identities in these places that are progressively ‘outskirts’ in name only. The factors compelling these relocations, notably mechanized agriculture, have equally been pushing for the conversion of rural forest regions into arable land (p.153).

Turan continues the discussion with land-use changes in response to the demands of tourism development. Under the terms of Article 8 of the Tourism Incentives Act, the Ministry of Tourism is entitled to request and receive allocation of treasury lands and forests in established tourism areas and centers. Land conversions

totaling 150,000 hectares were made for the Ministry of Tourism between the years 1983 and 1999 (p.157). In accordance with the amendment to Article 17 of the Forest Act by Law No. 3373 in 1987, outside of tourism areas and centers, the Ministry of Forestry is authorized to permit real and legal persons to construct all kinds of buildings and facilities for the public benefit in forests, provided there is compensation. Nonetheless, these arrangements have, from time to time, been contested in the Constitutional Court. Two critical rulings by the Court concerning these allocations date back to 2002 and 2007. [7]

Turan's key assertion is that allocations are somewhat milder compared to other, more absolute types of privatization. He also seems to maintain that the post-2000 developments in Turkey's tourism cannot be wholly attributed to the continuing reliance of investors on generous government handouts and their rent-seeking behavior. Putting it more accurately, in the implementation of administrative measures, whether they give legitimacy to a de facto circumstance or engineer a new one, market forces are decisively influential throughout the entirety of the decision-making process (p.133). That said, there is a need to elaborate on certain aspects of the Tourism Incentives Act, noteworthy for its tenacity and duration, which Turan's analysis does not quite address. One of the most profound impacts of these forest allocations is the segmentation of continuous forested areas. Statistics show a 118% increase in the number of forest patches smaller than 10 hectares from 2008 to 2019,

[7] Law No. 5192 was promulgated in 2004 to revise and replace the invalidated parts of Law No. 3373 in 2002. Notably absent from the updated law was the 'tourism areas and centers' concept due to legal insufficiencies. Oddly, in 2003, an amendment to the Tourism Incentive Law via Law No. 4957 preempted Law No. 5192. The 2003 changes shared similarities with the overturned sections of the Forest Law. This was surely done to maintain the continuity of forest land allocation for tourism. During the 2007 legal proceedings seeking to repeal select parts of Article 8 within Law No. 2634, the Court ordered a freeze on using forests for tourism investment, effective one year post-ruling. Yet, a legislative amelioration occurred shortly before this deadline, making the Court's decision inconsequential.

while there was an 11% reduction in areas between 10 and 99 hectares and a notable 42% plunge in forest segments sized 100 to 999 hectares. Referred to as habitat fragmentation, this pattern is a well-known instigator of biodiversity loss (Önder Özşeker, 2022, p. 170).

Önder Özşeker is curious about the changes that could follow the implementation of an Ecosystem-based Functional Planning Model. The 1990's 'close to nature forestry' approach gave way to new methodologies such as 'Sustainable Forest Management' (SFM) and 'functional planning' in the subsequent decade. These institutional changes and initiatives linked with SFM are part of global movements post-1990s. Following the Earth Summit, held in Rio in 1992, a flurry of global activities related to forests and forestry unfolded. The 'Forestry Principles', three fundamental agreements, and Agenda 21 belong to the standout documents from this period. Sustainable Forest Management took center stage during the 1990s through a succession of meetings and conferences, organized by the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests. By the year 2000, these deliberations resulted in the adoption of 270 forestry-related resolutions under 16 different categories.

A major stumbling block during these talks is the question of who will be responsible for reparations for any adverse effects caused by these principles (p.175). To address these complexities, distinct 'regional processes' have been organized. Türkiye participates in the Pan-European Process, which originated in 1990 at the behest of France, Finland, Austria, and Portugal, as well as the Near East Process, inaugurated in Cairo in 1996. By generating 6 criteria and 36 indicators, with complete technical manuals, the Pan-European process sharply defined SFM. In 2006, the General Directorate of Forestry synthesized criteria and indicators from

these dual processes, ultimately developing 6 national-level criteria and a corresponding set of indicators. From 2008 to 2011, as part of its climate change adaptation strategy, Türkiye, in partnership with UN organizations and through the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization's newly established Climate Change Department, completed the 'Joint Program on Developing Türkiye's Adaptation Capacity to Climate Change.' The formalization process concluded successfully with the release of the Climate Change National Action Plan (2011-2023) alongside Türkiye's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan (2011-2023). The chief aspiration is to consolidate climate change adaptation with the existing policy structure for ecosystem services, biodiversity, and forestry.

In 2004, as part of the GEF[8]-II Project, the General Directorate of Forestry (GDF) commissioned the Forestry Faculties at Istanbul University, Karadeniz Technical University, and Süleyman Demirel University to draw up a new forest management regulation. The project rounded off in 2008 with the adoption of the 'Ecosystem-Based Functional Planning Forest Management Regulation,' modernizing the framework for forest management planning. The Regulation addresses various planning issues, such as sustainability, efficiency, multi-purpose utilization, socio-cultural traditions, inter-sectoral coordination, international responsibility, protection of biological diversity, protection of aesthetics and other values, carbon balance, participatory approach' in its Art. 4-a. Also, it breaks down the forest regime areas into smaller units—planning units, operational grades, compartments, and subdivisions—and plans to attribute varied functions (i.e., economic, ecological, socio-cultural) to each, according to Articles 10 and 11. The organization of the

[8]See Duru (2003) for a critical introduction to the Global Environment Facility (GEF)-Türkiye relations.

forest into functionally distinct areas and the attribution of specific operational missions and conservation aims to each is the crux of 'multi-purpose utilization'.

The Circular 299, "Procedures and Principles for the Arrangement of Ecosystem-Based Functional Forest Management Plans" issued by GDF in 2017, stipulates how management plans will be arranged according to function. New 'protected area' types are introduced in the 'nature protection function' notification. The Circular recommends that forests with prohibitive 'tending conditions' such as slopes over 80%, soil depth under 50 cm, stoniness above 60%, and areas in the 'upper forest zone' be reserved for protection. Under the nature protection function, one also finds alpine zones, ancient natural forests, ecological buffer zones, areas with high conservation value, high mountain ecosystems, areas subject to social pressure, dune and wetland conservation areas, riparian zones, forest ecosystem monitoring regions, designated visitation areas, and monumental trees. According to the Circular, work on inventorying, analyzing, and modeling target species and biodiversity must precede the forest management plan development by one year. From this inventory, a 'Biological Diversity Protected Areas Map' is produced, which the planner then overlays with the stand map. Ultimately, the function chart itemizes 'biodiversity preservation and development zones,' explicitly disallowing any silvicultural intervention. Planning code also requires the calculation of stored carbon levels as well as the dust retention and oxygen generation metrics (Art. 25). Another notification unrelated to biodiversity is the obligation to conduct an inventory of non-wood forest products and to create individual production strategies for each of these products (Articles 26 and 76).

This planning style consolidates the many aspects of forest life into a singular, orderly proposition (p.185). Önder Özşeker critiques that Sustainable Forest

Management takes particular satisfaction in its conservation biology heritage, being self-referential and fanatic about technical criteria and their infinite refinement. This approach places the agenda at a remove from its core subject, bypassing most of the finer points and the profound experiences that come from less technical and more hands-on conservation techniques. That said, Önder Özşeker is swift to assert that planning decisions, conservation strategies, and perspectives typical of Sustainable Forest Management struggle to influence the implementation processes as they clash with the current production-oriented system. The 'Principles for the Formulation of 2021 Management Plan,' comprising 22 articles and familiar to the GDF staff, is a piece of internal correspondence that is not legally binding as it is not part of formal legislation. Despite this, it serves as the de facto standard, with most plans being developed in accordance with its criteria (p.157). This occurs even with the established 2008 Regulation and the 2017 Circular in place. Articles 10 to 14 of the incognito memorandum impose productivity measures so exacting that the memorandum itself seems to reflect on their achievability. Notably, Article 20 concedes that if meeting these criteria is not compatible with forest sustainability, the circumstances must be relayed in a report by the planner, controller, and implementers. This report, pending the regional manager's approval, must then be appended to the management plan. Önder Özşeker concludes her analysis with a surprisingly anticlimactic statement (p.234): “Even so, one should not dismiss Sustainable Forest Management practices as entirely futile or simple political gestures; they undergo evolution through conflict-reconciliation cycles and yield localized adaptations rather than fixed models”.

Perhaps a more fitting option would have been to exploit this political economy backdrop to rethink the uncritical attitude toward planned sustainable

tourism development. It is worth questioning at least why planned tourism is seldom set against a supposed unplanned case, as in Sarı (2020). The Türkiye Tourism Strategy 2023, along with the Türkiye Tourism Strategy Action Plan 2007-2013, was cleared by the Supreme Planning Council under the Decision No. 2007/4 on February 28, 2007. Between 01 - 03 November 2017, III. Tourism Council was organized. 'Product diversity and sustainability in tourism' was a flagged topic during the council, and a selected commission was tasked to assemble a final report. After the commission's sessions, an Action Plan was developed, featuring 92 measures arranged under the themes of legislation-organization, promotion-marketing, planning-infrastructure, incentives, and education-employment. The strength of Sarı's analysis lies perhaps in exposing a curious conceptual sequence in these policy episodes: where sustainable tourism steps lead, local development follows (p.14). Naturally, Sarı believes it is necessary to inspect the Regional Development National Strategy and the connected regional plans for the 26 Level 2 regions. The Regional Development Strategy maintains consistency with the Türkiye Tourism Strategy by reiterating the significance of diversifying tourism. Upon examining the extent of sustainable tourism measures within regional plans and tourism's impact on regional economies, it becomes clear, however, that sustainable tourism acts as a secondary option. A bias is evident in the planning approaches of BAKA, ISTKA, and GEKA towards the well-established mass tourism (accounting for 10% or more of these regions' tourism activities) (p.15). Sarı continues to assert that development agencies (kalkınma ajansları) perceive tourism as a lever to correct unequal development patterns that exist both among and within regions. As such, the formalization of the 2014 regional plans indicates that there has been substantial headway in addressing the inadequacies in regional planning that Tosun & Jenkins

(1996) reported. However, despite strides in planning, there are ongoing complications with managing tourism on a regional scale. The same study suggests that without strong administrative responsibilities, operational difficulties endure. Inattention to effective participatory processes and governance models in the more granular tourism plans have meant that the outcomes of sustainable tourism have been less than satisfactory.

The Türkiye Tourism Strategy (TTS) Action Plan 2007-2013 represents the first foray into strategic planning in tourism made possible by Public Financial Management and Control Law No. 5018. Strategic planning calls for a methodical arrangement of physical planning, organization models, financial solutions, and legal structures, ensuring self-financing models precede to minimize fiscal demands on the public. The TTS Action Plan also represented the Nineth Five-Year Development Plan's projection for a comprehensive Tourism Master Plan.

Türkiye Tourism Strategy 2023 introduces a structured approach to organization that involves the creation of national, regional, provincial and point level councils intended to streamline collective decision-making among public authorities, private sector organizations and NGOs both in public policy governance and destination management. Under the ‘Tourism Councils Law and Establishment of Councils’ action, a deadline was fixed for revisions to be made to Law no. 4848, the Law on the Establishment and Duties of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, to legally facilitate the creation of the councils. The ‘Investment Strategy’, on the other hand, crossed in some key related actions like incentive schemes, land distribution, renovation/modernization of tourism establishments, company certifications, and protocols for foreign investment, with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism being the only authority in charge of these regulations.

To this day, the decision-making nexus for establishing investment incentives and promotion and marketing approaches in tourism remains an open question, with it being unclear if responsibility resides within the new governance structure or the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (Taşcı, 2019, p. 108). To be sure, the 'tourism towns' model forefronts project liberties, providing investors with extensive design privileges within the strategic framework for the land allocations they receive as incentives. Land allocations, an incentive born from the 1980s vision of mass tourism, are yet to be evaluated for their compatibility with the sustainability criteria that feature prominently in the latest vision. It is evident, however, that the process of distributing treasury-tagged properties for tourism investment support sidesteps participatory planning and cooperative arrangements. Over a decade seems to have passed, and the council structure proposed in Türkiye's Tourism Strategy 2023 as a staple for public-private partnerships have not moved forward due to regulatory inaction. As Taşcı points out, the setback with the councils has hardly kept influential groups with ties to tourism from seeking to interact with government authorities. For the purpose of collaborative action toward sustainable development and stable tourism growth no less, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism assembled the ‘Tourism Advisory Board’ on April 27, 2018, uniting 9 industry-representative institutions and professional associations.

Türkiye is well-acquainted with collaborative platforms between the tourism business community and public administrators. In 1963's first Five-Year Development Plan, Taşcı notes the inception of a 'Tourism Development Committee' with industry affiliate membership. Remarkably, this step was singular, as no comparable organizational development took place over the next thirty years (p.101). A more significant early example, the ‘Tourism Private Sector Council,’ or TÖSEK,

came into existence on July 15, 1991. This was succeeded by another notable consortium, the Tourism Sector Council (TUSEK for short), in 1997. The ‘Tourism Congress’ created in June 2012 stands as the predecessor to the ‘Tourism Advisory Board.’

In retrospect, it is clear that the policy framework for tourism in Türkiye has invariably factored in sustainability concerns. From as early as the 1990s, sustainability was implicitly or explicitly part of the government's strategic approach to developing and managing tourism. The evidence presented in this and the preceding section reflects an inveterate resolve to use tourism as a means to narrow income gaps between regions. If nothing else, backing from Türkiye's new class of tourism entrepreneurs for tourism that creates value added in local settings helps refute the idea that nation’s large-scale mass tourism industry needs to be synonymous with short-sighted profit motives. Interestingly yet, the practice of determining the credibility of sustainable tourism involves assessing support for "more participative governance systems" (Alvarez, 2014, p. 98). It would appear that, in the Turkish case, as long as the coalition of forces in control of tourism policy continued to minimize the necessity for multiple levels of participation, allegations of "a strong relationship between the over-centralization of public administration, the emergence of clientelism, and the impact of tourism on the environment" (Tosun & Fyall, 2005, p. 259) also insistently made a comeback. At this stage, it is worth recalling two key points: firstly, while a community-oriented method for managing tourism can empower local citizens, acceptance of this is often conditional upon an equal insistence that sustainability and development are of comparable social value (Alvarez, 2014, p. 95). A strange implication is subtly present here. The alternative ‘limits to growth’ model is unique in that it requires no action from mobilized groups

or individuals. An improved method of analyzing Türkiye's approach to sustainable tourism policy throughout and before the 2000s – and this stands as the more important second point –could be to accept that while many policy platforms desired support from the disadvantaged for tourism and growth, they trusted that positive social development changes can occur without reliance on direct representation.

3.3 Aladağlar

Özbakır (2013a) shares a fascinating account of the first ascents of Aladağlar's five iconic peaks by a German group which deserves to be quoted in full.

> Georg Künne, Wilhelm Martin, and his wife Marianne arrive at Haydarpaşa station on the morning of July 10, 1927. The first part of the journey is on the Anatolian Railway between Istanbul and Konya, built by the Germans in the 1890s. The second part is planned to continue on the infamous Baghdad Railway, which was intended to run from Konya to Baghdad but was delayed due to problems in the Taurus Mountains and the interruption caused by a world war.
>
> The next morning, they arrive in Konya. They first cross the salt flats of Lycaonia, and then they finally stop at Ulukışla, the highest station on the Baghdad railway. The next part of their journey will continue to the provincial capital in a rattling Ford car. The road to the south starts off nicely, as they continue across the barren salt steppes, the ice-covered Bolkar mountains slowly fade from view. Along the way, they encounter camel caravans and pass by the tents and campfires of nomadic Yörük people. And onward to Tuwanuwa, which was once an important settlement of the Hittites in the Cappadocia region, now known as Kemerhisar. They make note of the Roman aqueduct and columns in their travelogue. Bor finally appears like an oasis, with its steep tuff slopes. When they arrive in Niğde, it is past 8 p.m. They settle into the best hotel in town, the "Palace Hotel." For them, it has been "a tolerable shelter, primitive as it may be."
>
> The next day they visit the governor and are received warmly. The team is even sincerely shown whatever is noteworthy in Niğde: “Beautiful buildings from the Seljuk period, a few mosques, and a splendid madrasa, and elegant fountains. Niğde is divided into two parts, the living and the dead. The Greek and Armenian neighborhoods have been completely abandoned and are in a state of severe ruin. The market area where the Turks live, on the other hand, bustles with hectic liveliness. While the valley is filled with poplar and fruit trees, the mountains are completely bare, which is why there is a shortage of

> firewood." They learn that houses are heated with animal dung and see how it is done. Their interpreter Gottfried Stransky organizes the caravan on the morning of July 13th. They send the horses and pack animals via Gümüşler to Çamardı, which back then was called Bereketli Maden. They sleep in their sleeping bags at night.
>
> The mine has long been closed, and the local people now make their living from agriculture and animal husbandry. The eastern slopes of the Aladağlar are now in view. They finally experience the image of a high mountain: "immense, rugged limestone peaks and the splendid expansive territories buried under snow." On the morning of the 15th, they spend a few hours making photogrammetric measurements and taking down references. And finally, before noon, the team departs from Bereketli Maden. After a three-hour journey, they arrive at Yalak village. They are warmly greeted with a spread of carpets and offerings of yogurt, butter, onions, and cucumbers. Following a farewell as warm, they travel for half an hour before the valley forks. The southern branch is the Gelincik stream (or Yalak stream, Karayalak), and the northern branch is the Narpuz strait. The procession is barely persuaded to continue, as the gravel on the valley floor presents great difficulty. The horses labor intensely, and the inexperienced riders request ropes for the perilous inclines. Eventually, evening arrives. The horses and riders are sent back. Only Yunus [the escort they hired back in Niğde] remains with his grey stallion. The tents are quickly erected. When the fire is lit, Demirkazık looms over them with a menacing stature. Soon after, they retire to sleep.

The group reached the summits of Demirkazık (Veli Çavuş, a villager from Yalak, seems to have teamed up with them), Eznevit, Kızılkaya, Kaldı, and Alaca peaks using what are now some of the most classic routes. They also developed the premiere cartographic representation of the area. When they later published their experiences in *Die Alpen*, the Swiss Alpine Club's magazine, it was this report that acquainted European climbers with Aladağlar, not omitting the earlier visit by geologist Franz Schaffer in 1901 and his article in Petermanns Geographische Mitteilungen about his surveying work and ascent of Alaca(başı).

In 1927, the Germans opened the Demirkazık South Couloir/East Ridge, and after the first ascent by a team from the German/Austrian Mountaineering Club in 1938 via the North Ridge routes, the English would enter the scene in 1943 and "gift" a third route to Demirkazık. Among the current generation of Turkish

mountaineers, this line, reminiscent of a deep laceration across the mountain's southern face, has become familiar as the Peck Couloir, probably due to the influence of Haldun Aydıngün's book (1987), the first work to systematically address the climbing exploits of the region (Özbakır, 2013b). Organized by the Klagenfurt Section of the D.A.V., the 1938 stint was not just a climbing event but an interdisciplinary expedition lasting over six weeks (Hodgkin, 1944, p. 245). This team, which included a geologist and botanist, ambitiously scaled thirty peaks, twenty-five of which were first-time ascents. The climbs up the other five involved fresh routes on previously summited peaks from 1927. A summary of the group's climbing triumphs can be located in the *Zeitschrift*'s 1939 edition. The 1943 team, including E.H. Peck, R.A. Hodgkin, and four others, ascended Demirkazık, Alaca, Mount Kaldı, İkibaş, and Kızılkaya; in 1944, E.H. Peck returned with a team of five to complete the second ascent of Direktaş and continued to ascend Mount Kaldı, Kızılyar, and Üçköşe Sivrisi. Hodgkin (1944) and Peck (1945) later shared their experiences of Aladağlar in the *Alpine Journal*. Hodgkin's account is strikingly forthright when drawing comparisons (p.236):

> The Ala Dag are part of the great Alpine Himalayan fold-mountain system, but being less intensely folded they reveal none of the deep-seated igneous rocks so common in the centre of the greater ranges. Not far away there are plenty of comparatively recent volcanic mountains of which the biggest is Mount Argaeus [Erciyes], but the Ala Dag seem to have been little affected by this phase. They consist mainly of hard limestone which weathers to give a red colour, and in shape they resemble rather subdued Dolomites. Steep rock climbing is possible on many of the peaks owing to the frequency of holds, but belays are rare and loose rock abounds.

Peck's remarks from 1948 about the state of Aladağlar are every bit as unvarnished as Hodgson's comparisons (p.178):

> The climbing is not up to Alpine standards, but the unfamiliar peaks give a flavour of the unknown which added the zest of pioneering to our expeditions. There is no real glacier, although traces of one exist, and there are numerous névés.

The accounts of Hodgkin and Peck are tinged with self-confidence and a sense of entitlement. By framing their time in Aladağlar as the ultimate 'Ala Dag' experience, they go posthaste from individual anecdotes to a universal generalization. Addis's 1996 submission to the Alpine Journal, on the other hand, is exceptional for its deeply personal undertone and as the only account amidst the acclaimed publication's (rather stubby) 'Aladağlar' collection that traces a series of visits to Aladağlar by the same person. Ömer Tüzel's 1993 book The Ala Dağ is credited by Addis as the motivator behind his concluding journey to the region. Addis was approached by Tüzel in 1989 who was looking to acquire the report of the Aladağlar trip made in July 1963 by the RAF Mountain Rescue Team stationed in Cyprus (their second in a row), a seven-person team that included Addis. The members planned a return/reunion trip in July 1991, which led to a chance meeting with Tüzel. Over the course of two years following their initial interaction, the pair "had started a very interesting friendship … [so] there was much to talk about" (p.193). In a conversation, Tüzel informs Addis that the highest point of the Torasan range, Vay Vay, is also near a fateful site where a Turkish airliner's crew and passengers once upon a time tragically perished, whereupon Addis makes a most intimate connection (pp.192-193):

> In March 1962 I went with the RAF Mountain Rescue Team (MRT) from Cyprus to an aircraft crash in Turkey. It was a Turkish Airline F27 Friendship. We had been flown to the US Air Force base at Incirlik, then taken by truck to a base camp. It did not seem important to know exactly where we had been … Now, for the first time, I knew the location of the 1962 call-out and for some strange reason I felt I wanted to go back.

In August 1994, he makes his way back to Vay Vay. This part of the account ends with a nod to Tüzel's book (p.196): "Ömer states in his guide, quite correctly, that this route does not involve any technical difficulty, but he adds a warning that route-finding, amidst the many gullies and towers, is a bit tricky."

The series wraps up with Geoff Hornby's contribution, giving us a "history of technical mountaineering exploration in the Ala Dağ" (2007, p. 291). Its brevity is arguably the article's most evident quality. Even so, during that short stretch, Hornby (quite unknowingly) addresses two significant episodes. First, after a 20-year lull, the Aladağlar once more becomes a magnet for Europeans in the early 2000s, with Italians like Rolando Larcher and Maurizio Oviglia leading the frey. The group is single-minded in its quest to put up demanding, bolt-protected routes, initially on the faces of Demirkazık and Parmakkaya Tower, with ambitions to carry on to the peaks in the Kazıklı (Ali) Valley. On the topic of their activities in Aladağlar, Oviglia (2007) shares:

> On my last two trips I focused on establishing long, hard new routes ground up, but this time I preferred to develop an astonishing new sport climbing area in the Kazikli Valley … By the time I arrived this year, there were already seventy routes, primarily focused in three sectors. Overhanging or technically vertical, the climbs feature strenous moves on small holes. Some of the routes, up to 8a/8a+, have been redpointed by Dogan Palut or other climbers from Adana. This year, I began to develop five new areas. By the end of the year we expect there to be 100 bolted routes; I estimate there to be potential for almost 500. Together with Antalya, the Kazikli Valley has the potential to become one of the world's best climbing areas, especially for Europeans.

