

# The development of ecotourism and ways to sustain it (The million visits to the Holy Karbala as a model)

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## **Abstract**

*The most important reason for the emergence of ecotourism at the present time is the rapid development witnessed by the global tourism movement and the emergence of mass tourism, which led to the emergence of a large number of environmental and social negatives in most countries of the world, which resulted in an urgent need for the emergence of other forms of tourism as an alternative to traditional tourism that affects the environment this means that eco-tourism is an alternative first tourism and leave g in marginal areas, secondly, environmental tourism is not a new kind of known tourism but the ideas of a group and broad lines all aimed at maintaining the tourist and cultural components and the archeological and natural with all the elements of her according to a plan long-term strategy. Therefore, an urgent need to do a field study to find out the reality of the environmental tourism in Karbala because of its religious and cultural legacy frequented by millions of visitors each year and because of the huge number of great importance, the researcher doing a field study to learn about the reality of the visits of millions and the failure of the negative effects on the environment natural axis core of this study is to investigate the changes that have occurred due to bi h of after 2003 and the T a Kid on sustainability factors and development so the work of the researcher to identify goods yen for various tourism sectors inside and outside Iraq for the purpose of access to the analysis of the results and choose the health of hypotheses to get the most important conclusions Then he made recommendations aimed at developing environmental tourism in Holy Karbala, especially the million visits.*

**Keywords** :development, tourism, the environment, the Astdam of, visits millions, Karbala

## **Introduction**

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First / research problem: The million numbers that enter the holy Karbala annually have many negative effects on the natural environment, and that these millions of numbers that enter the city have become without guidance, guidance and information, which negatively affects the flow of visitors that enter the city annually

Second / research importance: the tourism industry is a good way to advance the living reality of society and individuals, and to preserve and sustain the tourism environment is an urgent need, as well as creating a developed tourism industry capable of promoting the living reality of society and individuals and preserving the tourism environment

Third / research Objectives: Creating sustainable eco-tourism in the Holy Karbala, working and preparing leadership, guidance, care, organizing and activating the performance of religious and archaeological institutions and making them able to manage this sector

Fourth / research hypothesis: We must arrive through the study to take measures to address the negative cases that affect ecotourism in the Holy Karbala and create a sustainable and developed tourist environment that helps develop ecotourism and its development by relying on the experiences of developed countries in a distinctive tourism industry that keeps pace with global development and fits in its position The religious and archaeological city of Karbala.

Fifth / research Methodology: The method used in the study is theoretical, through which we learn about the concept of eco-tourism and sustainable tourism development and on the field (studying the reality of the situation of field visits)

Sixth/ research contents: study contains of three sections known from which to tourism and sustainable tourism development concepts and the third section are a field where a visit to the city of Karbala, a researcher and a number of supervisors meeting officials to establish and direct the millions of visits to the holy Karbala.

Seventh / previous studies

1-Star Abdul study of me, Abbas and the reality of religious tourism in Karbala

2-Haider Al-Sultani study planning sustainable tourism in the holy Karbala

## **Literature review**

### **1. Ecotourism rules and principles**

This topic deals with the rules and foundations of ecotourism, during which we will learn about the concept of ecotourism, its axes, components and factors that motivate tourism and the stages

of historical development in ecotourism, in addition to a statement of the importance, rules and types of ecotourism. (Bazazo, 2009)

### **First, the concept of ecotourism Eco-Tourism**

Specify a canonical not put environmental tourism so far. If we want to focus on environmental elements, social and economic system of tourism we may suggest that we know the environmental as tourism tourism viable from the perspective of a Guetsada, without coming on human resources and the ingredients and natural inside into a tourist site which can be subject to its existence and durability safety valve in the future in the Mo of Qa the tour of especially the physical environment and the social environment of the host group (Abdel - Kader 1999) is difficult to determine the process of developing this type of tourism, because the need to combine between Magath tourism today and create tomorrow b the future and it 's a difficult task in a dynamic political world and the emergence of eco - tourism of the term n y the early eighties of the twentieth century, a term environment modern Nsiba came to express a new type of tourism activity in a friendly environment. (Mustafa 2000) and practiced by man maintaining the balance of the P The natural and civilized environment of the environment in which he lives. The definition of ecotourism has been adopted by the World Environment Fund: travel to natural areas that have not been polluted and whose natural balance has not been exposed to vinegar. In order to enjoy its landscapes, plants, wild animals and civilization in the present and the past within a tourism that depends primarily on nature and its scenic views (Kamel, 1975)