Hornby lauds these actions, yet remains silent on the shockwave it sent through the Turkish climbing community at the time. At the outset, opinions are sharply polarized (Görenoglu, 2019), and an anarchist squad from Ankara steps forward to un-bolt the route named *Üç Muz* on Demirkazık's east face. In looking back, it seems the issue has found some resolution. Larcher and Oviglia find themselves spared from the brunt of severe criticism. Aykut Türem (2009a) notes that these individuals, while not entirely artless, nonetheless approach sport climbing with a mix of experience, athleticism, and moral consideration. Arguably, the most censurable aspect of their routes is that they are only attainable for a handful of highly

experienced climbers, which could invite allegations of self-indulgent tendencies on behalf of their creators. The Aladağlar range remained without new multi-pitch routes since those made by Dennis Condevaux and Pascal Duverney in 1994. According to Türem, the recent routes have brought the matter of alpine sport routes and therefore the use of bolts back into focus in Aladağlar. Yet, presumably, no one can guarantee that every climber who visits Aladağlar and wishes to open such a route will bolt to the same high ethical standards as Larcher and Oviglia. Türem calls for the nation's climbing community to come together in agreement on the standards of on-site conduct and the latter's dissemination on a global stage.

A short while before the arrival of Larcher and Oviglia, Mustafa Kalaycı in *Takoz*'s Summer 2005 issue, had elaborated on the codes of ethical behavior that Türem was later going to have plans for:

> Currently, we have opened Türkiye's most difficult and lengthier alpine sport routes. There are nine alpine sport routes in total, with the shortest being two pitches and the longest sixteen, in addition to three sport routes and three partially completed alpine sport routes … Bolting has been kept to a minimum. They have been placed most conservatively and thoughtfully for climbers' use. At no point were pitons used. We kindly ask that you also avoid using them. For all routes, at least a 50-meter double rope, helmet, a minimum of one set of camming devices, and definitely a set of nuts are required. The indicated number of bolts may sometimes be inaccurate due to fatigue or forgetfulness, so don't forget to bring extra quickdraws. The number of bolts per pitch does not show a uniform distribution. This means that the first bolt on some routes may be found at the fifteenth meter, or if there are three bolts in a pitch, they may all be used in succession. Be careful! As much as we could, we climbed all the cracks in the traditional way without using bolts. All routes have been bolted from the bottom up. We did not open routes by rappelling down from the top. We strongly request that those who wish to develop routes in the future show the same diligence in this matter.(p.19)

It may come as a surprise to discover that the activities Kalaycı reports are unfolding not in Aladağlar but in Dedegöl, Isparta. This information incites further speculation on the nuances of the period. Kalaycı is most transparent about his fondness for Dedegöl (its logistical benefits, elegance of its cliffs, the integrity of its rocks, and

the loveliness of its environment and community etc.). But Dedegöl is only one of the spots heavily frequented by native climbers. Other significant destinations include Geyikbayırı, Ballıkayalar, and Şahinkaya among several others. It is important to remember that each of these has its own history. Burak Özdoğan (2011) traces the events that have transpired around a single route, ‘First Blood’, to tell the story of Ballıkayalar. The turn of the millennium brings a mechanical buzz to the canyon as route-setting evolves from handmade to machine-assisted. Doğan Palut begins converting his top-rope routes from since 1994 to more permanent fixtures with the help of a Bosch hammer drill, courtesy of one Murat Akhuy. With the installation of chain-fitted permanent belay stations later on, the interest in sport climbing grows even more popular. Climbers, free from the worry of falls, can now apply themselves to the physical techniques the route requires.

The grades climbed too were gradually rising. The community in Ballıkayalar, where sport routes were nonexistent back in 1987, was regularly using the grade '9' in conversation by 2002. Ballıkayalar Climbing Guide (2002) by Palut and Aydıngün was another testament to the scrambling advances in sport climbing. This guide reflects an update in the rating of 'First Blood,' a route first free-climbed by Emre Altoparlak in 1987, now assessed at a higher difficulty of 8- over the initial 6+. The wear and tear on 'First Blood' and the ongoing maintenance work on its weaker, less stable sections have made the route a more formidable climb than it was at its inception evidently.

Öztürk Kayıkçı (2022), on the other hand, offers a varied analysis, one that tracks a separate evolution from the early 2000s to the current era:

> When I returned to climb these two routes years later, I was profoundly moved: ‘Orak Çekiç’ at Olimpos and ‘Elbe’ at Geyikbayırı … I marveled to myself, ‘How on earth did I manage to climb these routes in the early 2000s?... They are terrifyingly unsafe.’ … In the early 2000s, you had to

> make do with what you had. For instance, if you had eight bolts for a forty-meter route, that's one bolt every five meters. Falls would then roughly amount to ten meters … This was certainly a risky and, at times, potentially incapacitating circumstance. Years later, we rebolted these two routes, … [now, climbers] are able to enjoy the climb without being overpowered by anxiety … Once rebolted, the 'Elbe' route, for example, has attracted a tidy turnout. While I was adding new routes to various areas of Antalya every year, I was also rebolting the old ones … As the areas grew, it turned impractical, both physically and financially, [to do both at the same time]. Keeping pace with over 1,500 routes was nearly impossible... The cost of installing a route falls between 70 to 100 euros based on how long it is.

'Bolting Antalya,' which came to life in 2019, has now replaced (re)bolting by individuals. The collective, including Ö. Kayıkçı, collects cash donations to develop and renovate routes near Antalya. They also train others to aid in rebolting, with these new recruits contributing as operatives in the same nonreimbursed capacity as the original members.

All this, admittedly anecdotal, evidence implies that Larcher and Oviglia landed in the midst of a mountaineering scene already fraught with polarization. There was, presumably, also an introspective journey happening, with the induction of certain ethical formulas underway. In 2005, publicized, first-time pleas to stay true to such ideals in sites other than Aladağlar conincided with the TDF's decision to appoint a specialized committee and a vice-president responsible for the alpine sport discipline (Akıncı, 2008, p. 32). What comes clearer still is that while 'Bolting Aladağlar' did not happen, earlier ethical campaigns were slowly offset by equally 'ethical' concerns for climbers' safety and recreational experience (Albayrak & Çömen, 2018; Aşçı et al., 2007; Sevgül, 2014). The former outcome was likely helped by the convenience of a menu of suitable alternatives that are either an easy distance from metropolitan areas such as İstanbul and Antalya or free from the constraint of an arid season.

The inaugural official step towards planning for conservation in Cappadocia (home to the famed fairy chimneys) was the 1968 scheme for a national park. The Forestry Law, however, required the existence of forest areas, which Cappadocia did not possess, consequently putting on hold the progress of the park's planning proposals. The first protected area determinations across the region were made by the High Council of Monuments and Antiquities (Gayrimenkul Eski Eserler ve Anıtlar Yüksek Kurulu or GEEAYK) in 1976. Following this resolution, an environmental plan with a scale of 1/25,000 was developed in 1981. The concept of a site-specific legal statue for the protection of Cappadocia, on the other hand, debuted in the 1965 report, 'Nevşehir Tourism Planning.' During the environmental plan's revisory process in 1988, a series of gatherings were held among the region's custodial institutions where the topic of awarding the region special protection resurfaced. What they supported was the adoption of a status similar to that of a 'Metropolitan' or 'Provincial Governorship'. Meanwhile, the General Directorate of Environmental Management has submitted a proposal to the Council of Ministers to name the region as a 'Special Protection Area,' suggesting that the upper levels of government were also receptive to creating specific legal frameworks for Cappadocia. The Ministry of Culture, replying to a parliamentary inquiry from July 1999, reported that a legislative bill was developed in 1994 and forwarded to the Prime Ministry, nevertheless, pre-programmed budget cuts meant that the instantiation of new divisions should be put off barring critical need.

It seems that Cappadocia was only able to attain the long-coveted special status arrangement in 2019 with Law No. 7174. Carrying through with the administrative requirements of the law, the 'Cappadocia Area Presidency' now exists with its own public legal identity and independent budget. It is the duty of this

agency to take over the obligations and apply the powers that formerly belonged to the Nevşehir Protection Board Directorate, the Protection Implementation Control Bureau (KUDEB), and the Provincial Directorate of Environment and Urbanization. With the Area Presidency system, the fragmented and layered protection management organs that have existed in Cappadocia to date have been consolidated under the authority and responsibility of a single administration (Solmaz Şakar, 2021, p. 15). The Presidency emerges as a commanding titan in governance since it has the authority to make, enforce, and approve 'area plans', has its own special budget, and also has the power to inspect the area and impose administrative fines. Operations related to planning and protection, as well as closely related tourism and promotional activities, will also be conducted by the administration. This is unquestionably an attempt on a high-octane Destination Management Office. As such, there is substance to Solmaz Şakar's assertion that Law No. 7174 advances a novel approach to conservation policy and protected area management, phasing in a new precedent nationwide rather than just for the immediate area itself (p.17).

The provincial capital and Soğanlı, one part out of the World Heritage Site's seven, find themselves situated outside the 'Cappadocia Area' however. It appears that Soğanlı's administrative affliation to neighbouring Kayseri might have informed the legislative choices made. In Solmaz Şakar's assessment, an analysis of the historical geography and geology of the region would undeniably show that Cappadocia extends over a cultural landscape much vaster than what Law No. 7174 seeks to define. To properly protect Cappadocia, there is a clear need to enlarge the legislatively defined area. Under the Presidency's jurisdiction, it is critical to develop inclusive conservation strategies and policies that operate within this larger,

interconnected region (p.16). This statement equally reflects the hopes of Ömer Fethi Gürer (2019a, p. 93), a legislator from Niğde:

> Surrounded by Adana, Konya, Kayseri, Nevşehir, and Aksaray, Niğde's heritage reaches back ten millennia. Niğde's current state of abandonment and the inadequate tourism assistance it receives, despite being a part of the storied Cappadocia region, are most regrettable.

On the topic of Cappadocia Area Presidency, Gürer (2019b, p. 458) adds:

> If the Presidency is born as a structure that will not serve its purpose, much like what happened in İstanbul and Çanakkale, it would only add to the bureaucratic house of cards. Yet, if it serves its purpose, it will be a boon to the region's future; it will ensure the area's preservation, contribute to its development, and eradicate the bureaucratic disincentives to crucial investments.

The majority of Niğde lies within Central Anatolia; however, its Çamardı (gateway to Aladağlar) and Ulukışla districts are located in the Mediterranean Region. Time and again, Niğde's repeated appeals to share in the benefits of tourism development, planning, and governance in Cappadocia have been met with resistance from Ankara. Financial support from the Rural Tourism Program endures as the sole remaining offer. Operating under the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry since 2007, the Agriculture and Rural Development Support Institution (TKDK) extends, through its Rural Tourism Program, grant support to tourism investments in the countryside, with special attention to those in mountain regions and managed by women. The Program's financial requirements are met by EU's Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance in Rural Development (IPARD). In IPA I (2007-2013), Türkiye was the beneficiary of 4.7 billion Euro, with 854.6 million reserved for rural development projects. During IPA II (2014-2020), the financial package ran to 4.45 billion Euro, with 912.2 million received in rural benefits. The Program, applicable only to communities with a population under 20,000, offers support for diverse investment opportunities for small business owners and farmers; it also aids in renovating and

rescaling pre-existing establishments. Grants are awarded after one submits an individual application (Karataş, 2020, p. 726).

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts an exploratory qualitative approach to discern the contributions of mountaineering expertise to sustainable and social tourism in Aladağlar National Park. Interviews were conducted with 17 mountaineers between 7-31 December 2023, chosen based on their active involvement in the region and their potential to provide in-depth knowledge on the operationalization of sustainability in mountaineering practices (see Appendix A). The interview questions (see Appendix B) have been determined by the researcher through literature review and field observations. The semi-structured interview questions are grouped under 4 main topics: (1) personal story, (2) natural and cultural conservation, (3) tourism perspective, (4) protected area and its management.

4.1 Participant selection and sampling methods

The initial selection of informants was conducted through purposive sampling, targeting individuals who were recognized for their extensive experience and active involvement in mountaineering within Aladağlar National Park. This approach ensured that the participants had the depth of knowledge required to contribute meaningfully to the research questions. To expand the range of perspectives, snowball sampling was subsequently employed. The initial informants were asked to recommend other key informants, thereby leveraging their networks to identify additional participants who could provide valuable insights into sustainable

mountaineering practices. In the end, a variety of participants from different universities, ages, cities, and professions have contributed to demonstrate the variability of different approaches and the understanding on the subject.[9]

4.2 Data collection

Interviews were conducted in Turkish, the native language of both the researcher and the participants, to facilitate a natural and in-depth dialogue. This choice was intended to ensure that participants could express their views and experiences as accurately and comfortably as possible. The interview questions are provided in Appendix B, in Turkish along with their English translations.

4.3 Participant recruitment

To initiate the recruitment process, potential participants were contacted prior to the interviews (November-December 2023) through written communication, including emails and text messages, through either publicly available contact addresses or referrals, paying utmost attention to the protection of personal data law. For engaging with key mountaineering clubs that were identified as critical to the study, the researcher utilized publicly available contact information to send detailed explanatory emails. These communications were crafted to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research and its significance to sustainable tourism practices in Aladağlar National Park. These messages also outlined the general structure of the interview process, along with the participant consent form (Please see Appendix C

[9] See Table 1 in Chapter 5 that visualize the representativeness of the informants.

and D), which detailed the study's purpose, the voluntary nature of participation, the procedures for ensuring confidentiality, and the use of the data collected.

Those who expressed interest in participating were then followed up with to arrange the interviews between 7-31 December 2023. Scheduling was done in accordance with each participant's preference, offering flexibility between online mediums such as video or phone calls and face-to-face meetings. This adaptive approach not only facilitated a higher response rate but also accommodated the diverse schedules and preferences of the mountaineers, ensuring a participant-centered process that respected their time and contributions.

4.4 Data analysis

After the completion of the interviews, the researcher personally transcribed the audio recordings, meticulously converting the spoken language into written text. The transcriptions were carried out by the researcher to maintain the integrity of the data and to immerse further into the data, which is a vital step in qualitative research. Basic text editors were used to manage the transcription process and to begin the preliminary organization of the data for thematic analysis. This hands-on approach to data analysis allowed for an intimate familiarity with the content, facilitating a more nuanced identification of themes in line with the research questions.

The data collected from these semi-structured interviews was analyzed using a thematic analysis approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This involved a careful and iterative coding process (Saldaña, 2013) where key themes related to the mountaineers' practices, values, and perceptions of sustainable tourism were identified (the resulting code book is presented in Appendix F). The analysis aimed

to address research questions concerning the alignment of mountaineering with sustainability principles, mountaineers' concerns about global environmental issues, and their assessment of current and potential strategies for sustainable destination management in Aladağlar National Park.

4.5 Integration of secondary data

In conjunction with the primary data collected from interviews, this research also utilized secondary data to enrich the findings and provide a multi-faceted perspective on the topic. The initial themes derived from the interviews served as a framework for analyzing secondary data sourced from web resources frequently used by mountaineers as platforms for communication and knowledge sharing. These online resources were instrumental in understanding the broader context in which mountaineers operate and interact.

This triangulation of data sources adds depth to the analysis, allowing for a more robust interpretation of the mountaineering culture. The mountaineers' practices of recording and archiving their activities offer a unique opportunity to explore the historical evidence of sportive endeavors as well as the social and political milieu of their times.

4.6 Translation of transcripts

Upon the identification of key themes and the completion of the thematic analysis, the findings were translated into English. This translation was necessary to make the results accessible to a broader audience and to fulfill the requirements of this

English-language thesis. The translation was performed with the utmost care to preserve the original meanings and nuances conveyed by the informants.

4.7 Protection of personal data

To ensure a rigorous examination while respecting the ethical considerations of research, a comprehensive informed consent process was established. Prior to the interviews, consent forms were distributed (Appendix C and D) and verbal consent was recorded at the beginning of the interview, securing formal agreement from each participant.

To maintain confidentiality, a coding system was employed wherein participants were assigned unique identifiers that replaced their names and any identifiable information. This coding occurred immediately after data collection, prior to analysis, ensuring that anonymity was preserved throughout the research process. All data, including transcripts and notes, were stored securely in a “two-factor authentication” protected computer accessible only to the researcher, to further protect the identities of the participants.

The research protocol, including the anonymization strategy, received ethical approval from Institutional Review Board in Social Sciences and Humanities (SBINAREK) reinforcing the study's commitment to ethical standards. Although the nature of the study presented minimal risk to participants, measures were put in place to address any unforeseen issues, providing participants with contact information for the researcher any SBINAREK should concerns arise.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS

To address the first research question, it is important to decode the factors that influence mountaineering culture in Türkiye. Analyzing how sustainability considerations are factored into day-to-day operations, assessing mountaineering community's alertness about and sensitivity to sustainability issues on multiple fronts, and understanding their views on tourism in this context is required. The opening set of interview questions (see Appendix B) is structured to pick up on personal club experiences; explore the informants' and their club's approach to environmental and social issues; and measure their attitudes towards tourism and tourists.

Answering the second research question necessitates a clear understanding of the present conditions and a sense of the best-case scenarios according to our participant group. Hence, the informants were requested to describe their views on the current management strategies at Aladağlar National Park and to suggest their own for refining the visitor experience.

The literature review we conducted showed that scholarship on sustainable tourism operates within a cross-disciplinary space and also acts as a stage for two distinct types of intervention: one concerned with the variety of actors and their interactions in the real world, and the other giving much weight to issues of measurement. In discussions on measurement, it is accepted as a given that collective interest, aside from being a very real theoretical possibility, can even be approached through quantification. Collective interest continues to be a functional term in the examination of sustainable tourism's pluralistic nature too. Wells finds the aggregated

preferences of individuals to be a version of collective utility, but he proposes that it is in tension with a similarly collective concern for conservation. For the best economic strategy to match the conservation needs of a protected area, a third environmental quality index needs to enter the equation as a decider. This approach does not share the former's problem of having to screen projects with varying environmental impacts to optimize compensation outcomes and social efficiency. Wells insists on the necessity of a political outcome; collective interest has to come about not through bias toward any actor but by way of a political project that addresses the interests of a beneficiary coalition. Bramwell, on the other hand, questions whether such a project could realistically happen. These interventions substantially informed the structure of our research questions. The purpose of these was to dig into the three-dimensionality of a particular actor, namely mountaineers and mountaineering clubs, but without the context of any operative pluralism or reliance on the efficacy of a screening device. We also neither posed questions about our respondents' private definitions of sustainability during our interviews (Albrecht et al., 2022), nor sought to define "strategic tasks" that, reportedly, are commonly shunned by destination managers (Wagenseil & Zemp, 2016). The logic that informs our qualitative analysis asserts that the visitor management in Aladağlar National Park should be about creating a collective experience, with an examination into whether this is a sentiment shared amongst mountaineers.

Interviews were carried out with a total of 17 individuals, comprising 13 men and 4 women across various ages, from 22 to 63 years old. The average age among them was 40, with a median of 42 years. Although the majority began their mountaineering pursuits upon entering university, six had been participating in camping and climbing-type outdoor activities before turning 18, and another three

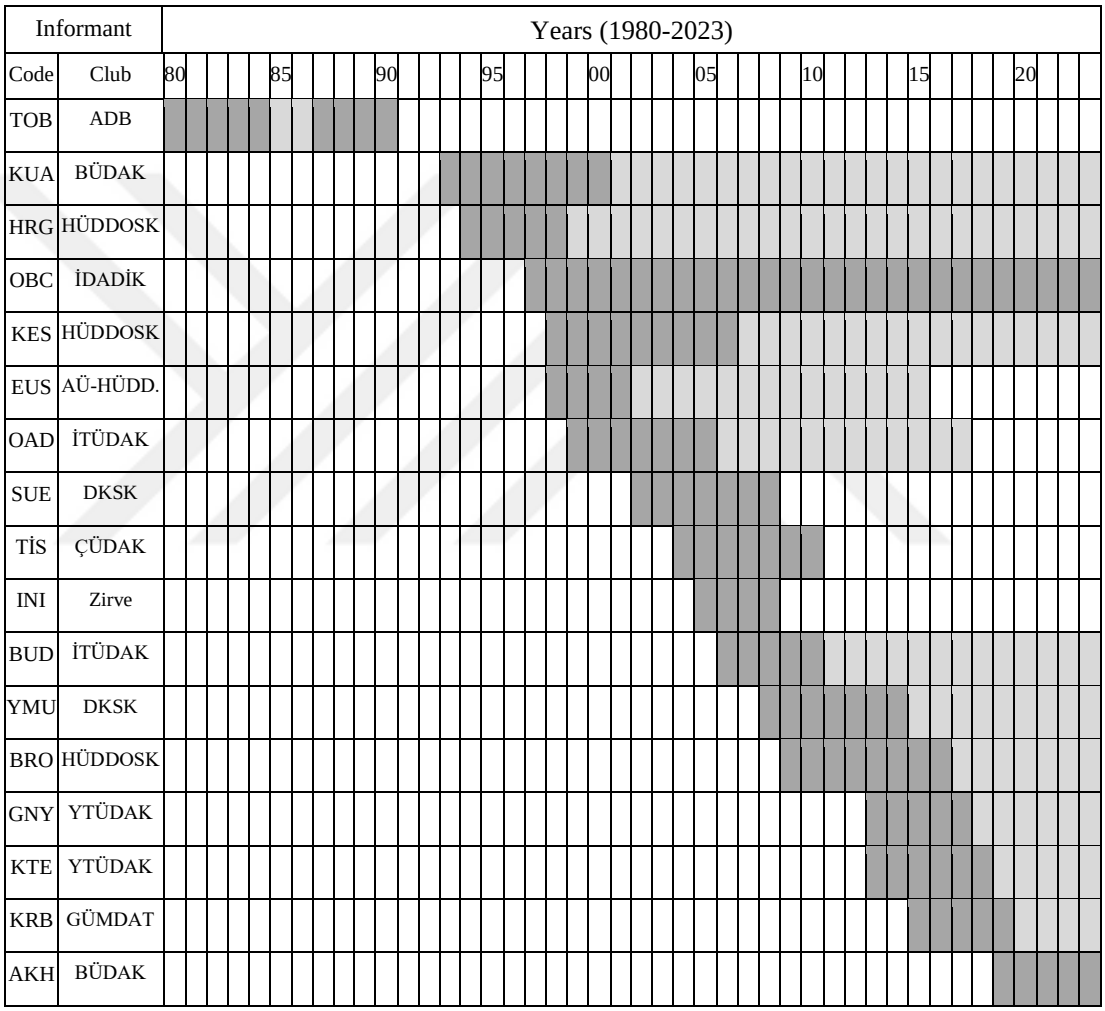
started these activities at a later stage in life. The informants received training from a variety of eleven clubs. The eight university-affiliated clubs are Ankara University, Boğaziçi University (BÜDAK), Çukurova University (ÇÜDAK), Gazi University (GÜMDAT), Hacettepe University (HÜDDOSK), Istanbul Technical University (İTÜDAK), Middle East Technical University (ODTÜ DKSK), and Yildiz Technical University (YTÜDAK).

Additionally, there are three registered associations: Anatolian Mountaineers Union (ADB), Izmir Mountaineering and Nature Sports Specialization Club (İDADİK), and Zirve Mountaineering and Nature Sports Specialization Club. Individuals who attended ODTÜ DKSK often went on to become members of the Middle East Search-Rescue, Mountaineering and Outdoor Sports Association (ORDOS). Since university clubs are not recognized as legal entities, they are not affiliated with the Turkish Mountaineering Federation (TDF). The Anatolian Mountaineers Union (ADB), an association that was dissolved in 1995, was also not a member of the TDF. In total, only two of the listed registered associations have recognition and representation within the TDF.