Ecotourism : It is the type of tourism that makes the natural environment the main site for the visitor or the tourist, with the aim of identifying the types, systems, appearances and natural elements (material, animal, and plant) contained in that ecological environment. And b p t r upscale enjoy in the areas and with the Ne and changes elements of the attraction of such means and the completion of the degree of utilization does not lead to the destruction of the elements of those or prevent the survival or transformation and determined and it relates to Ba for future generations, with the need for the involvement of pain Jet with domestic use and responsibility based on tourism for Not harming development at all levels in a responsible tourism, i.e. tourism that has awareness, reason and a sense of responsibility (Tawfiq, 1997)

### **Second: The components and elements of ecotourism**

1. Natural ecological factors: They include the vital elements and systems and those that are completely natural, such as the surface of the earth and what is on it, mountains, valleys, forests, caves, rivers, reserves and deserts.
2. Climatic factors: any climate and what they offer classes of elements and potential shifts in the summer and winter or spring or autumn are these wild tourism elements of the sunset views on the seaside or the practice of skiing. (Sugar 1994)
3. Biological factors: such as the wealth of plant pain is kind of flowers and trees and plants and the life of the metal to the roe of animal and fish from birds and fish were different freely and wild
4. M watched birds (resident and transient) : is a facility tourist new, especially in the Middle East region is not youth geography, climate is the headquarters of breeds and bird species of special as it is a traditional corridor for the movement of migratory birds between the north and the south, where is a pope additional requested interested scientists and amateurs.
5. Celebrations, occasions and popular ceremonies : It is a clean economic development door that benefits the local population in environmental sites and who are keen on opportunities for intense commercial activity similar to what traditional tourist patterns offer. (Al-Sisi, 2002)

### **Elements of ecotourism**

1. Environmental tourism is a human activity practiced by humans in accordance with governing regulations and sophisticated rules that protect and preserve the natural wildlife.
2. Ecotourism preserves the species and protects species from extinction.
3. Ecotourism is an activity that has a return and a return, whether material or moral.
4. Eco - tourism is the activity that combines originality in the legacy of her the h harmful the natural and modernity in moral attended.
5. Wade is a moral obligation to me more than what is a legal obligation, a contractual obligation of an actor not only at the level of the individual tourist or company level of the organization with or at the level of states of the host. (back, 2006)

With the flow of rad tourists in large numbers of tourist sites and tourists ' attention to biodiversity, it has been vandalized and destroyed many of the environments and identify wildlife and therefore began to resound voices of the need for tourism interest in environmental matters and show that it can not maintain the environment is not the participation of the

population of the Malian to preserve them and nurtured or may Describing the eco-tourist as a person with the following characteristics: (Interview, 2000)

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Having a great desire to get to know popular and cultural places

1. Get real experience
2. Get personal and social experience
3. Endure the hardships and difficulties and accept the challenge of Lus and for his target
4. Interact with the locals and engage with their culture and social life
5. Q e for commissioning even the existence of tourist services is simple.
6. Beautify the inconvenience, walk and face difficulties in a good spirit.
7. Positive and not emotional.

Favor spending the shortage and d to get experience and not for comfort) Cyan, 2008)

### **The development of ecotourism and the foundations of its sustainability**

Numerous concepts and views on eco - tourism, where the development in the past lacked the provision of facilities and services or upgrade them not Chaabaa needs and desires of tourists that this definition is not acceptable because it gives limited to the development of bi look h of environmental, so the expansion of the concept to cover all aspects related to patterns of spatial

supply and demand Tourism became seen the development of tourism and environmental perspective in a holistic and Jitka m 's with all aspects of economic and social activities (executioner 2003). Accordingly, the development of eco-tourism and the foundations of its sustainability is carried out in several ways, including:

**First / General principles for the development and sustainability of eco-tourism sites:**

1. Creating a positive mental image for the tourist visiting the tourist site because the tourist is the focus of the development of ecotourism
2. Preserving biodiversity and the environment. The environment and tourism are closely related and support each other.
3. Continuity and sustainability of economic growth in the long term, achieving economic and social benefits for the population of local communities, and distributing them fairly.

The development of archaeological and heritage sites as part of developed tourism and heritage development which led the tourism movement of growing towards many archaeological and heritage and religious sites in the world to bring many of the social and economic changes in these sites environment (Doubacat 2003) and accompanied by a decline, the gradual loss of the ingredients Its distinctive feature, as a result of the imbalance between the volume of tourist movement destined for it and its absorptive capacity to contain this volume of tourist movement, which led to the decline and deterioration of the strength of its base. Proving many countries in the world 's interest in archaeological and heritage areas and CaAiah and encourage responsible tourism to these sites to their importance in achieving economic growth and the industry is working to provide employment and income generation and improvement of the environment and appeared in many of the developed countries of tourism especially in European countries several attempts to restore the era of golden cities heritage and archeological and try to re - restored (Saleh, 2001) and put it on the map of world tourism re - make these areas and expanded to become a vital part of the system and the global tourism economy began responsible tourism in the heritage and archeological cities and take an increasing interest in this area, where he became regarded for its important role in economic development, improvement For archaeological and heritage areas at the current and past levels (Al-Ta'i, 2001) and some tourism projects included the government authorities' use of the ownership of some heritage areas and buildings, the provision of investments and government grants to find new tourist attractions, and the reformulation of urban plans for heritage areas for their development, arrangement and

rehabilitation, and the installation of some governments policies to re-employ heritage buildings as unfit areas for Jobs and rebuild the mental image that was linked to those areas and to create a tourist image Ga Melt of tourists. (Ali 2010)

### **Second / tools for achieving sustainable tourism development**

Many tools have emerged to achieve sustainable tourism development in eco-tourism, heritage and archaeological sites, in a scientific manner, and keep the tourist sites within the limits of sustainability in the long term, depending on the dynamics of the tourism development process and cross it with visitors, and focus on including tools that can be applied from a scientific point of view to achieve sustainable tourism development in environmental areas (Karbala Governorate, 2021)

1. Cost-benefit analysis: The cost-benefit analysis method is used to identify the economic feasibility of tourism projects, by deducting the project's expenses from the returns and the results of this process can be positive when the project is economically feasible.
2. Absorptive capacity : The steady expansion of the global tourism movement has led to the occurrence of many environmental problems in many tourist sites and the accompanying sabotage and destruction of archaeological, heritage and environmental sites, which led to the introduction of the term absorptive capacity and this concept is the number of tourists or users who can use a specific area without causing Negative effects on resources, society, economy and cleanliness depend on the absorptive capacity report mainly on the nature of the natural ingredients and biodiversity in the tourist site. There are a number of factors that affect the absorptive capacity of the tourist sites:
  - 1- On-site tourism services and facilities
  - 2- The natural environment, including climatic elements and terrestrial processes
  - 3- Socio-economic effects (Directorate of Tourism and Antiquities in Karbala, 2002(

The limits of changes j t reasonable: uses the style of nutritional limits of the year in tourism with large areas of the regions, and it was the most important content of this style help wide tourist sites use to determine the degree of environmental indicators and social custom determine their changes, and see how the appearance of the use of resources with a focus on the desired situation in the more area of the quantum that region can tolerate, and can identify the most important characteristics of the style which guy saw reasonable as follows: -

- 1) This technique aims to achieve a balance between tourist sites and resources on the one hand and the size of the target and the nature of the tourism delegation on the other hand
- 2) The reasonable change limits method is used to maintain the environmental and societal quality of an area and to raise the level of user satisfaction. (Karbala Provincial Council, 2019)

### **The role of governments in developing ecotourism**

Provide leadership and coordination

1. Developing a strategy for ecotourism Governments should work with other stakeholders to chart a clear path for tourism to some extent.
2. Creating and managing infrastructure and resources within government lands is public property. In many countries, the infrastructure on which tourism depends, such as roads, public transport, water extensions, waste treatment, and energy provision
3. Providing a regulatory framework: many tools that can be used to ensure tourism sustainability, such as planning controls and issuing licenses
4. Promotion and interpretation of other ways to confirm facilities as visitors can use various economic tools for supporting the voluntary encouraged for tourism more sustainable (province of Karbala 0.2021)

### **Methodology**

#### **First: The reality of the religious city of Karbala**

The holy city of Karbala is one of the big cities in attracting Iraqi and Arab tourists because it hosts the shrines of Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, the brother of Abbas, his family and his companions, and it has many heritage and historical places, rivers, lakes, and orchards full of palm trees, citrus and others. A study of the city of Karbala, millions of tourists and visitors annually from Iraqis and from Iran, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Pakistan and India and some tourists from European countries and, through an exploratory study in the holy city of Karbala obtained the following information: - (security tourism in Karbala, the holy 2020) The population of the Holy Karbala Governorate is 1.415,000 million four hundred and fifteen thousand people, divided into:

- 1-1,650,000 people officially registered.
- 2-350,000 people registered informally.

The average number of tourists on normal days is 2000 tourists per day

The number of Arab and foreign tourists for the year 2017 amounted to 1.809.100 million tourists; the daily average on regular days was 45,743 visitors

The days of the fortieth visitation the number of visitors inside Iraq ranges between 1-13 days, about (ten million visitors)

And the daily average is  $10,000,000 \div 11.5 = 869565$  visitors at the peak, and the number of visitors doubles in ten days, and this is  $86956 + 150000 = 236956$  visitors in peak days, and Arab and foreign visitors are added to this number, where they stay several nights in Karbala, as for Iraqi visitors for the largest Some of them come on foot from remote places, and they stay overnight or more, and the average in peak days is 1,500,000 (Holy Karbala Hotel Authority, 2020).