Out of the 17 interviewees, three possess master's degrees and one holds a doctoral degree. Most are engineers, but the group also includes professionals from health sciences, social sciences, arts, and linguistics. Six have direct ties to mountain tourism companies. The cohort also features two government officials, two individuals specializing in education, one academic, one expert in wildlife, one student, and four private sector professionals. Using purposive sampling, the informants were deliberately chosen to represent the varied stages of mountaineering development in Türkiye. Table 1 showcases their years of activity and club memberships (dark grey – most active, light grey – somehow active, unshaded – not

active) [10]. It uses shadowed areas to denote the tenure of each informant's membership in their respective clubs. Even those who have since disaffiliated from their clubs continue to keep up with solo mountaineering activities. This helps them maintain an up-to-date and relevant understanding of the case study area.

Table 1 – Informants, Their Clubs and Their Activeness in Their Clubs



The informants' attraction to university mountaineering clubs was multifaceted. They sought connection with nature, an active lifestyle, and relaxation, as well as a taste for adventure and discovery. The notion of escape from urban life and the sense of

[10] Additional details of informants are provided in the Appendix A.

camaraderie and solidarity found within the mountaineering community were also compelling factors. The existence of these clubs even influenced some in their choice of university. Cultural aspects like films, media coverage, and the influences of notable mountaineers such as Nasuh Mahruki and Uğur Uluocak have been instrumental as well.

The informants responded to an extensive array of questions concerning their own history in mountaineering, including their original motivations, the framework of training, and group dynamics. They also explored the basis of the informants' opinions on social and environmental issues, as well as their views on the relationship between tourism and sustainability, and their implications on Aladağlar. Later, thematic analysis techniques were employed to condense the findings into seven key themes:

- club culture
- environmental concerns
- local interactions
- self-perception
- tourism according to mountaineers
- evaluation of the current management practices
- vision for the national park

5.1 Club culture

Mountaineering clubs are central to creating and sustaining mountaineering culture, with a tradition based on collective knowledge sharing and a robust community spirit. Members regularly explore mountain environments, which enriches their understanding of diverse ecological and social contexts.

Participating in the training sessions is a prerequisite for being accepted into these clubs. Although the implementation might differ among them, the overall architecture and content of current mountaineering training programs have largely become uniform. The "master-apprentice relationship" forms the core of these training sessions, encompassing both theoretical and practical aspects. This dynamic fosters a tight-knit bond between generations of climbers and facilitates an interactive learning environment, with trainees often evolving into trainers as years progress.

The evolution of educational structures within mountaineering clubs in Türkiye and the fundamental significance of "master-apprentice relationships" are exemplified in the following testimonies:

> TOB: [In 1980s] In the absence of the internet and formal education resources, experienced mountaineers became instructors, passing their knowledge to beginners. Learning was communal, with individuals sharing insights from the rare mountaineering magazines they found, often in foreign languages. These publications were a key source of new technical information, which the members would discuss and seek to apply during weekend exercises. The training sessions would typically commence at the Hüseyin Gazi cliffs in March and conclude with specialized "snow/ice/high-altitude training" on Mount Erciyes by May 19. Members interested in progressing further in mountaineering pursued their own climbs, as the clubs' resources were limited to providing foundational skills.
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> HRG: [In 1990s] Our training included both theoretical and practical components, with theoretical sessions typically held every Friday. Practical skills were developed through a master-apprentice system in a series of structured sessions. Over time, as participants attended these group trainings, they naturally formed partnerships and friendships. They would then often climb in smaller groups alongside more experienced climbers, which facilitated further skill refinement and climbing experience.
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> BUD: [In 2000s] Like other university clubs, there is an established, volunteer-led, year-long foundational training program. Trainees are taught by individuals who have previously completed the training, ranging from seasoned mountaineers to relatively recent practitioners. A structured training template has been crafted and refined over the years. The program reflects a stepwise approach, where the initial focus is on fundamental outdoor skills like hiking, understanding equipment, and meteorology. As trainees gain

> experience, the program evolves to offer more advanced instruction in traditional climbing, ice climbing, avalanche training, and related subjects.

Regarding the theoretical trainings, another informant also highlighted their community's commitment to learning and knowledge exchange.

> KES: The commitment among trainees was genuine, with high attendance rates not just for core courses but also for complementary ones like "Human and Nature." We placed great value on the exchange, dissemination, and constant updating of knowledge. Everyone involved was proactive; members would actively research or translate material, share their findings at meetings, and contribute to the publication of a monthly bulletin.

Many mountaineering clubs have established traditions of producing printed materials such as periodic bulletins, annual activity reports, technical trip reports, and detailed accident reports[11]:

> BUD: After every trip, we prepare an activity report. In addition, personal reflections are recorded and kept ready to present to the technical committee upon request.

> KUA: From the beginning, we consistently documented our trips, which we referred to as 'excursions,' and organized the reports in folders. These documents were displayed on the common room board for everyone to see before being archived. Through these reports, where we opted to list expenses with FX conversions, one could obtain a narrative feel for the economic climate of Türkiye. Beyond internal record-keeping, select reports and editorials were shared with a broader audience through BÜDAK's published bulletin.

As demonstrated in the following testimonies, maintaining a lineage of trainers is fundamental to university clubs, a practice not always prioritized by "specialization clubs".

> EUS: (1990s) Course notes were updated every year and handed to designated instructors. This responsibility was often given to the more recent mountaineers who had advanced to a certain level. They would say, 'This course is yours to teach.' With oversight, we as up-and-comers would then take on teaching duties ourselves a year later.

[11] https://www.dagkazalari.org/ (*Dağ Kazaları*, n.d.) is a significant example of this tradition, which was first compiled by Recep Çatak (1988) and later digitized, elaborated and maintained by members of YTÜDAK/YDK.

On the other hand, an informant who was trained more recently highlighted challenges in sourcing trainers and partners for higher-level training. This was partly attributed to disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which affected the standard operations of all university clubs.

> AKH: After finishig the basic course, moving on to more sophisticated techniques such as multi-pitch climbing led to difficulties in finding qualified trainers or partners. Consequently, learning becomes a solo journey, leading to irregularities in advanced training continuity. The impact of 2020 was particularly severe. We attempted to pivot to online classes, yet these could not replicate the socially interactive learning experience of our conventional in-person sessions. As experienced members dwindled over time, our struggles intensified, forcing us to re-learn and adapt anew.

Evidence of the importance placed on training within clubs is illustrated by the common practice among them to maintain records that monitor the technical progress of their members.

> INI: In our club, we used report cards to catalogue the experiences of our members, which helped us determine their suitability for various climbing excursions. We did not take every member on every mountain trip.

> BUD: In a supervisory capacity, the technical committee evaluates the competence and experience of new members. Based on this assessment, the committee then advises which activities are appropriate and which may be too risky or demanding. Its role is to caution against taking part in dangerous activities.

> KTE: For basic training, a participant must meet specific requirements: attending at least 70% of theoretical classes, completing two winter events, two rock climbing events, and one activity in the Aladağlar region. Instructors then assess the participant's performance to decide if they can move to the next stage. The second year focuses on further skill development, including training for traditional and mixed climbing, as well as search and rescue techniques. Throughout the two years, there are distinct benchmarks to be achieved, culminating in a technical climb in the Aladağlar region.

> OAD: University mountaineering clubs typically maintain technical committees that oversee their members' activities to ensure everyone meets specific training standards. If a member hasn't finished their basic training, the technical committee will not approve their participation in certain activities, as it would be against the club's safety regulations. Those individuals who haven't completed the required training and wish to pursue advanced activities might end up leaving the club to continue climbing independently. Generally, these clubs aim for their members to advance to more sophisticated training after their initial instruction.

This, however, raises the question of how accommodating mountaineering clubs are to members disinterested in technical climbing, and what alternatives they provide. Some clubs primarily strive to allow more individuals to experience the outdoors, whereas others concentrate on enhancing the competitive and technical aspects of mountaineering. This situation can lead to concerns, particularly when a mountaineering club dominates the local scene, such as within a university setting, limiting 'retreating to natural habitats' options. In the cases we examined, almost all the clubs acknowledged that they accommodated less demanding activities or that other groups or organizations were available, offering various alternatives.

> INI: Upon finishing the training, some individuals chose to hike, whereas others pursued activities in more challenging terrains like high-altitude mountaineering or technical rock climbing. The level of difficulty varied, with certain mountains being accessible without specialized skills and others necessitating proficiency in techniques like ice or rock climbing along with the use of specific gear. Though personal preferences influenced these choices, all members initially received the same foundational training.
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> KRB: For instance, if there's a winter climbing event and you haven't been trained for the technical aspects, you're still welcome to come along to camp. We've included people in camping trips during periods when it was challenging to find trained members.
>
> SUE: Previously, a "nature club" was active and conducting hiking activities around the Yalıncak campus area. In addition, a new group dedicated to sports climbing has emerged, but their focus does not seem to center on ecological considerations. There was also a birdwatching club, to my recollection.
>
> YMU: The scouts were involved in camping and attracted significant participation. Subsequently, an organization that could be described as an “outdoor sports club” was established. Besides these, there were groups dedicated to orienteering, birdwatching, and mountain biking as well.
>
> AKH: We invite all to participate in our day hiking excursions. While there are individuals who prefer just camping, we view camping primarily as a support for technical pursuits, rather than the central activity. Our focus tends to be on those who show an interest in hiking within natural settings. There isn't another club that directly involves itself with mountain activities because the inter-club committee disallows it. The inception of a 'Hiking and Camping Club' has been held back due to opposition from mountaineering and caving clubs. There is a cycling club whose activities take place within urban and forested areas. Additionally, there is an athletics team. Clubs dedicated to sailing and aviation also exist. Moreover, an “environment club” is in

operation, which typically organizes activities centered around ecological themes, although I am not extensively knowledgeable about the full extent of their operations.

KTE: If members do not advance beyond the beginner level, their affiliation with the club is terminated. The club has a distinct vision focused on technical and wall climbing, with training programs designed to support this focus. For those interested in 'non-technical' pursuits, there are plenty of alternative options available that are open to discovery by anyone who does a bit of legwork.

GNY: The opening activities center on hiking and camping experiences. Following these, the club's true nature regarding stringent and disciplined training becomes apparent, which may deter those who are solely interested in camping and hiking from continuing with the club. On the other hand, those committed to the rigorous training often choose to stay. Nevertheless, it's worth noting that the first two activities welcome all who are interested. A notable memory includes a nature hike to Ballıkayalar that attracted 200 participants. Subsequently, YTU GEKA was established. There was a certain amount of debate regarding the similarity of their activities to ours, yet we perceived it positively as it offered an option for those who no longer wished to be part of our club but still longed to continue their ties with the great outdoors.

When discussing inclusivity, understanding the criteria that mountaineering clubs use to admit newcomers into their training programs is essential. The informants' feedback on the significance of an applicant's physical condition, political beliefs, or economic standing suggested a broad absence of "exclusion" policies for prospective members in various clubs.

On physical fitness:

OBC: Physical condition certainly plays a role in this sport; however, we never turned people away based on criteria such as being overweight or too short.

INI: Those who weren't in optimal shape were still allowed to join. Yet, if their fitness level became a significant obstacle and substantially slowed down the group’s progress, the activity leader had the authority to either issue a warning or choose not to include that individual in the activity.

BRO: Physical fitness is not a barrier to entry unless it equates to the severity of a health condition. Anyone interested and willing may join. Nonetheless, if an individual has psychological disorders, obesity, muscle, or joint issues at a level that parallels illness, they may not be able to complete the training sessions.

KUA: Physical fitness isn’t a requirement. Attendance at weekly practices was not compulsory. I view my club not primarily as a sports organization but as one founded on friendship. In a club of our size, it's unrealistic to expect comparable athleticism among members. To me, mountain climbing is more than just a technical undertaking; it's about the bonds of friendship, shared experiences, and solidarity. Sometimes, turning back before reaching the summit is part of the journey, if necessary.

On political views:

TOB: Our club didn’t have a political profile; political topics were not a subject of discussion within our group. Likewise, we did not concern ourselves with the religious beliefs of our members. We were genuinely an amateur mountaineering association.

HRG: In our club, political opinions were not of great consequence; we welcomed members who held various viewpoints. There was a sense of greater tolerance during that period. However, I'm not certain if the same level of tolerance exists currently.

SUE: Our environment is free from prejudice and no one is marginalized, although DKSK does possess a political culture. Yet, the club never forces any ideology on its members. It appears that this legacy may act as a natural filter, resulting in a form of self-selection among those with markedly divergent political views. Nevertheless, for those who may hold differing opinions and decide to remain with DKSK, no restriction is placed in their way.

EUS: Political ideologies did not serve as a standard for membership; however, owing to the open-minded nature of our group, which included men with long hair and earrings, there was an implicit screening process.

AKH: Political attitudes are deemed irrelevant; we don’t inquire about them. Exclusion from activities is not based on an individual's political ideology.

A similar testimony was provided in Akcan’s thesis (2011) which examines the sub-culture of mountaineering and includes an oral history study with veteran mountaineers.

(Sönmez Targan, 67) "In the city, you can't bring some people together, you can't seat a leftist and a rightist together in the same café, you can't make a leftist and a rightist do a joint activity. But in these years, the leftists and rightists would come to the camp, first they would have verbal altercations, then they would leave by kissing each other. I know it well, for example, they would come to the camp, some from nationalist groups, some from leftist groups, etc. (...) They climbed together. “rope team spirit” (esprit de cordée) is very important. And at the end, they would leave by crying and hugging. The only common ground there was climbing, the passion for climbing. I

> don't know if such a common ground can be found in other areas of life, but it was found there."

Concerning financial matters, a notable contrast exists between university and specialization clubs; the former implement mechanisms to accommodate students from varied economic backgrounds in mountaineering pursuits, while the latter primarily cater to financially self-reliant adults. Nonetheless, for costly yet long-lasting gear, all clubs set up shared pools of resources for offering trainings and preventing extravagance.

> OAD: Members of the club originated from a wide array of socio-economic conditions. In those days, universities were not exclusive to children from affluent families. The mountaineering club reflected this diversity, and it was the club's support that made all activities possible.
>
> BUD: University mountaineering clubs are distinct from other climbing organizations in that they maintain a communal gear inventory, supported by funding from the university, pooled resources, donations, and assistance from alumni. Access to communal gear and transportation facilitated by the university substantially reduces the costs associated with mountaineering, thus allowing students to take up the sport. As club members advance in their careers and start making money, they frequently give back to the club through modest financial donations. Ultimately, despite the potential high costs of mountaineering, the framework established by university clubs serves to mitigate these financial challenges. Within ITUDAK, Uğur Uluocak's legacy ensures that financial status is not a barrier to participation.
>
> INI: Our club was unique because many of our members were already employed, had advanced in their careers, and attained economic self-sufficiency, enabling them to contribute financially to gear and activities. Additionally, we dedicated a portion of proceeds from organized hikes to the club's finances, mobilizing resources for the acquisition of equipment.
>
> KUA: Our financial collaboration and support were consistently solid. Hailing from a family of retirees, I relied on borrowed equipment from fellow club members for my initial excursions. Back then, obtaining gear was tough due to costly imports, you couldn't find items like fleece jackets for sale anywhere. I recall a significant moment – when I hesitated to join the spring trip to Aladağlar, the club offered to front me the bus fare, assuring me I could pay it back when able. The support was ever-present, encompassing both camaraderie and gear. With club-owned equipment on hand, members only had to purchase personal items like tents, jackets, or boots.
>
> YMU: Aside from personal gear such as boots, jackets, and flasks, the club provides most of the necessary equipment. While technical mountaineering gear is typically the priciest, one doesn't need to invest heavily to start

> training—owning boots and a jacket is enough. Plus, there's often the option to borrow items. Financial limitations are not a major impediment, thanks to our culture of sharing.

Rather than encouraging members, especially those who are new, to go out and purchase brand-new gear, most clubs have established traditions that favor more sustainable options. They value a sense of community and sustainability by creating systems for members to borrow and lend equipment among each other. Members are encouraged to adapt or repair their current equipment, and are made aware of opportunities to obtain pre-owned equipment.

> SUE: Newcomers were advised against making immediate purchases. Equipment used to be costly and limited in variety. To minimize excessive consumption and due to availability of basic communal camping gear to support around 40 individuals, there was no urgency to buy personal gear. Established members regularly contributed their used items to the communal pool. Sharing items such as plastic boots and crampon-compatible shoes is a part of our club's culture. This practice is integral to how we function as a community.
>
> KES: Our club maintained a tradition of equipment sharing and ensured that personal gear was maintained and then handed down within the group. Rather than throwing away used jackets or shoes, we made it a point to pass them on to newer members. We also occasionally held second-hand sales specifically for students, pricing the items symbolically, sometimes equivalent to the cost of a drink, to instill value in the exchange. It was rewarding to receive quality equipment from senior members, sometimes only in exchange for a beer.

Some clubs practice generosity by making their resources available to mountaineers from different groups.

> GNY: We are fortunate to have access to the DKSK/ORDOS shelter. Provided that the shelter is not overcrowded and advance notice is given, non-members are able to stay there. The location is cherished, and mountaineers can make use of the sleeping arrangements with their own sleeping bags and mats, while also having access to toilets and bathroom facilities.

University clubs often have membership criteria that allow people from different age groups and educational institutions to join their training programs, potentially leading to full membership.

> KTE: Regardless of age, educational background, or current student status, the club is open to individuals willing to commit their time and can possibly even train to become instructors.
>
> EUS: In the past, the university club was often the sole provider of mountaineering education. Even the Mountaineering Federation, at that time, was perceived as having an antiquated approach to education and mountaineering practices. Consequently, individuals seeking training, including those well into their careers and of varying ages, would join university clubs to learn about mountaineering.

This also reveals the issues between mountaineering federation and university clubs.

> TOB: The Federation has limited representational capacity because it operates under the jurisdiction of the Sports Services (formerly the General Directorate of Physical Education) of the Ministry of Youth and Sports. This arrangement restricts the federation's independence and autonomy in its operations and decision-making processes.
>
> HRG: Throughout a two-decade span with unchanged leadership, the Federation did not realize major strides in the mountaineering discipline. Despite being eligible for a TDF-certified "mountain guide" title, I have no strong affiliation with that organization.

Members of university mountaineering clubs often maintain their connection with the club even after their university days, although they experience fresh personal trials and their viewpoints evolve. They generally respect the autonomy of current members but remain engaged by sharing their experiences and advice. This ongoing involvement not only supports knowledge sharing within the clubs but also helps sustain the clubs' financial resources.

> YMU: The ongoing association with the club is characterized by minimal interference from senior members who respect the decision-making autonomy of active participants. Though direct intervention is typically avoided, the expertise and guidance of seasoned members are offered when necessary. While my fundamental comprehension remains largely unaltered, I recognize that generational shifts result in diverse perspectives on various aspects, including mountaineering and life in general, which is both expected and appropriate.
>
> BUD: The club offers an ethics course that imparts historical perspectives and past experiences related to mountaineering. Affliates who uphold these doctrines tend to sustain a steadfast affinity for the club, not veering markedly from its inherent spirit. Despite the continuity of the club's core values, debates do occur, like the suggestion of introducing a physical condition requirement, to which I was opposed. However, these discussions have not

led to drastic changes that challenge the foundational beliefs of the organization.

OAD: My engagement with the club is ongoing yet indirect. Through the club's platforms, I stay in touch with members, allowing me to interact with and climb alongside numerous new climbers. While I am not involved in classes or governance, I contribute where I can, particularly in a voluntary capacity. My formal membership may have ended, but my support hasn't; I continue to help, such as by donating equipment like the bolt hangers for the new climbing wall.

KUA: I keep in touch with individuals from various eras. It's clear to me that views and mindsets change over time. The club has general assemblies to review the year's activities, where discussions are frank and transparent. I participated when invited, but after a suggestion from a friend, I stopped attending to prevent my presence from inhibiting free debate. Nonetheless, I do share my critiques in private conversations among peers.

The ongoing involvement with the club is not always the standard, and disassociation is equally prevalent. Evidence from various informants, including one from a university club and two from specialization clubs, supports this view. The degree to which members remain connected can often be attributed to the broader cultural aspects of the club beyond just training. As indicated by the last informant, his club eventually disbanded due to a failure to attract new members, despite its substantial contributions to sporting successes and mountaineering culture.

TIS: I've stepped back from the club due to a divergence in our mindsets, as I no longer resonate with the club-centric approach. Since my departure, I've pursued mountaineering on my own, which has expanded my horizons and enhanced my skills.

INI: My ties to the club remain, albeit loosely, and I'm no longer a participant in its membership roster. Joint activities with the club are now a thing of the past, as my need for club affiliation has lessened. Additionally, the club's roster has experienced substantial changes, with all the members from my time having moved on. I do maintain contact with peers from my active period.

TOB: ADB failed to attract fresh members, leading to a decline in its role as a mountaineering club, which resulted in its eventual closure. I left the club when it ceased to serve its purpose, yet my relationships with the individuals from the club persist.

This facet adds a new layer to the culture of mountaineering, acknowledging and appreciating the importance of self-reflection and critique. Informants recount incorporating critical assessment into their thinking. Instances were shared showing that, in outdoor settings, they consciously steer clear of disputes and honor the decision-making of their group leader. Nonetheless, they hold their feedback for post-activity analyses or during the annual general assembly, where such issues are collectively reviewed.

> AKH: Much of our practice is molded by experience, and not all intricacies behind every decision can be thoroughly articulated. Occasionally, we scrutinize, evaluate, and proceed with what works within our established framework.
>
> KES: In Türkiye, mountaineering clubs often seem insular, with minimal interclub interaction. Renowned clubs with distinct traditions, such as those at METU, YTU, ITU, and Hacettepe, are traditionally conservative. My time away from the club and exposure to the broader, diverse mountaineering cultures in Europe and worldwide, led to a change in my perspective, recognizing differences that exist outside of our immediate environment.
>
> SUE: Post-activity debriefs are standard practice for us. When on an expedition, the group leader's direction is adhered to without question. But in the meetings that follow, all participants are invited to share their thoughts. Significant issues are discussed, and on occasion, members may be warned. If there’s a dispute involving the group leader, the issue can be brought before the general assembly for further deliberation.

Virtual forums that bring mountaineers together are important. Until recently, the primary discussion platform was a mail-list hosted by YTÜDAK, but as social media has gained dominance, the list has fallen out of favor. A modern digital meeting place for mountaineers reflecting the convenience and connectivity of social media has yet to emerge.

> BUD: Mountaineers' collective action capabilities have waned with the expansion and scattering of their groups and the lack of centralized communication methods like the YTÜDAK mailing list. Previously, this list reached nearly all climbers in Türkiye, facilitating widespread discussions on important topics. Although the disappearance of such platforms has reduced their collective efficacy, mountaineering communities continue to self-organize. An example of this is the initiative taken years ago to remove bolts from routes in Aladağlar as a conservation measure.

The contention over bolting safe routes has polarized mountaineers worldwide, especially between those in favor of 'sportive climbing' and traditional alpinists who prefer natural climbing techniques. In Türkiye, this issue has led to internal strife within the mountaineering community, leading to a consensus memorandum in 2006. Despite this agreement, compliance has been uneven, sometimes prompting radical measures by certain groups to ensure the memorandum's enforcement (Türem, 2009b).

> INI: In Türkiye, the management of bolt use in climbing areas is predominantly overseen by the mountaineering community itself rather than formal authorities. The mountaineering community has held meetings and made declarations establishing guidelines about where bolting is acceptable and where areas should be kept 'clean,' free of bolts. Nevertheless, there have been instances where foreign climbers have not adhered to these community-driven regulations, leading to unauthorized bolting activities.
>
> KUA: Personally, I'm against bolting but climbing culture changes with time. While historically some might have opposed bolting to prevent large numbers of climbers from scaling certain routes, the current approach involves designating specific areas where bolting is allowed and prohibited. This compromise is documented in guidebooks for climbers' reference. Although supporting the preservation of traditional climbing practices, there's an understanding that climbing areas should cater to diverse preferences. This includes maintaining bolt-free zones for those who favor natural climbing experiences, as exemplified by the bolt-less Italian Tower in Emli Valley. This balanced perspective suggests a desire to honor both the heritage of climbing and the evolving inclinations within the mountaineering community.
>
> KTE: The contrast in climbing practices between different regions illustrates the diversity within the mountaineering community's attitudes towards bolting. In the Alps, the prevalence of bolted stations and well-marked routes can enhance safety and reduce the likelihood of climbers losing their way, providing a certain level of comfort and security. Conversely, regions like the Tyrol maintain strict prohibitions against bolting, upholding a traditional climbing ethic that emphasizes a purist approach to mountaineering. In some parts of Aladağlar, there's an accepted practice to limit or discourage bolting. If someone wants to climb routes at high elevations or on extensive walls that are bolted for safety, they won't find many options in Aladağlar. Therefore, climbers with such preferences may need to look outside of Türkiye.

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5.2 Environmental concerns

While the primary focus of mountaineering might not be environmental conservation, mountaineers often show greater understanding of ecological impacts and act with responsibility. Club culture contributes to establishing norms for appropriate conduct in natural settings. Additionally, through the act of mountaineering, individuals have the opportunity to witness firsthand the dynamics of natural ecosystems and the changes occurring in the environment.

Training is a key factor in developing the values and principles associated with mountaineering. Historical records, such as those from the 30th Year symposium held by DKSK in 1993, show that environmental education became a part of mountaineering training programs starting from the mid-1990s. This integration signifies a pivotal shift towards incorporating environmental considerations into the core learning and activities of the mountaineering community. Even before environmental stewardship was formally established as a distinct component of training, there was a common understanding among mountaineering communities about the principles of responsible outdoor behavior.

> TOB: I don't remember being taught specific lessons on ecology or preserving mountain environments, yet there was a profound respect for nature ingrained within our club's culture. This can be attributed to the members' exposure to and reading of international literature. We inherently understood and silently agreed on the importance of leaving no trace, even though we lacked formal materials or a dedicated instructor to provide structured education on these topics.

> KUA: Despite the absence of a dedicated course on environment or ecology, our club maintained certain unwritten yet well-understood rules about responsible outdoor behavior. These principles, often discussed informally within the club room, included how to select the proper outdoor areas for activities and the best practices for managing waste.

Currently, some mountaineering clubs have set aside a specific segment for environmental education, while others integrate these themes into their practical

training sessions. All trainings that are certified by the federation mandatorily include a one-hour component dedicated to environmental education (Dağcılık Eğitimi Talimatı: Birinci Bölüm - Genel Hükümler, 2004). Beyond the basic environmental curriculum, certain clubs go further by offering in-depth discussions on environmental topics through lectures or seminars. There are also clubs that introduce these ecological principles early on during the initial stages of hiking and camping training.

> EUS: I initiated a course on ecology within our training program. I would teach essential lessons, such as the appropriate distance to maintain from water sources to avoid contamination. During the period when I began this course, environmental awareness was not as widespread in the general populace. Nonetheless, the concept of the course was met with enthusiasm, and the attendees were very engaged, taking great care to apply what they learned in a conscientious manner.
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> SUE: We instill the principles of respecting nature right from the start, introducing them at the beginning of the initial camping experience, as well as providing them in the form of written guidelines ahead of time.
>
> GNY: In our case, we didn't have a formal class or seminar dedicated to environmental issues. Instead, important topics like environmental sustainability and being considerate of designated toilet areas were consistently communicated as part of the practical activities and embedded within the rules that our members followed.

Mountaineering organizations sometimes have the benefit of members who have backgrounds in natural sciences and who are keen to pass on their specialist knowledge to fellow members. Yet, such activities are considered an ancillary function rather than the core objective of these clubs.

> YMU: Our club was fortunate to have members from a variety of professional backgrounds. For instance, a friend who was specializing in landscape ecology would eagerly share her insights, teaching us about the flora and fauna, like identifying various tree species and birds. The knowledge shared by members with ecological expertise meaningfully supplemented our usual activities, yet deepening our focus in this area would necessitate a level of resource and commitment that could be difficult to uphold in the long term.
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> AKH: Our intention is to establish a specialized ecology course within our program. However, we currently face the challenge of maintaining a stable

> team of knowledgeable individuals to lead such a course, as our experts often are upper-year students who eventually graduate and move away. Consequently, we share our ecological knowledge on a more impromptu basis as a result of this turnover.

Every club has developed a set of rules, be they formal guidelines or informal norms, that prescribe proper conduct in outdoor environments. Non-compliance with these rules can lead to various repercussions, from receiving a warning to being expelled from the club, depending on the severity of the infraction.

> BRO: Our club upheld strict environmental rules to preserve nature's integrity. Any litter or remnants found after camping could lead to expulsion, as we all understood the need for such stringent measures. The rationale was explained logically and scientifically: We are merely visitors in these mountainous landscapes, which we burden with our presence. Therefore, we must act responsibly.
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> OBC: If our unspoken environmental rules are breached, warnings are issued, regardless of whether the offender is a club member. Persistent disregard from a member leads to an official report to the club's leadership, followed by disciplinary measures taken by the disciplinary committee, which enforces the club's established rules and ethical standards.
>
> KUA: While environmental rules are generally respected, violations sometimes occur during large group excursions. Such infractions are initially met with an on-the-spot warning. The matter is then brought up for discussion at a subsequent club meeting to determine further actions, which can include exclusion. Nonetheless, decisions about consequences are made after the return, as the immediate priority is to ensure all participants are safely escorted back.
>
> BUD: Our club is rigorous about respecting the alpine environment, instructing members to avoid starting fires in restricted areas, minimize disruption to the environment, and stick to marked trails. These principles are ingrained through our training sessions and are non-negotiable; breaches can result in severe disciplinary action. Such individuals lose the privilege to represent the club, wear club apparel, or use its equipment.

Mountaineering clubs place a strong emphasis on environmental conservation, which includes policies like leaving no trace behind. This means climbers are expected to carry out all their trash, including organic matter, to prevent any form of pollution. Clubs also take extra steps to remove litter left by others. They regulate sanitation practices to protect water sources from contamination by human waste and

detergents. Additionally, the clubs typically discourage lighting fires in camping areas and restrict activities to designated trails to avoid damaging the undergrowth and landscape. Efforts to avoid disturbing wildlife are made, such as by maintaining a distance and being quiet. Clubs also are aware of the impact of noise and light pollution, so they try to minimize such disturbances to preserve the natural ambiance. This demonstrates that these clubs inherently understand and respect ecological principles, even if they do not have specific ecology training programs.

> INI: During my presidency, we orchestrated a trash pick-up event along the shores of Lake İznik, where our group often hiked. With assistance from the city authorities and with local schoolchildren participating, we carried out a successful clean-up operation. On a separate occasion, we traveled to Mount Ağrı where, in addition to reaching the peak, we also collected all the refuse from the base camp and made sure it was transported back down the mountain.
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> GNY: In one notable instance, a group of friends took the initiative to pick up and remove a heap of garbage they found in the Kaçkar Mountains. They were even able to identify the people who left the trash through a found receipt and issued a warning to the respective team. In climbing areas, it is a common practice to protect wildlife; when a bird is found nesting on a climbing route, that route is closed, and indicators are put up to ensure climbers avoid it. The climbing community is very attentive to such matters.
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> SUE: Near Yörük encampments, it is typical for the residents to burn their rubbish. On one occasion, they burned such a large quantity that not all of it was fully incinerated. Seeing this, our group intervened by collecting the remnants of the trash and responsibly carried it down the mountain.
>
> KTE: Our club adopts an ecological perspective that involves efforts to keep noise and light pollution to a minimum. We maintain smaller group sizes to lessen the impact on nature and abide by rules that protect wildlife. Also, we exercise care when selecting and using camping areas.

When the shared commitment to environmental considerations is combined with the deep, direct engagement with nature that mountaineering provides, several individuals have noted an increased or deeper awareness of environmental issues. Specifically, they have become more attuned to the realities of climate change, the importance of preserving biodiversity, and the need for responsible waste management.

> KTE: Annually, the changes in the Aladağlar Mountains' glaciers, which are diminishing and transforming due to rising average temperatures, are noticeable. With the shifting seasons, our expeditions have been met with inconsistent conditions, such as deep snow even in late June. Temperature irregularities have become more common, leading to extreme ice conditions in Uludağ, where fluctuating weather has led to rapid thawing and freezing. Tragically, these environmental changes have had serious consequences, evidenced by the death of a dear friend in the Alps, who fell victim to a rockslide initiated by unforeseen snow and ice melt.
>
> OBC: From an ecological perspective, the trend of global environmental change is clear, particularly with the melting of glaciers. I observed the Kaçkar glacier for the first time in 2003 during a training trip and noted it was large at that time. Upon my most recent visit, I've seen a notable reduction in its size, indicating significant glacial retreat.
>
> INI: My increasing sense of personal responsibility towards the environment led me to become more proactive and responsive to ecological issues. In an effort to reduce plastic waste, I have stopped using single-use products, particularly plastic bottles. I try to persuade tour company cooks to move away from disposable items. I continue to advocate for this change despite resistance. Furthermore, my fascination with wildlife and native plants has grown significantly. On an occasion where I suspected illegal poaching, I wasted no time in seeking advice from knowledgeable friends on the appropriate actions to take.
>
> OAD: We organized an activity to familiarize ourselves with the plant life of Aladağlar, especially the endemic species within easily reachable areas. This experience had a profound effect on my personal outlook. Whereas before I might have been more focused on the larger landscape, I started to observe the intricate details on the ground more closely, appreciating the diversity underfoot. This newfound appreciation and knowledge even led to the creation of a website dedicated to the flora of Aladağlar [12].

Mountaineering extends its influence beyond environmental responsibility, as some participants in the study have reported. The skills honed in the mountains—such as discipline, communication, teamwork, crisis management, taking responsibility, and the efficient use of limited resources—have seeped into their urban lives. This crossover demonstrates that the benefits of engaging with mountaineering can be applied in various contexts.

> SUE: The discipline of mountaineering taught me valuable skills such as organized teamwork, being supportive, and effectively managing limited

[12] https://aladaglarflora.wordpress.com/

> resources. These capabilities are applicable to various aspects of my daily life.
>
> OAD: MY experiences have influenced my lifestyle to become more minimalistic and structured. I make conscious decisions to only purchase essentials, avoiding items that contribute to waste. Stewardship of what I own, such as immediate cleaning and maintenance to increase longevity, is important to me. I approach life with a long-term perspective, carefully considering various aspects such as dietary habits, exercise routines, logistical arrangements and financial planning.

The positive impact of mountaineering on personal development encourages further exploration into the social aspects of the sport, particularly the interactions between mountaineers and local communities. This line of inquiry aims to understand how mountaineering affects social relationships and community dynamics.

5.3 Local interactions

Mountaineers often develop a profound sense of respect and care for the communities that live around the mountains, showing genuine concern for their well-being and prosperity. In places like the Aladağlar region, mountaineers have formed special relationships with locals who live and work in the mountain foothills. For more than a hundred years, as international and local mountaineering expeditions have passed through Aladağlar, the tradition of hospitality and cordiality between the locals and mountaineers remains an essential part of the mountaineering experience.

Prior to examining detailed instances, it is useful to first understand the guidelines informed by the ethical principles of mountaineering regarding social interactions.

> OAD: Our mountaineering community abided by certain unwritten conventions that acknowledged local customs. During our mountaineering ethics course, one of the core tenets was centered on our behavior in local settings. It was a constant reminder that as mountaineers, we are visitors within the domains of the indigenous population. We underlined the need to respect their quietude, to avoid intruding on their day-to-day activities, to

> exercise discretion, and to build amicable ties that would facilitate our ongoing presence in the region. These elements were of considerable importance. After concluding each expedition, we would reflect on our actions, especially scrutinizing any disrespect shown toward local inhabitants.
>
> INI: We were generally advised to buy local products as a way of supporting the community's economy and to demonstrate respect for their cultural norms, which included being considerate about the way we dressed.

The Tyrol Declaration touches on similar themes (Tyrol Declaration, 2002):

> As guests in foreign cultures, we should always conduct ourselves politely and with restraint towards the people there – our hosts. We will respect holy mountains and other sacred places while seeking to benefit and assist local economy and people. Understanding of foreign cultures is part of a complete climbing experience. (Article 4 – Visiting Foreign Countries)

Mountaineers maintain a relationship with local residents that is marked by respect. Additionally, specific families have been known to offer their hospitality to mountaineers from the early days of modern mountaineering in Türkiye.

> TOB: Mehmet Taşyalak and Mehmet Dönmez were key figures in Aladağlar, known for aiding mountaineers and offering services like mule rentals. At their homes in Çukurbağ village, mountaineers would gear up, rent mules, and sometimes share tea and conversation before departing for the highlands.

In the past, before the advent of telecommunication technologies, the visits of mountaineers provided locals with a rare opportunity to inquire about city life.

> TOB: When staying with Mehmet Ağa, local men would join us for tea and discussions about urban and political matters. Meanwhile, the visiting women would converse with local women in the kitchen, exchanging questions and stories.

It is observed that the rapport between the community in Aladağlar and the mountaineers is quite special and not the norm in other areas of Türkiye. What began primarily as trade-based interactions with the locals evolved over time and deepened into authentic friendships, illustrating a unique and strong bond between the two groups.

> BUD: Aladağlar distinguishes itself from other destinations due to its excellent communication and rapport between locals and climbers. In earlier days, interactions were marked by occasional phone calls or check-ins. Today, social media has enabled locals and climbers to remain connected

> online. Climbers reach out to locals for any needs before arriving, and in return, locals offer meals and assistance, particularly during tough situations. This exemplifies a deep, mutual willingness to help one another, often with the locals going above and beyond in their support.
>
> KES: The relationship our club had with the locals was not typical; we saw them as more than just service providers for tractors, mules, or flatbread needed for our mountain trips. As time passed, the commercial aspect of our interactions often dissolved, giving way to genuine friendships. What began as a matter of necessity evolved beyond mere transactions.
>
> OAD: Previously, due to the limited reach and accuracy of weather forecasts, I would phone locals like Saadettin Taşyalak or Salim Üçer to get updates on weather conditions, such as snowfall, wind, or valley situations. Different clubs formed close ties with certain villagers. Social events, like weddings, and times of mourning saw mountaineers participating in village life.
>
> BRO: Our club's connection with the locals goes beyond the usual club-community relationship; it's much like a familial tie. Sometimes we even step into the roles of shepherds for a few days or join in harvesting apples, offering help whenever it's needed. Although this special bond endures, it's important to note the growing socio-cultural divide as younger generations become more overweening, altering these traditional ties. Still, club members receive a warm reception from the locals, reflecting the enduring, albeit changing, nature of these relationships.

The younger generation of mountaineers still holds the stories of Mehmet Taşyalak, known as Mehmet the Hunter, and Salim Üçer in high regard. Their legacies persist within the club's culture even after their passing in 2014 (Tüzel, 2014) and 2022 (Türem, 2022).

In the Aladağlar villages, the number of people involved in tourism and hospitality is small, with the primary economic drivers being agriculture and livestock (Göksu, 2020). Contact between mountaineers and locals not in services is limited. There have been no major conflicts noted with locals in Çukurbağ or Demirkazık. Any minor incidents reported have occurred in the city center of Niğde, not within the mountain villages.

> AKH: Our interactions with the Aladağlar inhabitants are somewhat restricted. Our connections are mainly personal, with selected local contacts. We do, however, have a friendly relationship with certain local businesses—like our custom of visiting a particular soup spot in Niğde around our mountaineering activities. Despite this, we sometimes feel like outsiders in

> Niğde, and we perceive a certain coldness from the locals, which we respond to by keeping our distance.

The above confirms that mountaineers -especially those in university clubs – have a special relationship in the locality and receive special treatment from the villagers. This blurs the distinction between a tourist and a local guest/visitor. In the next section, it will be questioned how mountaineers are positioning themselves in this field.

5.4 Self-perception

Mountaineers' self-perception as being deeply connected or nearly native to mountain areas can positively influence nature conservation. Although they may feel a sense of belonging, locals might see the situation differently despite any close relationships. Furthermore, the way mountaineers see themselves could influence their interactions with and attitudes towards other visitors in these areas.

Informants from the study have been classified into three groups according to their self-perception: tourists, in-betweeners, and non-tourists. Those in the first group identify as tourists, a self-designation arising from the treatment they receive from locals or from their personal understanding of what it means to be a tourist.

> EUS: I habitually experience the feeling of being a tourist in rural regions, and the local attitude often reinforces that sentiment. Consequently, my visits to the mountains are marked by a sense of unfamiliarity, akin to that of a tourist or an outsider, and this includes even well-known destinations like the Aladağlar.

> TIS: The local population's perception of us is often as tourists. This could be attributed to the possibility that locals might not share the same enthusiasm for immersing themselves in nature as fervently as we do.

> BUD: Tourism, for me, is pretty straightforward: I leave my place to relax, do fun stuff somewhere else, and then head back. If it feels welcoming – like a home away from home – that's the sweet spot of traveling.

The second group engages in activities commonly associated with tourism, yet they do not quite see themselves as tourists, because from their perspective, their experiences lack certain luxuries and conveniences that they believe are essential features of conventional tourism.

> BRO: In the past, it felt like we belonged there. Picking apples, helping farmers, shoveling snow, and tending sheep made us feel like part of the community. It was a situation where money didn't exchange hands, and we could roam freely, almost like a local. Pitching in wherever help was needed was par for the course. Yet, looking back, I see that we've always been tourists. Shopping at the market, enjoying kebabs at the local restaurant, engaging in typical tourist activities—it's clear now.

> AKH: My experience wasn't quite that of a tourist, nor did I fully identify as a local. This might be because the trips were self-organized. Packaged services usually give me more of a tourist vibe, especially when I'm in a foreign country. For me, being a tourist often involves a degree of comfort and ease, without having to put in much effort.

The third and largest group does not consider themselves tourists, particularly in places like Aladağlar. They think of tourists as individuals who use easily available services like hotels, food service, and guided tours. This group's self-perception extends beyond Aladağlar to all natural settings; they maintain their "non-tourist" identity and sometimes associate tourism with negative connotations.

> KUA: I try to steer clear of the tourist attractions. However, traveling abroad is a bit different. In Chamonix, I enjoyed wine and desserts on my way to Mont Blanc – that's when I really felt like a tourist. In Yosemite, you get the town feel with its hotels, and you might hit up a restaurant even if you're camping. Hiking the John Muir Trail, I couldn't help but be a part of that tourist scene. It's a contrast to what I've felt back in Türkiye.

> OBC: I've been going to Aladağlar for 23 years, so I don't really feel like a tourist there. But when I'm abroad, that tourist feeling is always there. In Türkiye, if I'm somewhere new and it's not a mountaineering hotspot, sure, then I feel like a tourist. Usually, though, we go to places that are used to climbers, and I fit in. It's in the less-traveled spots where our bright gear stands out that we get those curious looks – that's when you can't help but feel like a tourist.

As understood from above, mountaineers tend to feel like a tourist when the locals made them feel so, when they do similar things with "other tourists", or upon

receiving service that makes their activity less difficult or increase their comfort. We believe that this was important to know “how mountaineers identify” themselves before we ask them regarding their perspective on their suggestions for the visitor planning of a national park. The next section will also help us to deepen our understanding on how mountaineers conceptualize the impacts of tourism.

5.5 Tourism according to mountaineers

Mountaineers understand and appreciate that national parks should be accessible to all and they recognize the economic advantages such tourism can offer local communities. Nevertheless, they often point out a general dereliction in public knowledge about the right way to behave in natural settings.

In Goksu (2020), the impact of tourism on rural development in Aladağlar is examined in detail. Mountaineers have observed firsthand how tourism has generated new sources of income for mountain villages. Although tourism was quite active in Aladağlar up to the year 2016, it faced a downturn that matched the wider decline in tourism across Türkiye, attributed to a series of disruptive events.

> HRG: The communities around Aladağlar have grown used to the presence of tourism and have integrated it into their local economy, welcoming climbers, hikers, and more recently, runners. Although tourism today is less intense compared to the peak periods 15-20 years ago—when travel agencies saw a higher volume of business—the area nevertheless continues to see significant economic activity from tourism, especially during the more popular seasons. Tourism's current economic influence is substantial; it could be greater but is nonetheless impactful. The region's economy benefits as tourists come and stay in the village, dine at the local eateries, engage in recreational activities, and use transport services.
>
> KES: Contrary to what some might think, the actual number of residents involved in the various forms of tourism is quite modest. For most of the local population, their livelihood is tied to traditional activities such as farming, fruit cultivation, and raising livestock, rather than tourism. Only a select few families, especially in villages like Çukurbağ, Demirkazık, and

> Ulupınar, derive their main income from tourism. While tourism has made some contributions to local development, its overall potential remains underexploited, partly due to a lack of trained professionals who can offer sustainable tourism services.

When we explored mountaineers' views on the growing interest in nature and mountain tourism, we encountered a wide array of opinions.

> KUA: It's gratifying to see the growth in interest because it often brings about positive changes, like updates to mountain regulations and better provision of specialized equipment. As the numbers rise, access and resources generally improve. The main point to consider is its management.

> OAD: Mountains and natural areas require protection, as they cannot self-protect. It's essential that individuals beyond the local communities come to cherish and take delight in these environments; without widespread appreciation, there's the danger that such precious areas might be repurposed for commercial exploitation, like quarrying, by governing bodies or the private sector. When tourism is practiced responsibly, it can be advantageous. Globally, there are laudable instances where this approach has been put into practice effectively.

Conversely, those who express unease about the growth in visitor numbers often cite environmental concerns. The discontent centers around two main issues: some argue that mismanagement is the problem, while others criticize the poor behavior of tourists.

> EUS: I'm of the opinion that not just anyone should be able to visit mountains and natural areas. These places call for proper education and infrastructure to be in place. Without employing scientific evaluations like measuring the carrying capacity, an unchecked stream of visitors to these areas can adversely affect the environment, disturb wildlife, and cause pollution. Having witnessed these detrimental effects over many years, I am convinced that this situation needs to change.

> INI: I make a living from tourism, but I'm not happy about the rising demand. Rapid and low-quality growth leads to adverse outcomes. We see an uptick in pollution, detrimental impacts on natural environments, and inappropriate camping amplifies the threat of wildfires.

Another informant reflects on the mixed feelings mountaineers have towards the surging interest in natural areas for leisure activities. They are particularly torn over the possibility that the tourism sector could rapidly expand and lead to the commercial exploitation of mountain landscapes.

> TOB: While the appeal of mountain and nature tourism is on the rise around the world, it wouldn't be prudent for Türkiye to fall behind. Whenever there's a chance to better the living standards locally, our people should be able to benefit from it. Therefore, I can't outright dismiss this development. However, I firmly oppose the idea of large-scale tourism in mountain areas which fails to yield any positive effect on the environment or mountaineering and can cause irreparable damage.

According to others, economic factors are driving a change in tourism patterns. As people face tighter budgets, they are seeking more affordable vacation options, which is leading them to choose nature-based destinations that are often perceived as being less expensive than traditional, commercial tourist attractions. However, due to their primary motive being vacation rather than environmental appreciation, they may not always act in the most environmentally responsible way.