The average expenditure of the Iraqi visitor during the stay in Karbala is 125,000 Iraqi dinars per night, and the average expenditure of Arab and foreign tourists is 824 dollars, in addition to Karbala between 4-10 nights. (Tourist Security in Karbala, 2021)

The indicator of accommodation in the Holy Karbala, it was clear from the data that: -

-The number of hotels is 302 with different tourist grades

-Number of hotel rooms 11439 rooms

-Number of beds 29469

Normal pregnancy = 0.83 per normal days

Max load= 50.9 extra visitors without housing

These indicators are considered negative results due to the significant increase in the number of tourists, in contrast to the lack of increase in hotels, and this greatly affects the reduction of the movement of tourists in Karbala, especially Arab and foreign tourists, and negatively affects the cleanliness of the environment and the sustainability of eco-tourism.

Second: The reality of eco-tourism in the holy city of Karbala

1) The negative effects of tourism on the environment

The negative effects of tourism on the environment may be as a result of the waste generated by government institutions and the productivity of tourism, and the consumption of resources and factors in the geographical spot from which the tourism product is established as a result of poor planning and implementation of tourism programs and resulting in sabotage of the natural environment at the expense of achieving profits and growth. And tourism, and when examining the declarations and the negative effects of tourism, it was the result of the following things:

A- The planned increase in the number of tourists, which represents a burden on the utilities of the countries in terms of transportation, hotels and all services such as electricity, life and foodstuffs

B- Causing damage to some of the monuments and vital facilities, because there are no controls for visitors to deal with them inappropriately

(C)Increased by the biosphere

As well as the spread of garbage and waste in the sidewalks of streets and orchards, which represent tourist attractions and the visitor is also not alone responsible for all these disasters and the destruction of archaeological and tourist areas, but nature and the original inhabitants of these areas have a great income in that as well. Likewise, the millions of numbers that enter the city of Karbala and the lack of capacity for absorption also negatively affected the entry of foreign tourists, i.e., the city at peak times due to the lack of services and sometimes their absence.(Karbala Governorate, 2020)

## **2)Development planning**

Planning: is the basis of successful work and is the modern scientific method for addressing problems and comprehensive development, so planning has become the first and main tool for development and planning is one of the main functions of management, and it is the tool to achieve a specific goal in a limited unit and therefore it is the exploitation of all available resources, whether natural, social, economic or whatever. The type and level of planning, this planning requires a plan to gain a period of study that covers the natural, economic and social aspects and the result of tourism planning in Karbala to achieve the following goals :

- 1-Diversifying the tourism curriculum, providing associated services, and developing resources at the state level according to a unified approach
- 2-Providing full flexibility and achieve the exploitation of optimization of resources available to the Stroll Z with the needs of global demand or local.
- 5-Rationalizing the use of natural and human resources therein until they are protected from deterioration
- 8-Providing the necessary manpower needed by the tourist establishments.

The lack of interest of the authorities in the holy Karbala became clear through a number of manifestations, the most important of which are:

-Tourism planning does not depend on the many modern scientific methods in determining the goals to be achieved.

-The absence of integrated planning outlook linking activities and events tourism unbalanced in its.

- A Posed planning for tourism research and scientific studies in various tourist areas.

-The tourism development plan is not linked to the general plan of the state.

-The available tourist services are not related to the expected tourist movement.

### **Conclusions**

1. Failure to identify and analyze the natural environment of Karbala, which negatively affected the exploitation of environmental resources to obtain high economic feasibility
2. Poor planning for tourist and archaeological sites in a way that preserves land and tourism resources and prevents their destruction.
3. The lack of an optimal evaluation of the tourism resources needed for future development and the lack of an evaluation of the geological monuments and dangers within the religious and tourist sites.
4. Lack of preservation to the specialized technical committees in the field of environment and sustainable tourism recognize the demands of the visitors and places exporting them and their attitudes.
5. Weakness of the elements of investment attraction compatible with religious and eco- tourism
6. Imbalance in the use of natural resources for workers in tourist and hotel sites and tour guides.

### **Recommendations**

1. Conducting a planning process for religious and archaeological sites, taking into account the approved international standards, and the planning process is carried out according to certain standards.
2. To identify the tourism and environmental resources and the possibilities available for development.
3. Understand environmental hazards and their effects on tourist sites and visitors.
4. The future prediction of the response of the sites on which the future facility is located to the million visits with any natural hazards that may affect it.
5. Benefiting from the experiences of developed countries in this field and transferring their experience to Karbala for its sanctity.

6. Spreading awareness about the importance of preserving the natural ingredients among visitors.

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