> BUD: The primary issue is the insufficient education about nature and the misguided reasons behind the emerging trend in mountain tourism. Many people choose camping trips as an economic alternative to staying in hotels, yet they still anticipate hotel-like amenities. Without these services, they often leave their trash behind, expecting someone else to clean up after them. This can lead to treating natural spaces as disposable and not deserving of respect or care.

“Uninformed” visitors sometimes take risky actions that may necessitate rescue efforts. These behaviors, apart from posing risks of harm or even fatality, can also compromise the trust of emergency services and slow down the rescue operations for climbers who are in legitimate distress.

> KRB: Once, I encountered two young individuals from Adana who were unaware of the technical demands of the route they intended to take, and they were inadequately equipped, wearing only sports shoes. I'm not saying it's impossible, but if they were to run into trouble, they would complicate search and rescue efforts, affecting not just their own safety but also the efficiency and safety of the rescue teams involved.

> OBC: When accidents occur, the media often simplifies the story to "a mountaineer died climbing," even though the person involved may not be a trained mountaineer. These events profoundly impact the mountaineering community. An increase in interest for climbing and mountaineering is positive, but it should be accompanied by a conscious effort to respect and learn about the sport. Regrettably, such a culture has not been well-established in our country yet.

There is a general understanding that Aladağlar remains "well-preserved" since many of its visitors belong to a specific segment of tourists who possess a higher level of environmental awareness.

> BUD: Aladağlar seems to draw in tourists who are environmentally conscious and have a true appreciation for nature. In contrast, other mountain areas might attract tourist groups that are more consumer-oriented and arrive in greater numbers, influenced by the availability and nature of services provided in those regions.
>
> EUS: The impacts of tourism are indeed observed to be more negative in the Kaçkar and Ağrı mountains due to their higher popularity and the increased pressures that come with it. In comparison, Aladağlar could be seen as relatively unspoiled. The reason for this is that tourists who opt for Aladağlar often do so with the specific intention of mountaineering.

5.6 Current management practices

Mountaineers with varying climbing philosophies and backgrounds tend to share common views regarding the management of Aladağlar National Park. Firstly, they recognize that since its designation as a national park in 1995, there have been beneficial outcomes, particularly in terms of controlling illegal hunting of larger mammals within the park's boundaries. Additionally, they agree that the preservation of the area's wilderness has positively contributed to the quality of their mountaineering experiences.

> KES: Before the establishment of Aladağlar as a National Park, wildlife in the area faced threats from hunting. One of the effective measures introduced has been the presence of park rangers. These rangers patrol designated areas, helping to enforce conservation laws.
>
> EUS: It appears that protecting the mountain goat population is indeed a high priority within Aladağlar National Park. The current measures for monitoring wildlife seem to be effective as evidenced by the mountain goats' behavior; they feel secure enough to descend into the villages during the winter months. This suggests that the conservation efforts in place create a sanctuary for these animals, allowing them to thrive and maintain natural behaviors.

> BUD: In Europe, while there are many picturesque mountains, finding areas that offer a true wilderness experience can be rare. The encroachment of infrastructure can disrupt the sense of remoteness and tranquility that many mountaineers seek. In response, mountaineers gravitate towards the more secluded, interior regions of the park to find the isolation they desire. Conservation measures are instrumental in keeping these remote sectors free from further intrusion.

The collection of entry fees serves as the only tool for managing visitors within the national park. Nevertheless, due to the absence of a controlled entrance, the ticketing process remains irregular, handled by rangers who patrol the area and issue tickets at various times. Students seem to be particularly inconvenienced. Although visitors generally do not object to the cost, there is a desire for transparency regarding the use of the revenue generated to understand how it contributes to the park's upkeep and improvement.

> INI: Ideally, visitors would like to see the money being used for specific purposes, such as addressing disease issues within the Emli forest region of the park. While access to main valleys is nominally regulated, the intermittent ticketing by park officials appears more focused on fee collection than on the active regulation of visitor footfall.

> TIS: It's concerning when climbers are charged without receiving discernible services in return. The current system is limited to a basic transactional model—money is taken, and receipts are given. A better approach would be the collection and dissemination of statistical data regarding park usage and services.

> YMU: For students, the cost of national park fees can feel substantial. Potentially, exempting student groups from these fees might be a more equitable arrangement.

> KRB: Establishing designated payment stations at certain spots within the park could streamline the fee collection process and avoid inconveniences for visitors. While the willingness to contribute to the park's preservation is there, being interrupted early in a hike for fee collection can be frustrating for park-goers.

Mountaineers deeply care for the open access to Aladağlar National Park, which allows them to explore freely at their own risk. Nonetheless, there are instances where governmental bodies, such as the Mountaineering Federation, attempt to restrict access to certain areas for advanced activities citing safety concerns. These

interventions are met with criticism from the mountaineering community, who may view them as undue limitations on their freedom to navigate the park.

> AKH: We sometimes cross swords with the government agencies. Since we're university clubs and not on their official radar, we can get caught up in their push to button things up with rules for climbing. They'll throw stuff at us like having to carry a satellite phone or hiring a guide, stuff that just isn't in our budget and frankly, we can tackle the climbs without. But when we're out there, no one's actually there to enforce all that. These top-down rules don't make much sense, especially when you've got a place like Aladağlar with so many ways in. Piling on more rules just makes people tune out the authorities even more. I mean, if it was all about just giving the heads-up to the right people before we climb, sure, we'd be all over that. Back in the day, we'd loop in the Gendarmerie; now they just wave us off to the Ministry of Youth and Sports. And sometimes they want to see a mountaineering license, but let's be real, having that card doesn't mean you know the first thing about climbing.

When it comes to permissions, members of the mountaineering community feel that the regulations put forward by official institutions are more about putting up barriers to prevent accidents rather than taking proactive steps to enhance safety measures or set up an insurance system. It is seen as a kind of avoidance tactic, where the default response to potential risks is to restrict activities, which doesn't sit well with mountaineers who would prefer to see more constructive solutions.

> KTE: Experience in rescue operations among official institutions may be lacking, which can be problematic during emergencies, as showcased by incidents where if not for the quick action of seasoned mountaineers, response times from gendarmerie teams might be inadequately prolonged, sometimes due to red tape. This leads to a perception among mountaineers that local authorities view them more as a liability than participants in a legitimate outdoor activity, and it casts doubt on the authorities' ability and preparedness to ensure climbers' safety effectively.

> KUA: The fluctuating regulations around activities like barbecuing can make it feel like the authorities are in a constant state of trial and error. Bans can sometimes seem like an easy way for authorities to deflect responsibility rather than taking the time to educate visitors on appropriate behavior or implementing preventive measures. This inconsistency can stem from changes in management, with each new official potentially introducing their own set of rules.

Despite the various regulations on mountaineering activities, bolting has largely gone without official oversight. There are mountaineering groups that have been pushing

for institutional support to regulate the practice. Within the community, as highlighted in discussions about club culture, there has been a movement to self-regulate by opening a dialogue and approaching a unified position, though the implementation of these self-regulations is still incomplete and continues to evolve.

> EUS: Despite our efforts to engage with the authorities by requesting meetings to voice our concerns, there was no action taken. It seems the authorities either didn't grasp the situation or showed a lack of interest in the implications of bolting activities in the national park.

There is strong disapproval among the majority of informants about the man-made structures within the national park. Specifically, 14 out of 17 have criticized the national park authority for constructing mountain shelters that fail to meet the necessary standards due to poor material choices and inappropriate locations. These structures are deemed ineffective for their intended use. Additionally, the construction of additional parking areas and the widening of roadways are under criticism as they allow for unregulated passage into previously unspoiled mountain regions. This increased accessibility, without the implementation of visitor monitoring tools, risks compromising ecological balance of the park and is a significant cause for concern.

> INI: At Emli Valley's entrance, a cobblestone parking space was initially laid out only to be taken apart afterwards. Deeper within the mountain, facilities like showers and toilets were built, yet they quickly fell into disrepair within weeks, a development that seemed unnecessary. Focusing on improving waste management practices might have been a more pressing and beneficial concern.

> HRG: In the interior of the mountain, buildings constructed with unsuitable materials are now deteriorating. These structures have been erected in locations that lack water resources and are now in a state of disrepair. The decision to place them in these spots without proper planning, using inappropriate materials like marble tiles and metal roofing, has led to facilities that are not only impractical but also challenging and costly to maintain or repair. Considering the buildings are falling into ruin, there's a need to allocate more budget to address this issue. The preexisting, older toilets remain functional and highlight the effectiveness of simpler, more reliable constructions. A better investment would have been in smaller,

> strategically placed shelters or bivouac spots for climbers, which would greatly improve the overall mountaineering experience.
>
> KTE: The stone cabins available are not practical and lack organization in their interior setup. They may provide temporary refuge in inclement weather, yet they are not fit for overnight accommodation. For instance, the cabin located in Kocadölek has suffered partial collapse. Even though I have frequently encountered the cabin at Yedigöller, it hasn't drawn me in enough to inspect inside. Similarly, the cabins in the Maden region do not offer functional value for visitors.
>
> SUE: An effort has been made to add infrastructure, such as the stone house at Yedigöller which I saw once but was not convinced of its functionality. In Emli Valley, barriers have been erected to block vehicles, yet they are ineffective. Accessibility to such places isn't solely about constructing roads—it's also about planning for the human impact.

The construction of toilet buildings in central, more accessible areas (front country) has been appreciated by some mountaineers, particularly as these facilities have become essential with the rise in popularity of certain campgrounds.

> SUE: Previously, people at Sarımemedin Yurdu would simply find seclusion behind a stone for their toiletry needs. However, with the rise in visitor numbers, this is no longer a viable option. Although a toilet facility now exists, details about the waste management system implemented there and its maintenance remain unclear. I’m concerned about the frequency of waste collection and the potential impact this could have on the wildlife in the area.

New infrastructure can draw larger crowds that, however, result in additional complications. The accumulation of waste, overcrowding, and fly outbreaks negatively impact the quality of the outdoor experience.

> BRO: Aladağlar seems to be more protected because it's off the beaten path than because it's a national park. My friends tell me Sarımemedin Yurdu has gone downhill—it stinks, there are flies everywhere, trash piled up, and it's always packed with people having picnics. They won't bother going there in the heat of summer anymore. Now that they've fixed up the road, it's a breeze to get there in any old car. But since the roads to Arpalık and Sokullu Pınar aren't great, it looks like we'll end up heading to those spots instead.

A few have raised concerns about pollution in the higher mountain regions, particularly around the campsites often used by shepherds. They pointed out that the national park's authorities' monitoring does not seem to extend beyond the motorized access areas.

> YMU: The shepherds are partly responsible for contributing to pollution by leaving behind waste such as glass and plastic. There is a notable desire for more surveillance in the more remote backcountry areas. Pollution is evident around the Vali Konağı campsite, and there appears to be a lack of concerted effort to keep Yedigöller clean.

On a different note, certain informants have also brought up the regrettable displacement of nomads and pastoralists from the park during the initial stages of planning.

> HRG: There're some rules now that keep the nomads and their herds out of the mountains, reportedly to save the park's unique plants. But back in the day, we as climbers had a good give-and-take with the nomadic folks. We'd hook them up with some meds if they needed, and they'd share their homemade bread, yogurt, or cheese with us. They knew how to find water straight from the mountain too, which was helpful for us climbers.

Additional issues of note involve the inadequate inclusion of stakeholders in governance, insufficient quality human resources, and the unavailability of informational resources within the park. Together, these aspects highlight the range and seriousness of the issues that the mountaineering community believes should be addressed to better manage the park.

5.7 Vision

The views of mountaineers on tourism planning and management vary, but as they contemplate the best possible scenario for the national park, a consistent set of agreed-upon ideals becomes apparent. This section will outline the key areas of improvement identified from informant feedback.

The development of search and rescue services and the implementation of an insurance system stand out as pivotal improvements, as agreed upon by a multitude of informants.

> KUA: In emergency situations, assistance has to come via helicopter from Kayseri, unlike in well-known climbing destinations like Chamonix or Yosemite where climbers can secure insurance for as little as $10. To attract

> the same caliber of tourists and establish parity with these renowned sites, there is a need to offer comparable amenities, which includes having reliable rescue services and insurance options.
>
> HRG: Developing a comprehensive search and rescue system is imperative for Aladağlar to ensure the safety and security of mountaineers. This involves establishing a permanent rescue team, equipped with helicopters and staffed by trained professionals, to provide timely and efficient response in case of emergencies on the mountain.

To ensure that those who are new or less experienced in mountaineering do not take on challenges beyond their capabilities, the suggested approach is a gentle one, primarily focused on education and guidance. The idea is to provide these visitors with better access to informative materials that can teach them about the risks and the required skills. Additionally, connecting them with experienced individuals, like park rangers, can offer valuable in-person advice and support. This recommendation comes from a preference for these non-restrictive methods rather than implementing strict controls that would limit who could access certain parts of the park or require special permissions to do so.

> KRB: A method for supervising the park's points of entry and exit would have been an optimal solution. This doesn't necessarily mean that climbers need to get certified or have permission from a central authority. However, a more basic step could be to train park officials in assessing the adequacy of visitors' gear and in educating them about the more demanding trails.

Another widely agreed-upon notion is the necessity to monitor the environmental impact of visitors. Suggestions range from adopting regulatory measures to assess the mountain's carrying capacity, to the implementation of strategies to lower the ecological footprint per visitor.

> EUS: It would be useful to have signage throughout the park that emphasizes the ecological importance of the area to those entering.
>
> TOB: It’s important to maintain yearly records of visitation and observe the trends of increasing visitor numbers. With this data, it would be prudent to investigate the necessity of setting a cap on the number of visitors permitted in Aladağlar National Park going forward.

KUA: I am interested in addressing pollution issues. One approach could be to distribute trash bags to picnickers and see to it that they are retrieved when they leave.

HRG: Kilimanjaro National Park has banned single-use plastics to reduce litter. Porters are required to weigh their gear in and out of camps to ensure nothing is left behind, with financial penalties for non-compliance. Many tour groups now bring private latrines to deal with human waste responsibly, ensuring all waste is carried off the mountain for proper disposal. This is all applicable to the context of Aladağlar.

With a culture centered on the value of generating and sharing knowledge, one of the top priorities was allocating resources to information-related initiatives.

OAD: Academic research is needed to document the history of the park. Complementary to this should be written works which profile the park's ecological attributes and recreational uses. Equally important would be scholarly examination of the local oral traditions. With its unique placement between the steppe and alpine ecologies, Aladağlar offers an interesting cultural landscape. I'm curious about the lifestyles and viewpoints of the residents there. By 2050, I hope to see a comprehensive and well-curated library of literature addressing all these elements.

HRG: What Aladağlar needs is a museum or information center. While a new building for national parks has been established, it remains unstaffed and lacks resources to provide information to visitors.

Opinions are clearly split on the topic of constructing new infrastructure like mountain huts in the area. Some support these developments as a means to enhance the mountaineering experience, while others raise questions about potential adverse effects on the natural landscape.

KTE: Looking at it pragmatically, if the goal is to advance mountaineering and search and rescue operations, it would be beneficial to establish small service cabins for mountaineering and dining in all camping sites. However, from a personal standpoint, I believe that the construction of such structures might limit my ability to pitch my own tent, so I prefer that they remain unbuilt for the time being. In Europe, wild camping is prohibited, and staying in a hut requires payment, which I don't appreciate. Implementing similar restrictions in Aladağlar should only be considered if there's a substantial rise in demand.

INI: Constructing mountain huts as refuges for mountaineers is essential. However, this responsibility often falls to national park authorities, who have yet to implement this requirement. There needs to be a place for shelter in dangerous weather conditions, but I am not referring to tourist accommodations; those should be situated outside the national park.

> TOB: It would be ideal to forgo any development within Aladağlar National Park that might interfere with the natural ecology and balance.
>
> GNY: Aladağlar holds a unique significance for me. I'm not in favor of replicating the Alpine mountain hut model there; that's not my preference. Nonetheless, I do see the value in establishing climbing-specific campgrounds nearer to the village.

Other proposals for the area just outside the park's borders include the creation of capacity building programs, small loan programs for community entreprenuers, support for cooperatives led by local women, upgrades to public transport services, more effective advertising for the area as a travel spot, the implementation of a regional building code, and the establishment of superior barbecue facilities with full services.

> KTE: Çamardı could really be a hotspot for mountaineering in Türkiye, especially with the younger crowd, but culture gets in the way. Looking at places outside Türkiye, it's a whole different story. You'd think Çamardı would've produced some top-notch climbers by now. Maybe the key is getting the word out about climbing and helping the locals take pride and ownership in their mountains.
>
> SUE: Mixing up the lodging choices around the borders of the park could lead to fewer folks taking up space at campgrounds. On the infrastructure side, we could think about setting up the parking areas a bit away from the mountain's entrance and then shuttling people in on buses, especially when it's busy in the summer.
>
> BUD: Mestia, in Svaneti, really got it right by getting the locals involved with their tourism strategy. It's awesome how they've used a community-driven approach to turn their town into a popular spot. Visitors now know exactly what to look forward to when they head there. It wasn't like that at all when I first wanted to go; there was hardly anything. But then, in just a short time, they made it into a welcoming spot for backpackers from all over. It'd be great to see something similar happen in Aladağlar.

The evidence points to the need for a more thorough planning and proactive management strategy for the area in question. Moreover, the majority of informants indicated their readiness to participate in these efforts.

> HRG: Our travels take us far into mountains, beyond the usual reach of national park patrols. This provides us with a clearer perspective on the issues and difficulties that may be overlooked by the park officials. I am convinced

> that we are in a position to offer valuable contributions based on our direct observations and collective experiences.
>
> YMU: Creating a channel for expressing opinions or worries could be really helpful, maybe by setting up a system of volunteer inspectors.
>
> INI: I would very much like to be a part of such a committee as a volunteer, with my knowledge and time.

In support of a participatory approach to planning and management, an informant stressed that the active involvement of local community members is indispensable for the successful implementation of this model.

> KUA: In the US and Europe, local clubs are really good at handling area management and conservation. The clubs take the lead in maintaining trails and safety stations, while also making sure visitors get the info they need. Locals and climbers work together to keep these places in good shape. We see this happening in Geyikbayırı too. But it's a different story in Niğde, where people coming in from bigger cities like Ankara or İstanbul now and then doesn't quite match the same level of care.
>
> AKH: Mountaineers have a lot to offer, and their input shouldn't be restricted just to those with official credentials from the Turkish Mountaineering Federation, or just to coaches and guides. It would really help to bring in voices from all corners of the mountaineering community, to hear from groups of all sizes that have been involved in climbing and mountaineering, and to make sure their thoughts and opinions are part of the conversation.

Conversely, there were criticisms directed at the mountaineering community for their main focus on recreation and their limited involvement in social and environmental policy matters.

> OAD: Lately, Türkiye has faced numerous environmental problems, especially in natural areas. From what I've seen, there's only been one time when the climbing community got involved, which was about the quarries in Geyikbayırı.

When asked about their participation in planning sessions or stakeholder workshops, all informants reported that they had never been invited to contribute. They noted that although they had reached out a few times, these attempts had not led to any ongoing communication.

> KES: I recall us visiting the national parks authority just a couple of times. One visit was with the Ministry of Forestry to talk about the mistletoe

> problem, which is harming the pine trees in Emli Valley, and we were asking about ways to handle the situation. The other visit was to discuss bolting issues

When discussing their 30-year projections for Aladağlar, the informants split into two camps. Half are proponents of conserving the area's pristine condition, while the rest propose a more diversified approach. This latter group believes that infrastructural upgrades are essential to grow the visitor demographic and improve user experience, yet they also stress the importance of environmental management.

The first group insisted that those visiting the region ought to be inclined to savor its natural wilderness:

> BUD: I'm really fond of the Aladağlar as it was in 2006; it's best kept just as is. I know my way there inside out. As far as I'm concerned, it should keep its wild streak… I'd be up for it being a bigger deal across Türkiye, but only as long as it doesn't compromise the ‘wilderness’ factor I go for.
>
> HRG: My sole desire is for Aladağlar to retain its natural state, its plants and wildlife, just as it was before me and will be after. Increased popularity isn't an issue as long as there's a sense of order.
>
> AKH: I'm happy with how things are now; a drop in quality would be regrettable. I'm not looking to find man-made structures or clear markings for routes in the park, since the thrill is in uncovering your own course – that spirit of 'exploration.' It's a vital part of the experience. I shudder to think of more signs of human impact than there currently are.

The second set of informants also appreciate the area's wilderness and argue that, with prudent planning, strategic investments can coexist with conservation, allowing a greater number of visitors to enjoy the park.

> KUA: I'd like it if the Aladağlar were a destination people of every age and families could visit all year round. Mountaineering might not be for everyone, but there should be alternative ways to enjoy the outdoors, like camping and simple hikes. We must make the mountain a year-round attraction with activities for all. This means ensuring that the physical infrastructure – from trails to emergency services – is robust. If we don't make these changes, we'll be stuck in the same pattern, with only a handful of us visiting; but I believe the future should offer more than what it did 30 years ago.

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CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

A commodified alpine experience refers to the process where the natural and interpersonal elements of mountain environments, such as the act of mountaineering and the interaction with local cultures and landscapes, are turned into products that can be bought and sold. A considerable body of social science research has reported on the harmful environmental impacts, along with the social and cultural impacts on mountain communities, attributable to tourism and travel activities. Mountaineering literature is equally laden with perception and worry regarding the effects that commodification has had on the sport itself, as well as on the communities inhabiting mountain regions and their surrounding environments.

A significant portion of mid-19th century mountaineering literature includes accounts of first European summits. From 1854 to 1872, British climbers laid claim to 31 out of the 39 first ascents. By 1877, the era of pioneering the first ascents of European Alps had concluded, and the mountaineering community set its sights on more ambitious projects, branching out to different weather patterns, landscapes, and the discovery of new routes. Mountaineers driven by the desire to conquer higher mountains journeyed to the Himalayas, which at the time was dotted with colonial settlements serving as gateways to these high-altitude ranges. Just as they had done in the European Alps, their primary mission was to reach the highest points of the mountains, using any methods or strategies they could. A typical Himalayan campaign spanned several months. The process of scaling heights beyond 8,000 meters and the logistical challenge of carrying gear and provisions to these secluded alpine environments demanded extensive teams of climbers and a substantial

contingent of porters. With time, the evolution of mountaineering has seen the replacement of the original, heavy gear and provisions with advanced, lighter materials optimized for the specific conditions of high-altitude climbing.

In addition to advanced personal gear, modern climbers use various high-tech methods that significantly change their interaction with high-altitude environments. Satellite data has improved map precision. To traverse crevasses, climbers have placed aluminum ladders in areas like the Khumbu Icefall on Everest; some even use explosives to preemptively induce avalanches for safety. The first helicopter evacuation on the Eiger North Wall in September 1971 set a precedent for what is now a more frequent occurrence in mountain rescue. More recently, adventurers have taken to carrying paragliders to the peaks, adding a new dimension to their descent strategies. The advancements in mountaineering technology have profoundly influenced the sport. Faster ascend via optimized routes has cut down the duration climbers are exposed to physical risk factors. Less time at extreme altitudes has somewhat diminished personal risks related to lack of oxygen, such as impaired judgement, as well as minimizing occurrences of edema and frostbite. This partial reduction of physical risks, together with advancements in transport infrastructure has led to a significant surge in the number of individuals traveling to and scaling mountains.

With more individuals taking to the mountains, the quest for mountaineering achievements grows more competitive. For instance, after successfully summiting Everest, climbers might look for new stunts by attempting less-traveled routes or other faces of the mountain. The advancement in climbing gear, increased accessibility, and the lowered perceived danger levels combine to draw a larger crowd to high-altitude peaks – a crowd that may be better outfitted technologically

than they are seasoned in practice. Climbers from Europe and Asia often train in the Alps. These experiences may not adequately prepare them for the extreme meteorological conditions encountered on grand subarctic elevations.

Mountaineering, having become a commodified activity, has seen an impact on its economic organization. As more people are drawn to mountaineering, the demand for access to renowned peaks and the required resources to summit these mountains has risen. Nowadays, climbers often depend on corporate sponsorships and product endorsements to provide critical equipment and financial means for their activities, and many among them have thrived under these contemporary forms of patronage (Barcham, 2018). The most telling change perhaps is the transformation in mountaineering literature. Previously, these accounts publicized climbing routes and sought to mitigate accusations of recklessness. In the current climate, such writings are developed to resonate with corporate interests, striving to generate compelling marketing fables. For many, the growing dependence on corporate sponsorship has however compromised "the meaning of the climbing experience" (Johnston & Edwards, 1994, p. 466). The competition for, and dissatisfaction with, corporate sponsorship has pushed many climbers to seek alternative forms of support. Accomplished alpinists are capitalizing on their expertise to enter the growing market of adventure tourism, moving into travel-related professions. Some have partnered with travel agencies and climbing clubs that organize visits to their base camps. Some are hired as qualified guides by adventure tourism organizations, arranging their expeditions to meet the expectations of traveling clients. They are also landing jobs with an ever-increasing number of alpinism academies, which offer the dual benefits of high-altitude training and the opportunity to develop their avocations into a career.

To be sure, mountaineering literature confirms the image of mountaineers as participant-observers: people who cultivate lasting relationships with local communities and record their encounters with a level of detail that is a hallmark of ethnographic fieldwork. However, this representation overlooks the perspective of host communities: “an outsider whose presence instigates complex social, cultural, economic, and environmental repercussions” (Johnston & Edwards, 1994, p. 469). Mountaineers often establish long-term connections with the regions they visit and the peoples they meet. They are driven by diverse and complex motivations in their activities. Additionally, as a distinctive cultural community, they have developed their own specialized language, histories, social structures, and institutional organizations (Akcan, 2011). Countries typically have mountaineering associations that log the triumphs of members, recommend protocols and methods, and create a forum in climbing publications that helps develop and uphold the group’s collective standards. In a way, the mountaineering community embodies the ideals that ecotourism aspires to: they are a collective of conscientious, introspective explorers who report and examine the significance of their journeys, as well as the consequences of their actions. In these moments of self-reflection, should they perceive a change in their identity from that of a traveler to a tourist, this realization is considered a positive development.

Mountaineers seek the thrill of confronting nature in its most undebased form, yet their activities can, paradoxically, end up altering and diminishing the very wilderness they cherish. This problem is universal, but uniquely, mountaineers pledge to reduce the effects of their activities and lessen future impact. As Johnston and Edwards (1994, p. 473) note, “they involve themselves as active, rather than passive, participants in structuring mutually beneficial relationships with mountains

and mountain peoples". Yet, one might contend that these changes and impacts can be more accurately attributed to tourism as the operative factor. Ecotourism is commonly described as the "ideal" of combining conservation and development, with business owners, local hosts, and visitors all actively working together to create experiences that are sustainable. Johnston and Edwards (1994) argue that while mountaineers might be seen as ideal ecotourists, there is still concern about the broader consequences of commercializing the alpine experience.

The way tourism develops often echoes the existing socioeconomic framework, typically reinforcing established power dynamics. The approaches taken create a system that allows for adjustments — rather than radical changes — in the way involved parties interact with one another, and with the environment. The adjustments ecotourism warrants are carefully calibrated to maintain, if not increase, reliance on economic motivations. The latter need not change and ascribing them to any single group (i.e., business owners) among the three sets of actors is without merit. The authors are convinced that local participation, although a key component of alternative tourism models, "does not necessarily mean participation for the social collective good" (Johnston & Edwards, 1994, p. 474). Communities with strong ties to alpine ecotourism have to contend with the sector's conflicting realities and global market trends. In situations where demand results in overcrowding, the natural environment is compromised, pathways become overused, and consumer interests move on. This leaves the places that once thrived on tourism with a failing economy, as travelers seek out and flock to other, well-kept destinations.

Corporate sponsorship, on the other hand, significantly influences the real-life mountaineering experience and the way these experiences are perceived by the public. Objectives are set and announced by corporate sponsors. Consequently,

people who buy into this idealized vision of mountaineering respond by purchasing the advertised gear and clothing, and by seeking out their own mountain adventures. As a result, there is a surge in the number of brimming-with-tackle, fashion-forward tourists traveling to mountain destinations. These marketing strategies also help define what it means to be a professional mountaineer today.

Johnston and Edwards (1994) raise some very compelling arguments. Particularly fitting is their inquiry into whether the emergence of a socially-conscious community of tourists and industry professionals truly establishes the structural framework required for authentic "sustainable" ecotourism. This line of questioning is crucial, as it starkly contrasts recent research[13] that assumes the indispensability of proactive groups for sustainable tourism success, only to conclude that tourists commonly do not live out their stated pro-environmental values. Their assertion that economic factors carry significant weight in the development of alpine ecotourism hits close to the mark. They also convincingly argue that neither the mountaineering community nor the host societies can genuinely lay claim to the mantle of the social collective good. However, where they do not quite deliver is in providing guidance on how to seek out and locate the latter.

Johnston and Edwards are quite right; we should be careful not to quickly affirm the self-image of mountaineers as (eco)tourists, as it might represent a politically retrogressive chapter in the history of mountaineering. Numerous mountaineering bodies and trekking companies, both national and international, have indeed implemented ethical codes that generally stress low-impact, soft-path approaches. The choice to follow 'soft-path' strategies and to redefine mountaineering accolades to give precedence to environmental consideration over peak summiting, however,

[13] In addition to (Holden et al., 2022), Higgins-Desbiolles (2010), Sharpley (2012) and Sharpley (2021)

still operates within the framework of environmental imperialism. Here, the issue is not merely the potential overlooking of the mountaineering community's self-organizing nature, even if it gravitates towards eco-imperialist solutions. What is perhaps of greater concern is the inattention to the fact that trend towards commercialization-cum-ecotourism depends not purely on economic factors but a distinct ‘political project’. Certainly, the thrust of this project is to steal a march on more radical environmental agendas.

A universally accepted definition of ecotourism continues to be out of reach, not because of technical complexities, but owing to political differences among various groups. While there is an understanding of ecotourism's fundamental issues and evaluative criteria, and to some extent, widespread consensus on the type of qualities an ecotourism experience should embody, there is markedly less unity on the relative weight, ranking, and the implementation of these evaluative criteria. Buckley's discussion on the normative frameworks of ecotourism is just a precursor to his preferred area of inquiry—descriptive studies that seek to consolidate the ways in which the term ecotourism is applied in practice. Given that a single tourism company can provide a variety of products with diverse characteristics, Buckley believes that it is more appropriate to define ecotourism on the level of specific products or at the scale of locally operating affiliates. While some firms integrate ecotourism completely in their mission and product line, these are outnumbered by those providing a varied selection that includes elements of both nature and adventure tourism. An analysis of close to 170 instances of ecotourism, examined by Buckley (2003), detected characteristic regional patterns, with certain ecotourism products being more typical in different continents and types of ecosystems. Buckley's 2006 review of adventure tourism case studies (Buckley, 2006) yielded no

identifiable regional trends. An assessment of the more specialized sector of conservation tourism, again by Buckley (2010), was geographically organized and noted variances tied to cultural, political, land ownership aspects, as well as endemic wildlife, but did not establish any consistent, general regularities.

Buckley also addresses the empirical analysis of tourism impact and visitor behavior. The severest human impact in wilderness areas can be attributed to a subset of visitors who carry out unauthorized actions and overlook both formal regulations and specific minimal-impact directives, not to mention the more broadly pitched overtures of green marketing. No clear connection has been established, on the other hand, between professed eco-friendly lifestyle choices in urban settings and genuine low-impact behaviors in natural environments. Residents of metropolitan areas could be concerned with environmental issues, yet might be underprepared and ill-equipped for travel that minimizes impact. While not always scoring high on standardized environmental polls, those who reside or have resided in the countryside for an extended period often excel at moving through natural landscapes in a manner that leaves no evidence.

Despite his empirical approach, Buckley (2013a, pp. 12–13) does not shy away from reporting on the motivations behind tourist behavior either: “Given that concepts of ecotourism allow a very broad latitude in the specific types of attraction and activity, we may perhaps anticipate a correspondingly broad range of motivations and socioeconomic characteristics amongst ecotourists.” The varying motivations of national park visitors, volunteer tourists, and commercial ecotour clients each merit independent study. However, understanding these motivations is unlikely to produce a conclusive definition of what constitutes an ecotourist. For this

reason, Buckley advises the study of ecotourism to be oriented towards its product line-up.

This orientation does not absolve Buckley from proposing a 'horizontal' theory of ecotourist consumption. As such, one may accuse him of showing less concern for analytical coherence and being more interested in empirically modelling consumer behavior and stimuli for consumption (Bayliss & Fine, 2020, p. 8). Nor does it exempt Buckley from the criticism of equating a person's value with their role as a consumer in the marketplace. As previously discussed, responsible tourism chiefly gives consumers the agency to enact change by where they choose to spend their money. This casts responsible tourism as largely contingent on market-oriented approaches to solve environmental problems. Sustainability's collective value proposition appears to clash, however, with the principles underlying responsible tourism, which stress the ethical (and economic) self-determination of the individual.

This does not mean that Buckley does not possess a precise understanding of how and where commercial conservation tourism enters the scene. In the past, the creation of public parks has been the cornerstone of successful conservation policy. Yet, there is increasing pushback against extending the reach of protected areas worldwide. Thus, the situation calls for creative conservation approaches that accommodate existing land use rights, providing a way to protect and manage the environment without the need to negotiate new ownership or tenure arrangements. As various species, along with their ecosystems, feel the growing impacts of climate change, strategic interventions must now be advanced that ensure connectivity at the landscape level, as opposed to conserving separate patches. Given that these corridors often need to cut across privately-owned territories, off-reserve conservation mechanisms deserve serious attention. In some places, such incentives

could be created through direct payments from the government or through tax breaks for conservation or related environmental services. In others, the proceeds from privately operated tourism businesses can act as an additional and “sometimes more targeted incentive” (Buckley, 2010). Buckley's approach is the very definition of a Hardin-esque solution. In this scenario, what truly drives tourism demand is precisely the newly privatized power to limit access. Thereby, Buckley has no compelling reason to account for the consumer aspect. For our purposes, the Hardin-like propositions by Buckley are to be resisted, as they are likely to dissolve any sense of shared accountability and collective action (Çoban, 2018, p. 30)

The difference between the perspectives of Johnston and Edwards and that of Buckley is difficult to overlook. According to the former, commercialization is a process that cannot help but "put more people on mountains” (1994, p. 464). It is intrinsically inclusive, even though it gives rise to overcrowding and related environmental problems. Buckley, on the other hand, suggests that commercialization could be a resolution to overcrowding in a more generic sense and the extractive use of natural resources. A critical aspect of legal private property is the absolute discretion of the proprietor to manage admission. This, however, does not stand in the way of both reaching the conclusion that the ideal of sustainability as a collective good is unattainable under our present circumstances. The chief purpose of our interview process was to discover the attitudes of mountaineers and their clubs towards these questions.

Mountaineering clubs play a crucial role in fostering a strong sense of community among their members. Their primary focus is on sharing knowledge about mountaineering techniques, safety practices, and experiences. The emphasis on community building helps create a supportive environment where members can learn

from each other and enhance their skills. This communal aspect is vital for the structure of these organizations. Exchange of knowledge and experiences not only improves individual skills but also transforms these clubs into more formalized institutions. Through these processes, a mountaineering club evolves from a casual group of enthusiasts to a more formalized institution. This institutionalization helps in preserving and enhancing the club's legacy, ensuring the safety and education of its members, and contributing positively to the wider mountaineering and outdoor community. Through these activities, long-established mountaineering clubs embody a blend of tradition, skill-sharing, and community spirit.

Mountaineering offers a unique vantage point for observing environmental transformations firsthand. As mountaineers traverse diverse terrains and altitudes, they witness the direct impact of climate change and other factors on mountain ecosystems. Mountaineers in Türkiye often develop unique and meaningful relationships with local communities. These relationships are built on mutual respect, understanding, and often, a shared caring attitude towards the local environment. They develop a profound sense of belonging within mountainous terrains. They also often recognize the dual aspects of public access to national parks: its economic benefits for local communities and the importance of widespread access to natural spaces for all. However, they also frequently identify a gap in fundamental knowledge about appropriate conduct in these environments among visitors. Mountaineers, despite their varied backgrounds and differing philosophies in mountaineering, often find common ground in their critiques of the management approaches in Aladağlar National Park. The regulation and management of tourism in national parks is a topic that often elicits varied opinions among mountaineers.

New members gain valuable insights from experienced mountaineers, while seasoned climbers have the opportunity to mentor and share their expertise. As knowledge is passed down from experienced climbers to novices, clubs often develop structured training programs. This formalizes the learning process, creating a more institutional approach to skill development and safety training. Over time, the knowledge and practices shared within the club are often documented and codified, leading to the creation of manuals, guidelines, and standard operating procedures. The repeated practices and shared experiences of club members lead to the establishment of traditions and norms, which become an integral part of the club's culture. As clubs grow and formalize their activities, they often establish defined roles and hierarchies. This can include elected positions like a president or secretary, and designated roles for training, safety officers, or environmental stewards, contributing to a more institutional structure. Clubs require members to adhere to strict safety and responsibility standards. This is crucial in mountaineering, where risky activities necessitate a high level of trust and reliability among members. As clubs become more institutionalized, they also seek recognition from external bodies, such as national mountaineering associations or sports federations. This can lead to further formalization through adherence to external standards and regulations.

Clubs may have flexible membership policies to accommodate people from different walks of life, acknowledging that interest and ability in mountaineering can vary widely. While mountaineering clubs often strive to be inclusive and open to enthusiasts of all levels, the nature of the activity requires a certain level of skill, commitment, and adherence to safety standards. How clubs balance these requirements with the goal of inclusivity vary, but many make concerted efforts to welcome, train, and integrate members from diverse backgrounds. Clubs often

require new members to complete a training course or attend a certain number of club events before gaining full membership.

The dynamics and mandates of the clubs vary widely. Environmental education is a staple part of training programs for club members. This includes teaching about the impacts of climate change on mountain ecosystems, how to minimize one's ecological footprint while mountaineering, and understanding the importance of sustainable practices. Mountaineers often hold strong environmental ethics, which are integral to their activities and interactions with the natural world. These ethics are rooted in a deep respect for the environment and an understanding of the delicate balance that must be maintained in natural ecosystems, especially in mountainous regions. Mountaineering clubs often have provisions in place for members who engage in behavior that contradicts their environmental rules of engagement or overall ethics. The nature and enforcement of these provisions can vary depending on the club's policies, the severity of the infraction, and the circumstances involved. If a member repeatedly violates environmental guidelines or if the infraction is more serious, the club may issue formal warnings or reprimands. This action serves as a clear indication that the behavior is unacceptable and needs to change. As a last resort, for the most egregious or repeated violations, a club may revoke a member's membership. This is generally reserved for cases where the individual's actions have caused significant harm or represent a fundamental breach of the club’s values. Some clubs have committees dedicated to reviewing cases of misconduct. These committees ensure that any actions taken are fair and consistent with the club’s policies.

Mountaineers can report on environmental changes they observe, such as signs of erosion, wildlife disturbances, or the impact of human activities. Their

repeated visits allow them to notice changes over time, providing important data on environmental conditions.

Mountaineers often take the time to learn about and respect the local culture and traditions. They often contribute to the local economy in more direct and significant ways, such as hiring local guides, staying in locally-owned accommodations, and purchasing supplies from local vendors. In some cases, mountaineers actively participate in the community life, attending local events, engaging in cultural exchanges, and sometimes even participating in community projects. Due to repeated visits and a shared passion for the mountains, mountaineers often build long-term relationships with local communities, differentiating them from transient tourists.

This differentiation is not always clear-cut, and there can be overlaps between mountaineering and tourism. However, the general tendency for mountaineers to seek a more immersive, respectful, and engaged experience often sets them apart from the conventional tourist archetype and positions them closer to their host communities. Differing viewpoints reflect the complex balance between preserving natural environments and accommodating tourism, which can be beneficial economically but potentially harmful ecologically. Many recognize the economic benefits tourism brings to local communities near national parks. There is often a divide between those who support making national parks more accessible to a broader public and those who argue that increased accessibility can lead to overcrowding, habitat disturbance, and a loss of wilderness experience. The development of infrastructure (like trails, lodges, and visitor centers) to support tourists is another point of contention. While some mountaineers see this as

necessary for safety and comfort, others view it as an encroachment on natural landscapes.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

In discussions around the underwhelming outcomes of sustainable tourism programs, scholars frequently point fingers at tourists themselves, arguing that the project's setbacks are due to consumers' unsustainable choices. Yet, there remains a reluctance to revise the notion that the burden of effecting change in tourism lies primarily with tourists and their consumption behavior. Certain voices in tourism scholarship question the reliance on individual responsibility and market-based solutions: image of the consumer as a change-maker is inextricably pegged to neoliberal ideologies and market rationalities. Not surprisingly, this anti-collectivism skewers the idea of sustainability as a shared responsibility, suggesting it is misconceived or antiquated. In other words, this approach causes the promise of sustainable tourism as beneficial to all to vanish. Alongside critical scholarship, we contend that with the loss of the collective value proposition in sustainable tourism, it is perhaps necessary to abandon the entire sustainability agenda. At the very least, inquiring into the tangible sustainability benefits brought about by enlightened tourists seems more judicious than presupposing their impact. This critical issue, however, is often simplified into a discussion of delegation, as academics search for which social actors are primed to enact sustainable measures (Bramwell et al., 2008). A remission occurs because, within this narrowed focus, the radical option of relinquishing the entire sustainability program is left out of the conservation.

Traditionally, mountaineering is defined by an expectation of simple, unembellished accommodation, without the trappings of contemporary tourist amenities. Mountaineering enlarges the range of potential destinations, often to

include remote and less accessible regions that are beyond the scope of traditional tourism. This sport thereby requires a different set of resources and infrastructure compared to commercial leisure travel, which often relies heavily on well-established facilities and services. Mountaineering typically demands self-sufficiency and has a lower reliance on local resources. While the extractivist tendencies of present-day mass tourism motivates the push for sustainability, mountaineering inherently suggests an activity with a conservationist impulse. Such traits are revered by supporters of ecotourism, but their actual validity is progressively under scrutiny. It is becoming clear that even mountaineering is not naturally impervious to economic and market trends. Yet, these critiques may overreach, suggesting that a path toward significant social change, reversing commodification, is inconceivable. In effect, the process of meaningful social change is once again stripped of agency.

Inconsistencies in tourist behavior are not disconcerting to all. An interesting rejoinder by Buckley is that the expectation among tourists is for operators to regularly mitigate impacts, not to use impact reduction as a basis for choosing among competing services (2012b, p. 534). His line of analysis operates from a much simpler proposition: “Voluntary private initiatives contribute principally by leading regulatory change” (2012b, p. 534). While tourism developers are often at the forefront of new methodologies, the general adoption requires legislative action. This, we believe to be a very nominal application of legislative powers. On a prior occasion, we reflected on another aspect of Buckley’s work and came to a conclusion much like the one now. Buckley (2002, p. 79) insists that “[t]he costs of managing a protected area for visitors include the costs of conservation management as well as the direct costs of visitor management and infrastructure … Arguably, commercial users of protected areas should meet the full incremental or marginal management

costs associated with that commercial use." However, teasing apart the management costs grows complicated when there is a close resemblance to public recreational activities. Most countries and jurisdictions place environmental conservation and ecological integrity at the forefront of management concerns in their protected area systems' legislation. In Buckley, this collectivist approach applies to recreation within national parks as well. At no point does he suggest that visitor management is public responsibility and that joys of outdoor recreation are to be relished in private. Yet, recreation continues to be ranked as the second most socially valuable use of protected areas. To reduce impact, the type, scheduling, setting, and scale of recreational activities need to be regulated whenever they are at variance with conservation values. Why does Buckley struggle to identify the more effective solution to be actions that accord with the social value of public recreation, as only these can help us gain up on the active creation of these opportunities through public policy?

The journal Biological Conservation published an interesting conversation between Buckley and Souza et al..The latter team of researchers hypothesized that public interest in national parks would significantly wane as a direct consequence of pandemic-induced mobility restrictions. They used Google Search trends in relative search volumes as a culturomic index to quantify public interest. During the early stages of the COVID-19 outbreak, a general downturn was detected worldwide, though this trend was inconsistent, showing substantial differences between countries and individual parks. Still, they came away feeling more confident about the significance of park visitation in generating and sustaining public interest in national parks (2021b). In his Letter to the Editor, Buckley (2021) cautioned against the blanket assumption that tourism is beneficial for conservation everywhere. He was

anxious that the Souza *et al.*'s title phrase, "No visit, no interest," was susceptible to being misrepresented as if the study substantiated "a global link between tourism and conservation." National parks downtrending in Google searches did not necessarily mean a loss of long-term "conservation interest," as individuals with a strong interest in conservation were less likely to reflect this in general search engine activity. In their response, Souza et al. (2021a) concurred with Buckley's reservations about culturomics' limitations in addressing all aspects of conservation interest and "biases associated with culturomics data more broadly." They continued to remark, however, that the term "conservation interest" or any variant does not appear in their paper as this was not the aspect they sought to measure. They stuck to the customary term "public interest" to stress the diverse user base of Google's search service. The team admits that it is uncertain what drives the browsing public to seek information on specific protected areas. Nonetheless, the collective disinterest, irrespective of its origins, denotes a fading concern that may lead to the kind of negative development outcomes Buckley fears, precisely because misapplication would work better on the reported behavior pattern than it would on their own research.

Şengel et al. (2020) presents a quick look at the conditions in Türkiye during COVID-19. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism introduced 132 measures amidst the pandemic. These steps, while critical for public health safety, could appear overly restrictive to tourists desiring a relaxing experience. Hence, camping and more specifically caravans, as a mobile accommodation option, are predicted to gain traction among holiday-goers. Increased instances of camping and caravan tourism might also be influenced by the 'isolated vacation' appeal of these environments or their profiling as 'low exposure risk' places in official announcements. The evidence for their hypothesis comes solely from a collection of news stories (p.1435).

Presumably, there is high chance that, during the recovery period after the pandemic, the hospitality industry will adopt higher-than-usual pricing strategies due to factors such as late-season openings, inability to operate at full capacity, and economic impacts from COVID restrictions. The Association of Turkish Travel Agencies has shared this perspective and predicted a trend towards non-traditional vacation choices among travelers. Given the hike in hotel rates and camping's emergence as a consistent and comfortable travel activity, campgrounds as an inexpensive accommodation option could become a lasting trend in domestic vacation planning.

In a statement to the press (Duran, 2022), Minister of Agriculture and Forestry Vahit Kirişçi informed, “Strategic initiatives to break into the world’s top five destinations for nature tourism by our General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks are well underway. At the 3rd Agriculture and Forestry Council, the agenda included ‘TOB-26,’ an action item requiring us to ‘unlock our nature tourism potential and become an international nature tourism trademark’.” Kirişci announced that a considerable portion of the planned projects had already been carried out, and he gladly shared, "The increasing appreciation our citizens have for our national and nature parks is a source of great satisfaction for us." The news report also contained official tallies of visitation to the country's national and nature parks. Starting from 12.5 million visits at the beginning of the period (2015), there was an end-period high of 51.8 million (2021). Even with COVID-19 closures in 2020, there were still 32.8 million visits. This data shows an average annual increase in visits of approximately 52.34%. It is safe to say that these outcomes did not benefit from organized demands upon policy makers to stay loyal to the social utility of public recreation. It is also important to note that the clear trend in tourism consumption toward low-cost alternatives was not just a response to

the COVID emergency and the adjustments that made traditional accommodation services intolerably expensive thereafter, and only upon a supposed attempt at recovery. The phenomenal yearly increases in park visits since 2015 plainly tells a different story. The investigation of the specific political economy factors behind this 'turn to parks' must await a separate study.

In this study, we do not address the issue of fluctuations in ‘conservation interest’ either. According to Buckley, the recreationist is an end-user of ecosystem (and sometimes ecotourism) services and a political client. The only behavioral requirement for a recreationist with an utmost interest in conservation is to relocate themselves to less critical environments upon diagnosing carrying capacity overload. During our research into the levels of concern for global environmental sustainability and sustainable development, it emerged from qualitative input that 'conservation interest' in the climbing community is distinctly separate from the usual versions of applied responsibility that need to forever inhabit the emphatic world of individual ethical sovereignty. Our attention to destination management issue too does not radiate from the possibility of more participatory models or the complicated history of managerial ecology (Hall, 2021). Its function was mainly to explore the practical applications of a proposal that so far is only tentatively programmatic.

Our qualitative research was organized to look for subtle traces of a potentially original contribution that could compare to Weimar Naturfreunde's "social hiking" (Williams, 2011), even in its most unofficial and incipient form. Naturfreunde, throughout the interwar years, operated as a cultural organization with working-class membership, and was led by figures that had a moderate take on socialism. The group regularly expelled members, notably in 1923-1924 and 1930-1932, for attempting to radicalize the movement. Internal strife led to a considerable

decline in Naturfreunde's membership, which dwindled from a total of over 116,000 to approximately half by 1926, before stabilizing and recovering to 61,000 by 1929. As the 1920s drew to a close, the organization grappled with another drop in numbers due to the Depression and resurgent political polarization. Nevertheless, it maintained over 800 local groups in Germany by 1931, with membership figures just over 58,000. The rhetoric within Naturfreunde during the 1920s coalesced around the benefits of hiking as an outlet for delectation, suggesting that a worker's free time was the antidote to the punitive, alienating experiences of their work life. By the mid-1920s, the Naturfreunde reenvisioned their approach, converting their 'hiking as a solution to joyless work experience' rhetoric into 'social hiking' that recast the turn to nature as an authentic political act. The Naturfreunde felt that shared outdoor experiences had the power to overcome social cleavages, including those related to gender and generational gaps. Arguably, "[s]ocial hiking was also an opportunity to learn collectively about nature … The many possibilities of collective self-education … made social hiking superior to all other kinds of proletarian sport" (p.208). Group hiking could be a classroom for political socialism too. Hikers were to study the lifestyles, workplaces, and health situations of fellow workers, as well as their political attitudes. Crucially, social hikers needed to learn firsthand about the backward economic conditions and structural inequality that stood in the way of German social justice. In the Baden district alone, from 1928 to 1931, there were 10,554 hikes with a total of 115,279 hikers. Of these, 28 percent were brief hikes lasting a few hours, 57 percent were day trips, and the remaining 15 percent stretched over several days.

The Naturfreunde's notion of nature was also infused with political significance. As Williams (p.211) puts it, "[o]ften in Weimar Germany, the rhetoric of

Heimat or ‘homeland’ was shot through with nostalgia for pre-industrial social hierarchies. But the Naturfreunde clearly distanced themselves from this conservative Heimat ideal.” Germany's natural setting was equally agrarian and industrial, and it was a space hospitable to and reconcilable with emergent social egalitarianism. Their attitude toward nature-human relations, on the other hand, oscillated between a political partnership against ‘unnatural’ factors and an extraordinary solidarity, necessary to attain a superior model of community. While their approach to conservation also showed dichotomous tendencies at times, already in 1911, the Naturfreunde were adding nature protection to their national statutes. In their case, the adaptation of the Naturschutz idea was radical in the sense that it represented a deliberate non-capitulation to standard German conservationism. As part of a dissident culture, nature protection emerged from isolation to stand united with a wider social reform agenda. The TVNF's brand of conservationism in solidarity with nature was simple enough; a struggle was to be waged against “false attitudes toward nature” and working men and women were to help “fight hiking abuses” (p.214). The organization representatives sought legislative actions to conserve natural landscapes and they stood with activist conservation leagues like the Nature Park Association.

There is little that can be transported from Weimar Germany to present-day Türkiye. Besides, not all apparent similarities are suitable as permissible correlations. Nonetheless, a small number can offer significant assistance. Our research has shown that the mountaineering club scene in Türkiye is as much a cultural one as was the case with the Weimar Naturfreunde. Also, just as it was with the German cultural movement, the legacy of Türkiye’s mountaineering clubs too is perhaps an antecedent popular environmentalism. Although ours was not an attempt at a study of

club histories, the cues in our data clearly identify it as a meaningful research topic. The terms 'social climbing' and 'social climbers' do not apply to the Turkish context. Understanding the 'why' is important and requires a thorough analysis of the country’s history of environmental politics. Nonetheless, we feel it is not entirely out of line to question the hypothetical scenarios of these two in the Turkish setting and especially for the case of Aladağlar National Park. It was our hope that soliciting our respondent’s feedback on the park's destination management would induce them to assess the programmatic aspects of mountaineering knowledge. One critical response upstages the rest in its importance. Although our respondents had varied opinions on how tourism might evolve in the region, all agreed that imposing restrictions on visitor movements would be intolerable. While it barely compares to the Naturfreunde's condemnation of capitalism's monopolization of rural landscape (p.203), our sample group similarly rejects all forms of restriction as inadmissible.

APPENDIX A

PARTICIPANT'S PROFILES

	Code Name	Gender	Age	Educational Level	Educational Field	Sector	Current Residency	Club	Most active years in the club	First Aladağlar Visit	Frequency of visits
1	TOB	M	63	Bachelor Degree	Political Science	Government	Ankara	ADB	1980-1993	1980	Very frequent until 1990, later with intervals
2	HRG	M	46	Bachelor Degree	Industrial Engineering	Tourism	Antalya	HÜDDOSK	1994-1998, ongoing	1994	Minimum 2 times a year
3	OBC	M	40	Bachelor Degree	Fine Arts	Sports	İzmir	İDADİK	1997 – ongoing	1999	3-4 times a year
4	INI	F	48	Bachelor Degree	Economy	Tourism	Antalya	Zirve Dağcılık	2005-2008	2005	3-4 times a year
5	BUD	F	37	Masters Degree	Architecture	International Development	Ankara	İTÜDAK	2006- ongoing	2006	Very frequent
6	KES	M	44	Bachelor Degree	Geological Engineering	Tourism	Ankara	HÜDDOSK	1998-2006	1997	4-5 times a year
7	EUS	M	45	Bachelor Degree	Veterinary Science	Civil Society Organizations	Ankara	Ankara Üniversitesi / HÜDDOSK	1998-2001, 2001-2015	1998	Minimum once a year
8	KRB	M	27	Bachelor Degree	Civil Engineering	Private Sector	Ankara	GÜMDAT	2015 – ongoing	2017	Minimum once a year

	Code Name	Gender	Age	Educational Level	Educational Field	Sector	Current Residency	Club	Most active years in the club	First Aladağlar Visit	Frequency of visits
9	YMU	M	42	Masters Degree	Physics	Education	Balıkesir	DKSK / ORDOS	2008 – 2014, ongoing	2009	4-5 times a year
10	KUA	M	47	Bachelor Degree	Electrical and Electronic Engineering	Education	İstanbul	BÜDAK	1993-2000 - ongoing	1993	Minimum once a year
11	TİS	M	42	High School Degree	Linguistics	Tourism	Adana	ÇÜDAK	2004-2010	2003	Lives in the region
12	SUE	F	39	Masters Degree	Environmental Engineering	Government	Ankara	DKSK / ORDOS	2002-2008, ongoing	2003	Minimum once a year
13	AKH	M	22	Bachelor Degree	Electrical and Electronic Engineering	N/A (student)	İstanbul	BÜDAK	2019 - ongoing	2019	Minimum 2 times a year
14	OAD	M	43	Doctorate Degree	Geophysics	Academy	Utrecht	İTÜDAK	1999-2005	1999	Minimum once a year
15	KTE	M	28	Bachelor Degree	Administrative Sciences	Private Sector	İstanbul	YTÜDAK	2014-2023	2014	2-3 times a year
16	GNY	M	34	Bachelor Degree	Cartographic Engineering	Private Sector	İstanbul	YTÜDAK	2014-2016, ongoing	2013	Minimum once a year
17	BRO	M	34	Bachelor Degree	Geological Engineering	Tourism	Ankara	HÜDDOSK	2009-2016	2009	Minimum 2 times a year

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Sürdürülebilir Turizm Yönetimi Programı - Yüksek Lisans Tez Çalışması - Yarı-yapılandırılmış Görüşme Soruları

(Sustainable Tourism Management Graduate Programme – Master's Thesis Case Study – Semi-Structured Interview Questions)

Tez Başlığı: "Korunan Alanlarda Sürdürülebilir Dağ Turizminin Planlanması: Aladağlar'da Dağcıların Bilgi Birikiminden Faydalanılması"

(Thesis Title: Planning For Sustainable Mountain Tourism in Protected Areas: Utilizing Mountaineers' Know-How from Aladağlar)

Tahmini Süre: 45-60 Dk

(Approximate Interview Duration: 45-60 minutes)

Katılımcı Profili: 18 yaş üstü, Aladağlar Milli Parkı'nda dağcılık aktivitelerine katılmış bireyler

(Participants Profile: 18+, Individuals participated mountaineering activities within the Aladağlar National Park)

Riskler: Olası cevaplar katılımcıların deneyimleri ve kişisel görüşlerini yansıtacak olup, herhangi bir travmaya yol açacak (örneğin geçmiş dağ kazaları) tetikletici soru bulunmamaktadır. Soruların, etik anlamda herhangi bir sorun yaratması beklenmemektedir.

(*Risks: The answers will reflect the participants' experiences and personal opinions, and there are no triggering questions that may cause any trauma (for example, past mountain accidents). The questions are not expected to create any ethical problems.)*

Sorular *(Questions)*

Genel Bilgiler *(General Information)*

- İsim *(Name)*
- Yaş *(Age)*
- Eğitim Seviyesi ve Alanı *(Educational level and field)*
- Mesleği *(Occupation)*
- Şu anda yaşadığınız yer *(Place of residence)*
- Doğduğunuz ve büyüdüğünüz yer *(Place of birth and early childhood)*

Kişisel Hikaye *(Personal History)*

- Dağcılığa (doğa yürüyüşleri ve/veya tırmanış) ne zaman başladınız? Amacınız neydi?

  (When did you start mountaineering (hiking and/or climbing)? What was your aim?)
- Bir dağcılık kulübüne üye misiniz/miydiniz?

  (Are/were you a member of a mountaineering club?)

Bir kulüp üyesiyse, (If a club member,)

- Hangi kulübe üyesiniz/üyeydiniz?

  (Which club are/were you a member of?)
- Kulübünüzde bilgi aktarımı nasıl yapılıyordu, nasıl bir eğitim aldınız?

  (How was knowledge transfer performed in your club, what kind of training did you receive?)
- Kulübünüzde doğadaki faaliyetlere katılmanın ön koşulları var mıydı?

  (Were there prerequisites for participating in nature activities in your club?)
- Bu faaliyetlere katılmak için, fiziksel fitlik, maddi imkanlara erişim, siyasi görüşler gibi kısıtlayıcı faktörler var mıydı?

(Were there any limiting factors for participating in these activities, such as physical fitness, access to financial means, political views?)

- Kulübün maddi imkanlara erişimi kolaylaştırıcı bir yanı var mıydı?
  (Did the club facilitate access to financial opportunities?)
- Kulübünüze katılamayanların yönelebileceği doğa yürüyüşü ya da doğa gözlem imkanı sunan ve eğitim veren başka gruplar var mıydı?
  (Were there any other groups that offered training and hiking or nature observation opportunities to those who could not join your club?)
- Hangi dönemde kulüpte aktiftiniz?
  (During which period were you active in the club?)
- Kulübünüzle (aktif ya da pasif) bağınız devam ediyor mu?
  (Do you maintain your connection (active or passive) with your club?)
- Eğer aktif değilseniz, kulübünüzden uzaklaştıktan sonra fikirlerinizin, kulübün genel görüşlerinden farklılaştığını düşünüyor musunuz?
  (If you are not active, do you think your opinions differ from the general views of the club after you move away from your club?)

Kulüp üyesi değilse, (If not a club member,)

- Kendinizi dağcı olarak tanımlıyor musunuz?
  (Do you define yourself as a mountaineer?)
- Teorik ve Pratik eğitimleri nasıl edindiniz?
  (How did you obtain theoretical and practical training?)
- Bir ekolü takip ediyor musunuz?
  (Do you follow a specific ecole in mountaineering?)
- Kulübe dahil olmayı tercih etmemenizin özel bir sebebi var mıydı?
  (Was there a particular reason for you to not to choose to join a club?)

- Belirli bir kulübün parçası (sporcusu) olmadan, genel dağcılık camiasının bir parçası olduğunuzu hissediyor musunuz?

  (Do you feel like you are part of the general mountaineering community without being part of a specific club (athlete)?)

Çevresel/ Sosyal kaygılar ve koruma bakış açısı

(Environmental/Social concerns and conservation perspective)

- Dağcılıkla ilgilenmeye başladığınızdan beri çevresel kaygılarınızda bir değişiklik oldu mu? (ör: kirlilik, biyolojik çeşitlilik kaybı, iklim değişikliği) Örnek verebilir misiniz?

  (Have there been any changes in your environmental concerns since you became interested in mountaineering? (e.g. pollution, biodiversity loss, climate change) Can you give examples?)

- Bu anlamda kulübünüzde ortak bir anlayış var mıydı?

  (Was there a common understanding in this sense in your club?)

- Dağcılıktan edindiğiniz prensiplerin şehirdeki hayatınıza etkisi oldu mu?

  (Have the principles you learned from mountaineering affected your life in the urban environment?)

- Dahil olduğunuz kulüpte/ ekolde doğanın ve yerel kültürün korunmasına dair bir eğitim/ders var mıydı?

  (Were there any specific training/course on the protection of nature and local culture in the club/school you belong to?)

- Bununla ilgili yazılı/sözlü kurallar var mıydı?

  (Were there written/verbal rules regarding the above?)

- Şayet vardıysa, uyulmaması durumunda nasıl bir uygulama yapılıyordu?

  (If there was, what actions were taken in case of non-compliance?)

- Aladağlar özelinde, yerel halk ile bir iletişiminiz var mı?

  (Do you have any communication with the local people, specifically in Aladağlar?)

- Şayet varsa, yerel halk ile ilişkinizi nasıl tarif edersiniz?

  (How would you describe your relationship with the local community, if any?)

- Dağcılık yaptığınız yıllarda, yerel otoriteler ya da halk ile ters düştüğünüz durumlar oldu mu?

  (During your active years of mountaineering, were there any situations where you have conflicts with local authorities or the inhabitants?)

Turizme ve turistlere yönelik genel bakış *(Approach to tourism and tourists)*

- Dağcılık (doğa yürüyüşleri ve tırmanış) faaliyetleri yürütürken kendinizi turist olarak gördüğünüz/tanımladığınız bir yer ya da zaman oldu mu?

  (Has there been a time or place where you saw/defined yourself as a tourist while carrying out mountaineering (nature walks and climbing) activities?)

- Doğa ve dağ turizmine artan ilgiden memnun musunuz?

  (Are you content with the increasing interest in nature and mountain tourism?)

- Endişeleriniz var mı? (en büyük endişeniz nedir?)

  (Do you have any concerns? (what is your biggest concern?))

- Sizce Aladağlar özelinde, sürdürülebilir turizm neyi ifade ediyor?

  (What do you think sustainable tourism in Aladağlar means?)

- Turizmin doğal çevre ve yerel halk üzerindeki etkisini nasıl tanımlarsınız?

  (How would you describe the impact of tourism on the natural environment and local people?)

- Turizmin yerel kalkınmaya ve yaşam koşullarının iyileşmesine katkı sağladığını düşünüyor musunuz?

  (Do you think that tourism contributes to local development and improvement of living conditions?)

Korunan alanın yönetimine dair görüşler ve katkılar

(Opinions and contributions regarding the protected area management)

- Aladağlar'ı ne zamandan beri ziyaret ediyorsunuz? Buraya ne sıklıkla gelirsiniz?

  (How long have you been visiting Aladağlar? How often do you visit?)
- Aladağlar'a ulaşırken ya da park içinde hangi ulaşım araçlarını kullanıyorsunuz?

  (What means of transportation do you use to reach Aladağlar or within the park?)
- Mevcut durumda, faaliyetlerinizi yaptığınız alanın bir korunan alan (Milli Park) olmasının faaliyetleriniz üzerinde bir kısıtlayıcı ya da destekleyici etkisi var mı?

  (Currently, does the protected area (National Park) status have a restrictive or supportive effect on your activities?)
- Dağcıların çıkarları ile koruma hedeflerinin çeliştiği veya uyduğu durumlar hakkında örnekler paylaşabilir misiniz?

  (Can you share examples of situations where climbers' interests conflict or align with conservation goals?)
- Park içindeki mevcut yönetim uygulamalarıyla ilgili değerlendirmeniz nedir? Hangi yönlerin iyi işlediğini düşünüyorsunuz ve hangi yönlerin iyileştirilmesi gerektiğini düşünüyorsunuz?

(What is your assessment of current management practices within the park? What aspects do you think are working well and what aspects do you think need improvement?)

- Park içinde özellikle etkili veya sorunlu bulduğunuz belirli politika veya düzenlemeler var mı?

  (Are there any particular policies or regulations within the park that you find particularly effective or problematic?)

- Türkiye'deki dağcılık topluluğunun milli parkın yönetiminde ile söz sahibi olmasının fayda yaratacağını düşünüyor musunuz? Bu anlamda Türkiye'den ya da farklı ülkelerden verebileceğiniz, değerli bulduğunuz örnekler var mı?

  (Do you think it would be beneficial for the mountaineering community in Turkey to have a say in the management of the national park? In this sense, are there any examples you can give from Türkiye or other countries that you find valuable?)

- Bu konuda geçmişte milli park yönetiminin bir çabası, dağcılardan katkı talebi oldu mu?

  (Has the national park management made any efforts or requested contributions from mountaineers in the past on this issue?)

- Şu anda, böyle bir komisyonda söz sahibi olsanız, öncelikli olarak hangi alanlara müdahalede bulunurdunuz?

  (If you had a say in such a commission, in which areas would you primarily intervene?)

- Burada uygulanabileceğini düşündüğünüz, diğer dağlık bölgeler veya parklardan başarılı örnekler var mı?

(Are there any successful examples from other mountain regions or parks that you think could be applied here?)

- Milli parkın korunmasını güçlendirmek için korunan alanın dışında/çeperinde kalan (korunmayan) alanlar için bir beklentiniz var mı? ne gibi uygulamalar yapılması, destekler verilmesi iyi olurdu?

  (Do you have any expectations for the (unprotected) areas outside/on the periphery of the protected area in order to strengthen the protection of the national park? What kind of practices and support would be good to provide?)

- Bundan 30 yıl sonra, Aladağlar Milli Parkı'nın nasıl bir yer olmasını isterdiniz?

  (What would you like Aladağlar National Park to be like 30 years from now?)

- Eklemek istediğiniz bir şey var mı?

  (Is there anything you want to add?)

APPENDIX C

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

Institution supporting the research: Boğaziçi University Institute of Social Sciences

Title of the study: Planning For Sustainable Mountain Tourism in Protected Areas: Utilizing Mountaineers' Know-How from Aladağlar

Project Manager : Assist. Prof. Duygu Salman Öztürk

Address: Boğaziçi University, Department of Tourism Management, Hisar Campus, 34342 Beşiktaş, Istanbul

Name of the researcher: Aydan Özkil

Dear Participant,

This study is being carried out within the scope of Boğaziçi University Sustainable Tourism Management Graduate Programme student Aydan Özkil's master's thesis titled Planning For Sustainable Mountain Tourism in Protected Areas: Utilizing Mountaineers' Know-How from Aladağlar".

Sustainable Mountain Tourism is one of the sustainable sectors that stands out to support the development of mountainous areas, and the areas subject to tourism development mostly overlap with areas of high natural and cultural conservation value. For this reason, proper planning and management of tourism in these areas is of great importance.

The aim of this study is to examine, through existing examples, the measures to be taken and the approaches to be adopted for the sustainable development of tourism and its benefit to both nature and host communities, in response to the increasing demand for mountain and nature tourism. In this context, Aladağlar National Park,

which is shown as one of the good examples for sustainable mountain tourism, was chosen as a case study. By conducting interviews with individuals in mountaineering communities that have played a role in the development and regulation of tourism in the area, the aspects of mountaineering that overlap with "responsible tourism" practices will be identified, its relations with nature and host communities will be evaluated, and information about the practices they deem necessary for the sustainable development of tourism in Aladağlar National Park and its surroundings will be determined. All information obtained will be used in the scientific research mentioned above.

We invite you to be a part of our project by supporting us with your inputs for the mentioned study. Your participation in the study should be voluntary. You will not be charged or paid any fee for your participation.

The study will be conducted either face to face or via online tools. The oral interviews will be conducted by the researcher named above, and "semi-structured" interview protocol will be followed.

This research is conducted for a scientific purpose and the confidentiality of participant information is granted. Voice recordings and transcripts will be stored on the researcher's double-factor password protected computer. When presenting the research results, the names of the participants in the study will be coded and your answers will not be associated with your identity unless special permission is obtained from you.

If you agree to participate in this research, you will be asked open-ended questions under four main headings about your experiences during your years of mountaineering and your answers will be recorded. It is anticipated that the meeting will last approximately 45-60 minutes. Your answers will be audio recorded and

transcribed by the researcher. (If the conversation is held and recorded via online platforms, you do not need to turn on your camera.) Voice recordings will not be used for any purpose other than transcription.

As a result of the research, your answers to this study will be systematically analysed and compared with the applications in the literature, and can be used as a basis for future tourism planning studies in Aladağlar National Park. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions asked in this study, and no scoring will be given for your answers. You can skip questions that you do not know the answers to or do not want to comment on.

Participating in this research is voluntary. You can withdraw your consent at any point during the study. If you withdraw your consent, all written and recorded data collected from you up to that point will be permanently deleted from the researcher's computer and written notes will be shredded.

By confirming your participation in the study within the scope of this form verbally or electronically, you indicate that you agree to participate in the research voluntarily and without any pressure or coersion.

If you have questions about the study during or after the interview, you can contact researcher Aydan Özkil or project coordinator Boğaziçi University Department of Tourism Management Assist. Prof. Duygu Salman Öztürk. For your questions and complaints about the research, you can contact Boğaziçi University Institutional Review Board in Social Sciences and Humanities via e-mail at sbinarek[at]boun.edu.tr.

Thank you in advance for your participation and contributions.)

I understand what I was told and what was written above. Under these circumstances,

I agree to participate in this research voluntarily, without any pressure or coercion.)

☐ YES ☐ NO

I consent to my voice being recorded during the interview.

☐ YES ☐ NO

Participant's Name- Surname

(Signature

Date (day/month/year)

APPENDIX D

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM (TURKISH VERSION)

KATILIMCI BİLGİ ve ONAM FORMU

Araştırmayı destekleyen kurum: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

Araştırmanın adı: Korunan Alanlarda Sürdürülebilir Dağ Turizminin Planlanması: Aladağlar'da Dağcıların Bilgi Birikiminden Faydalanılması

Proje Yürütücüsü: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Duygu Salman Öztürk

Adresi: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Turizm İşletmeciliği Bölümü, Hisar Kampüs, 34342 Beşiktaş, İstanbul

Araştırmacının adı: Aydan Özkil

Değerli Katılımcı,

Bu çalışma, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Sürdürülebilir Turizm Yönetimi Bölümü öğrencisi Aydan Özkil'in "Korunan Alanlarda Sürdürülebilir Dağ Turizminin Planlanması: Aladağlar'da Dağcıların Bilgi Birikiminden Faydalanılması" başlıklı yüksek lisans tezi kapsamında yürütülmektedir.

Sürdürülebilir Dağ Turizmi, dağlık alanların kalkınmasını desteklemek için öne çıkan sürdürülebilir sektörlerden biridir ve çoğunlukla turizm gelişimine konu olan alanlar doğal ve kültürel koruma değeri yüksek alanlar ile örtüşmektedir. Bu sebeple, bu alanlarda turizmin doğru biçimde planlanması ve yönetilmesi büyük önem arz etmektedir.

Bu çalışmanın amacı, dağ ve doğa turizmine yönelik artan talebe karşılık, turizmin sürdürülebilir gelişmesi ve hem doğaya hem de ev sahibi topluluklara fayda

sağlaması için alınması gereken tedbirler ve benimsenecek yaklaşımları mevcut örnekler üzerinden incelemektir. Bu kapsamda, vaka çalışması olarak, sürdürülebilir dağ turizmi için iyi örneklerden biri olarak gösterilen Aladağlar Milli Parkı seçilmiştir. Alanda turizmin gelişmesinde ve düzenlenmesinde rol oynamış dağcı topluluklarında yer almış bireyler ile görüşmeler gerçekleştirilerek, dağcılığın "sorumlu turizm" uygulamaları ile örtüşen yanları tespit edilecek, doğa ve ev sahibi topluluklar ile ilişkileri değerlendirilecek ve Aladağlar Milli Parkı ve çevresinde turizmin sürdürülebilir gelişimi için gerekli gördükleri uygulamalar hakkında bilgi edinilecektir. Elde edilen bilgilerin tamamı yukarıda bahsi geçen bilimsel araştırmada kullanılacaktır.

Bu araştırmada bize yardımcı olmanız için sizi de projemizin bir parçası olmaya davet ediyoruz. Çalışmaya katılmanız tamamen isteğe bağlıdır. Katılımınız için sizden bir ücret talep edilmeyecek ya da size herhangi bir ödeme yapılmayacaktır. Çalışma yüzyüze ya da çevrimiçi araçlar vasıtasıyla sözlü olarak yapılacaktır. Sözlü görüşmeler yukarıda ismi belirtilen araştırmacının kendisi tarafından yürütülecek, ve daha önceden çerçevesi belirlenmiş, "yarı-yapılandırılmış" görüşme soruları kapsamında gerçekleşecektir.

Bu araştırma bilimsel bir amaçla yapılmaktadır ve katılımcı bilgilerinin gizliliği esas tutulmaktadır. Ses kayıtları ve deşifreleri araştırmacıya ait çift faktörlü şifre korumalı bir bilgisayarda saklanacaktır. Araştırma sonuçları sunulurken, çalışmaya katılanların isimleri kodlanacak ve sizden özel izin alınmadığı sürece cevaplarınız kimliğiniz ile ilişkilendirilmeyecektir.

Bu araştırmaya katılmayı kabul ettiğiniz takdirde, size dağcılık yaptığınız yıllardaki deneyimlerinize dair dört ana başlık altında açık uçlu sorular sorulacak ve cevaplarınız kayıt edilecektir. Görüşmenin yaklaşık 45-60 dk süreceği

öngörülmektedir. Verdiğiniz cevapların ses kaydı alınacak ve araştırmacı tarafından deşifre edilecektir. (Eğer görüşme çevrim içi platformlar üzerinden yapılıyor ve kaydediliyorsa, kameranızı açmanız gerekmemektedir.) Ses kayıtları deşifre dışında bir amaçla kullanılmayacaktır.

Araştırma sonucunda, bu çalışmaya verdiğiniz cevaplar sistematik olarak analiz edilerek literatürde yer alan uygulamalar ile karşılaştırılacak, Aladağlar Milli Parkı'nda gelecekte yapılacak turizm planlama çalışmaları için altlık olarak kullanılabilecektir. Bu çalışmada sorulan soruların, doğru ya da yanlış cevapları bulunmamaktadır, cevaplarınıza yönelik herhangi bir puanlama yapılmayacaktır. Cevabını bilmediğiniz ya da yorum yapmak istemediğiniz soruları geçebilirsiniz.

Bu araştırmaya katılmak tamamen isteğe bağlıdır. Çalışmanın herhangi bir noktasında onamınızı çekebilirsiniz. Onamınızı geri çekmeniz halinde o ana kadar sizden toplanmış tüm yazılı ve kayıtlı veriler araştırmacının bilgisayarından kalıcı olarak silinecek, yazılı notlar imha edilecektir.

Bu formda belirtilen kapsamdaki çalışmaya katılımınızı sözlü ya da elektronik ortamda onaylayarak, söz konusu araştırmaya kendi isteğinizle, hiçbir baskı ve zorlama olmaksızın katılmayı kabul ettiğinizi belirtmiş oluyorsunuz.

Görüşme sırasında ya da sonrasında, çalışmayla ilgili sorularınız varsa araştırmacı Aydan Özkil veya proje yürütücüsü Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Turizm İşletmeciliği Bölümü Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Duygu Salman Öztürk ile iletişime geçebilirsiniz.

Araştırmayla ilgili sorularınız ve şikayetleriniz için Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu'na e-posta yoluyla sbinarek[at]boun.edu.tr adresi üzerinden ulaşabilirsiniz.

Şimdiden katılımınız ve katkılarınız için teşekkür ederiz.

Bana anlatılanları ve yukarıda yazılanları anladım. Bu koşullarda söz konusu araştırmaya kendi isteğimle, hiçbir baskı ve zorlama olmaksızın katılmayı kabul ediyorum.

☐ EVET ☐ HAYIR

Görüşme esnasında ses kaydımın alınmasını onaylıyorum.

☐ EVET ☐ HAYIR

Katılımcının Adı- Soyadı:.....

İmzası:.....

Tarih (gün/ay/yıl): ...../...../.....

APPENDIX E

CODE BOOK

Code Book

1. Mountaineering

1.1. Individuals

1.1.1. Personal Motivation

- Curiosity, discovery of new places (as seen in movies)
- Travel
- Former nature engagement/ Reconnection with nature
- Social engagement
- Sports – Active living
- Isolation from technology/people
- Adventure
- Self-discovery
- Relaxation
- "Rock climbing"
- Achievements/competition
- Sharing/solidarity
- Media / Influencers – Uğur Uluocak, Nasuh Mahruki
- Impact on university choices

1.1.2. Demographic Characteristics

- Age
- Residence location
- Occupation
- Diverse backgrounds
    - Educational
    - Financial
    - Cultural (place of birth)

1.1.3. Educational Level

- University
- Higher Education
- High school
- Environmental awareness
    - Present before mountaineering
    - Developed with mountaineering

1.1.4. Time periods (witnessed)

- By years
    - 80s
    - Early 90s
    - Late 90s
    - Early 2000s

- Late 2000s
- 2010s
- 2020s
- Pandemic

- Activeness
  - Active (Hardcore) mountaineering
  - Occasional mountaineering
  - Retired mountaineer

1.2. Club/community characteristics

1.2.1. Knowledge Transfer

- Educational programme
  - Theoretical and Practical Trainings
    - Basic and advanced trainings (priority)
      - Hiking
      - Camping
      - Rock climbing
      - Ice climbing
      - Multi-pitch climbing
      - Sportive climbing & bouldering
      - Search & rescue
    - Other trainings (supplementary)
      - First Aid in outdoors
      - Ethics
      - Nature Education
        - Staying in Nature
        - Moving in Nature
        - Waste disposal
        - Water resources
        - Climate and weather
        - Ecology (Limited knowledge!)
  - Written Educational Materials
    - Modern and up-to-date (progressive)
    - Journals
  - Master-apprentice relationships
    - Succession of trainers
    - Volunteering / voluntary trainings
  - Peer learning
  - Technical Progress Reports – Monitoring of achievements
  - Gained or Improved Abilities/skills
    - Crisis management

        - Survival
        - Discipline
        - Minimalism
        - Compliance with authority
        - Practical wisdom (knowing where to give up, return)
        - Critical Thinking
        - Innovative thinking
        - Communication
        - Pro-activeness
        - DIY culture, upcycling
        - Maintenance and caregiving
        - Cooking
        - Environmental sensitivity, reducing waste
        - Cultural sensitivity
        - Wise use of resources
        - Respect to others – campground rules

1.2.2. Traditions / Culture / Ecoles

- Priorities
    - Sportive Performance / achievements
    - Safety and Security
    - Mainstreaming of mountaineering
    - Providing a social environment
    - Continuation of the club
- Tangible and intangible assests
    - Administrative/operational structure
        - Code of conduct
        - Rules and Sanctions
            - No fire, no cigarettes etc.
        - Unwritten rules
        - Division of labour
            - Boards (training, public relations, equipment maintenance, organizations)
    - Accumulation of knowledge
        - Reporting, archiving
        - Educational structure, educational materials
            - Open for innovations and contributions
        - Tutors, mentors, peer learning
        - Story telling
    - Prolonged membership (and friendships)
        - Sense of belonging, bonds
        - Alumni clubs

        - Supervision and support from former members
            - Intergenerational conflicts?
    - Equipment
    - Financial mechanisms (enabling environment)
        - University subsidy
        - Club fees (equipment depreciation fee or annual fee)
        - Revenue generating activities (also helps spreading env awareness)
        - Alumni support
- Ethics & Shared Values
    - Inclusivity
        - Membership criteria
            - Candidate membership
        - Open-door policy for external participants
    - Solidarity
        - Sharing culture (equipment, knowledge)
        - Collective spirit (and teamwork)
        - Search and Rescue Efforts
    - Advocacy
    - Democracy
        - Voting mechanisms
            - Delegated authority
        - Active participation in management (via boards)
        - Annual turnover of leadership (generational dynamics)
        - Culture of criticism
        - Freedom of speech
    - Sports Ethics
        - Clean climbing
        - Courtesy to other sportspersons
        - Non-competitive (?)
        - Animal welfare (?)
    - Intellectuality, open-mindedness, innovation
        - Constantly seeking new knowledge and techniques
        - Being open to progressive approaches and innovations
        - Developing new tools or improving existing ones
        - Creating added value
        - Pro-activeness
    - Common Concerns
        - Improvement of Mountaineering Techniques in Türkiye
        - Commodification
        - Nature Conservation/ awareness

        - Cultural Conservation/Respect
        - Consumption culture
        - Climate change

1.2.3. Prerequisites

- Willingness to join (interest)
    - Diversity of offered activities
    - Availability of alternates (clubs)
        - Scouts
        - Bird watching
        - Caving
        - Horse riding
        - Hiking
        - Camping
        - Other mountaineering clubs
- Willingness to continue (dedication)
    - Social adaptation
        - Political views
    - Physical adaptation
    - Availability of time
        - Dedication to education programme & trainings
        - Some people join the club after graduation
    - Natural elimination
- Physical Fitness
    - Health conditions
        - Disabilities
        - Mental stability
- Financial Resources
    - Costs
        - Equipment
        - Transportation
        - Monthly contributions

1.2.4. Mountaineering Activities

- Hiking
- Trekking
- Camping/Bivaking
- Traditional Rock Climbing
- Sports Climbing
- Indoor climbing
- Trail Running
- Skiing

1.2.5. Individual benefits of participation in mountaineering activities

- Experience based learning
- Transformative experiences
- Community identity
    - Network benefits

1.2.6. Institutional Structure of Mountaineering in Türkiye

- Turkish Mountaineering Federation (TDF)
- TDF Member Clubs
    - Sports Clubs
    - Specialization Clubs (İhtisas Kulübü)
- Other Clubs not represented by TDF
    - University Clubs
    - University Alumni Clubs
- Individuals and Informal Groups
- Specialized Tourism Agencies
    - Mountain Guides
    - Mountain Tourists
- Global Institutions
    - International Climbing and Mountaineering Federation (UIAA)
    - International Federation of Mountain Guides Associations (IFMGA)
    - Other Alpine Clubs

1.2.7. Criticism towards mountaineering community in Türkiye

- Lack of collective action between different clubs
- TDF representation issues

1.3. Interactions with local people and nature

1.3.1. Local connections

- No interaction with locals
- Limited interaction
    - Sharing commons
        - Public transportation, water resources, camp grounds
    - Service provision
        - Key focal points
            - Transportation
                - Mules, Tractor, pick-up
            - Accommodation
                - Camping, homestays, pensions

        - Occasional service providers
            - Grocery Store
            - Restaurant

- Solidarity and Friendship
    - Two way interactions
    - Specific families
- Changing dynamics

1.3.2. Local's attitude towards mountaineers

- Positive
    - Welcoming, giving, open-minded, curious
- Negative
    - unwelcoming, hostile, unfamiliar
- Neutral
    - Indifferent
    - shy
    - Conservative
    - Familiar

1.3.3. Conflicts/cooperation with authorities & people

- Conflicts
    - Unreasonable regulations (Loosing respect towards authorities)
    - Licensing (with TDF)
    - Lack of transparancy and communication
- Cooperation
    - On illegal hunting
    - Search and rescue etc
- Indifference

Subject institutions

- Public authorities
    - National Park Administration
    - District Governorship
    - Gerdarmerie
    - TDF
- Tourism Agencies
    - Local agencies
    - National agencies
    - International agencies
- People
    - Local people
    - Mountaineers

- Local climbers (amenity migrants)
- Campers and caravanners
- Package tourists

2. Mountain Tourism and Economy

2.1. Livelihoods

- Agricultural production
  - Orchards
    - Apple
    - Beans
    - Apricots
    - Cherries
  - Livestock
    - Transhumance
    - Shephards
- Tourism
  - Accommodation
  - Transportation
  - Carriage
  - Guiding
- Trade
  - Food
  - Other

2.2. Position against "tourism in mountains"

- Benefits
  - Learning
  - Climate awareness (?)
  - Stewardship (building conservation culture)
- Concerns
  - Overcrowding
    - Pollution (water, soil, noise, light)
    - Lack of respect
  - Exploitation – irreversible damages
  - Constructions
  - Commodification
  - Land speculation
  - Lack of management structure
  - Safety and security

2.3. Perceived Impacts associated with mountain tourism

- Positive (opportunities)
    - Diversification of Livelihoods, Economic contributions, improvement of life conditions, gaining new skills, job creation, social interactions, emergence of family businesses, environmental awareness, healthy living/sports, enabling nature interaction, reversing migration, public awareness – creating political will
- Negative (threats)
    - Pollution (garbage), Land degradation (land use change, constructions), biodiversity loss
    - Environmental health (sanitation)
    - Cultural erosion,
    - Conflicts between locals
    - enhanced inequalities
    - economic leakages (non-local, private investments)
    - safety
    - false self-confidence
    - integrity problems
- Neutral
    - Cultural changes

2.4. Mountaineers attitude towards tourists

- Self-identification as "tourist"
    - Never
    - Always
    - Sometimes
        - Location dependent
        - Service provision based
        - Presence of other tourists
- Perception of other visitors/tourists
    - Polluter
    - Unqualified for certain activities
    - Uneducated / vulgar
    - Consumer
    - Status seeking
    - "cheap holiday" seeker
    - Irrespective
    - Lack of basic nature knowledge

2.5. Mountain Ranges subject to tourism

- Türkiye
    - Taurus Mountains
        - Aladağlar (Anti-Taurus)

        - Geyikbayırı
    - Pontic Mountains
        - Kaçkarlar
    - Zagros Mountains
        - Cilo-Sat
    - Volcanic mountains
        - Ağrı
        - Erciyes
        - Uludağ
        - Nemrut - Süphan
        - Hasandağı
- Global
    - European Alps
    - Himalayas, Karakoram, Pamir, Tian Shan
    - Patagonia
    - Caucasus Mountain Range - Kazbek, Elbrus, Ushba, Svaneti
    - Demavend (Alborz mountain range) - Iran
    - Atlas mountains - North Africa
    - Kilimanjaro - Tanzania
    - Aconcagua – Argentina
    - Yosemite, Rocky mountains - USA

3. Protected Area & Management

3.1. Physical and Biological Features

3.1.1. Conservation Subjects

- Geological Features
- Habitats
- Biodiversity
    - Endemic plants
    - Wild goats
    - Urkeklik
    - Lynx etc
- Ecosystem Services

3.1.2. Natural processes of potential hazard

- Climate change
- Avalanches
- Extreme weather conditions
- Rock formations
- Erosion
- Draught

3.2. Spatial Characteristics

3.2.1. Classification of land on approach

- Center (last village)
- Frontcountry
- Backcountry

3.2.2. Conservation Zones

- Strict conservation
- Wildlife Development Zone
- Buffer zone
- No conservation

3.2.3. Access to the park

- Mechanized/Motorized
    - Public transportation
        - Intercity Bus
        - Train
        - Airplane
        - Local buses
    - Private transportation
        - Private car
        - Carpooling
        - Motorbikes
        - Caravan
    - Rental
        - Pick-up, carriage
- Non-mechanized
    - On foot
        - Self carriage
        - Animal carriage (mules & horses)
    - Bike

3.2.4. Services in the park

- Public services
    - Roads
    - Signage
    - Toilets
    - Shelters/refuge
    - Camping areas
    - Parking lots
    - Information Services

    - Gates
    - Solid waste collection / management
    - Forest and wildlife management
        - Maintenance, support, monitoring
    - Safety and Security
        - Search and rescue
- Private Services
    - Managed camping grounds
    - Privately run shelters - none
    - Other

3.2.5. Activities in the park

- Picnicking
- Hiking
- Trekking
- Camping
- Caravanning
- Mountaineering (alpine climbing)
- Sportive Climbing
- Ski touring
- Mountain biking
- Wildlife observation (flora and fauna)
- Scientific Research (geology, biology, geography etc)
- Photography
- Filming
- Hunting
- Running
- Stargazing
- Off-road driving
- Grazing & Transhumance

3.2.6. Frequently mentioned locations

- Sarı Memedin Yurdu
- Emli Valley
- Kocadölek
- Sokullu Pınar
- Yedigöller plateau
- Arpalık
- Demirkazık Summit

3.3. Visitor Management Dimension

3.3.1. Management Structure

- National Level (DKMP)
- Regional Level (DKMP 6th District in Adana)
- Local (Şeflik)
    - Manager
    - Technical Personnel
    - Field Personnel /Rangers
- Other local authorities
    - Governorship
    - District Governorship
    - Municipalities
    - Mukhtar & community council (ihtiyar heyeti)
    - Gendarmerie (Armed Forces)
    - District Directorate of Youth and Sports
- Local stakeholders
    - Mountaineering Federation (TDF)
    - Sports clubs & NGOs (university clubs, AKUT etc)
    - Niğde University
    - Tourism enterprises
    - Individuals
    - Inhabitants (locals)

3.3.2. Visitor Management Tools

- Visitor Management Tools by operating mechanism (as classified by Buckley, 2002)
    - Regulatory instruments
        - Laws, Restrictions, rules
            - zoning, quotas
    - Economic instruments
        - Charges, fees, tickets
    - Suasive instruments
        - Marketing, demarketing
            - Informative materials, education
- Visitor Management Tools by Intended Functions (as classified by Buckley, 2002)
    - Moving impacts from one area to another
        - For rotation
        - For protection
    - Reducing marginal impact of additional visitors
        - Infrastructure & hardening (initial major impact, reducing marginal impact)

- Reducing per capita impacts of individual visitors
  - Information and education

3.3.3. Information Management in the Park

- Visitor counts
- Satisfaction surveys
- Licenses (for mountaineering)
- Patrolling (for hunting)

3.3.4. Visitor Experience

- Visitor Rights
  - Freedom of roaming
  - Right to nature
- Comparison (with other parks)
  - National
  - Abroad
- Attributions to mountains & attachment
  - Pristineness
  - Uniqueness
  - Variety of challenges
  - Negative emotions
    - Fear, horror, alertness, distance
  - Positive emotions
    - Appreciation, affection
    - Specialness
    - Home-like
    - Satisfaction
- Visiting Frequency
  - high
  - medium
  - rare
- Perception of the "National Park" Status
  - Restrictions
  - Gains
  - Neutral

3.4. Mountaineers' perspective for management of Aladağlar

3.4.1. Criticisms of current management

- Deficiencies
  - Effective management
    - Human capacity
    - Physical capacity

        - Order
        - Communication and Transparency (linked to unreasonable restrictions)
        - Visitor management – info center
        - Passive management
    - Information-based planning and management
        - Data collection, statistics, indicators
    - Communication & promotion
        - Creating awareness
    - Solution oriented management (instead of result oriented)
        - Avoiding access bans
        - Better communication
    - Unfunctional investments
        - Mountain refuges – made of inappropriate materials and
        - Ski-center
    - Lack of partnership-collaboration
        - With mountaineers
        - Other stakeholders
    - Tourism vision
        - Lack of support for quality tourism activities
        - Lack of support for community based activities
- Strengths
    - Good implementations
        - Hunting control
    - Cooperation with academicians
        - Avalanche risk map – but limited in general

3.4.2. Vision and expectations

- Conservation
    - Absolute protection – limited activity and visitors
    - Enhancement of mountain experience – increased attractions and services
    - "adventure"
- Advancements
    - Information based management
    - Information resources
        - Printed, online, physical
    - Effective management
    - Visitor count, access and assessment of capabilities
    - Information system for high-risk activities
    - Participatory planning
    - "Experience-based" tourism
    - "Community-based" tourism

- Environmental monitoring for surrounding villages
- Search and Rescue Improvements - Insurance
- Marketing/Promotion
- Infrastructure and Services
  - Transport, communications
  - Waste Management
  - Pest management
  - Safety and security
- Investments on locals and local businesses
  - Education
  - Credits
  - Awareness raising (on environment and on their rights)
- Educational programmes
  - Vocational Schools – Switzerland and Georgia examples

APPENDIX F

ETHICS COMMITTEE APPROVAL

T.C.
BOĞAZİÇİ ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ
Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (Sbinarek)

Sayı : E-84391427-050.01.04-156728 06.12.2023
Konu : 2023-06T Kayıt Numaralı Başvurunuz Hakkında

Sayın Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Duygu SALMAN ÖZTÜRK

Tez danışmanlığını yürüttüğünüz öğrenciniz Aydan Özkil'in "Planning for Sustainable Mountain Tourism in Protected Areas: Utilizing Mountaineers' Know-how from Aladağlar (Korunan Alanlarda Sürdürülebilir Dağ Turizminin Planlanması: Aladağlar'da Dağcıların Bilgi Birikiminden Faydalanılması)" başlıklı projesi ile Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (SBİNAREK)'e yaptığınız 2023-06T kayıt numaralı başvurunuz 20.11.2023 tarih ve 2023/09 sayılı kurul toplantısında incelenmiş ve projenize etik onay verilmesi uygun bulunmuştur.

Bu karar tüm üyelerin toplantıya on-line olarak katılımıyla ve oybirliği ile alınmıştır. Onay mektubu tüm üyeler adına Komisyon Başkanı tarafından e-imzalanmıştır. Bilgilerinizi rica ederiz.

Saygılarımızla,

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