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Responsible green tourism: A new path for eco-friendly tourism development

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Abstract--This research aims to explore the role and importance of the green tourism industry in activating environmentally friendly development mechanisms, while analyzing the experiences of selected countries. In recent years, green tourism has been characterized as the most important concept in the tourism market, although it is not a new idea, it has begun to expand and spread recently, and green tourism has become the focus of attention of many countries of the world because of its great profits and benefits, In addition to the vital role played by tourism in contributing to the national economy, and generating a large annual income in dollars and foreign currencies. The research concludes with important results that the responsible tourism has succeeded in embodying and applying the concepts of the global charter for tourism ethics, the most important of which is achieving respect and mutual understanding between peoples and preserving the cultural heritage of them and strengthening the foundations of sustainable development, and this is significantly represented through the responsible tourism festival in Italy, And the Dubai Green Tourism Initiative to enhance the sustainability of the

tourism sector and contribute to clean energy goals and sustainable development.

Keywords---Eco-friendly Tourism, Eco-friendly Development, Green Tourism, Green Economy, Eco-friendly Developmental Dimension.

JEL Classification: C13; C32; F21; F15

Introduction

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) estimates that an annual funding shortfall of \$2.5 trillion exists to meet the Eco-friendly Development Goals (SDGs). The 2030 Agenda for Eco-friendly Development and the Paris Agreement on climate change are key milestones driving global efforts to transition to a green economy and tackle climate change. Their implementation has heightened environmental awareness and integrated sustainability into the financial sector, marking a significant change in financial intermediation and transaction structuring. As a result, new investment products and financial instruments that are environmentally and climate-friendly, eco-friendly, and responsible have been developed. These include green bonds and green, eco-friendly, and responsible investment sukuk.

In another perspective, a recent report by the Global Commission on the Economy and Climate indicates that shifting to a eco-friendly, low-carbon growth model could generate economic benefits amounting to \$26 trillion by 2030. Interest in and focus on the green economy emerged as an environmentally friendly economic activity and a means to achieve eco-friendly development, beginning with the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Two decades later, at the United Nations Conference on Eco-friendly Development (Rio+20) in Rio de Janeiro once more, new opportunities were unveiled for advancing eco-friendly development.

The green economy acts as a driving force for progress and development worldwide. Many nations have launched a range of reforms and initiatives to diversify their economies, improve the business environment, enhance energy security, protect the environment, and develop green economy sectors. This approach seeks to establish a new model of economic development, centered on significant green investments in areas like renewable energy efficiency, green infrastructure, waste management, and other related fields.

Eco-friendly tourism has garnered significant attention from researchers across various disciplines. It is not just an economic phenomenon but also a social and economic one. Its impact extends beyond the economy to affect human resources, culture, and society. Tourism is described as the fastest-growing industry in national economies. Its concepts have evolved from merely satisfying individual desires through travel to becoming a complex human phenomenon influenced by numerous economic and social variables. Today, tourism stands as an independent industry striving for sustainability.

Research consistently shows that eco-friendly tourism is on the rise, driven by increasing awareness and demand for all forms of eco-friendly tourism. The consideration of sustainability has become more prevalent when choosing travel destinations or lifestyle approaches.

According to a study by the global research and consulting firm Bain & Company, two-thirds of consumers surveyed in selected markets view sustainability aspects as important or very important when traveling for leisure. Moreover, 73% of these respondents expect that the importance of sustainability in tourism will grow over the next five years.

Eco-friendly tourism aims to minimize the negative impacts of travel on the planet while enhancing social and economic benefits. This is achieved by focusing on environmental protection, preserving biodiversity, respecting indigenous cultures, and upholding ethical principles. The concept of green tourism aligns with the idea that tourism should be environmentally friendly, reducing many of the adverse effects associated with the movement of tourists from one country to another.

As travelers worldwide become increasingly conscious of the environmental, social, and cultural impacts of their trips, there is a rising demand for green tourism. People are now looking for destinations and activities that promote environmental conservation, reduce carbon emissions, and protect natural resources. The eco-friendly tourism market is anticipated to attain a value of \$11.4 trillion by 2032, experiencing an annual growth rate of 14%.

Study problem:

The central issue of this study can be expressed in the following primary question:

How can green tourism be activated to respond to the global environmental changes we are witnessing and ensure its sustainability? Are there global and regional initiatives that embody this approach?

Study importance:

The importance of this research lies in the global significance of tourism, both economically and socially. Economically, tourism primarily contributes to increased foreign exchange revenues, boosting a nation's foreign currency reserves generated by incoming tourists during their stays. This makes eco-friendly tourism a strategic approach adopted by most countries. Maintaining and sustainably developing tourist areas and sites has become a strategic objective pursued by everyone.

Study Objectives:

The research aims to understand the modern trend in tourism represented by eco-friendly tourism, highlighting its benefits and its role in activating eco-friendly development mechanisms in Algeria. Additionally, the research has an academic objective to shed light on key terms and concepts in the fields of tourism and eco-friendly development, emphasizing the need to advance Algeria's tourism sector.

Study Approach:

To comprehensively address the study topic, we employed a descriptive-analytical method. This approach clarifies theoretical and academic concepts related to green eco-friendly tourism and eco-friendly development.

Study Structure:

The research is divided into four main sections:

- Conceptual Framework of Eco-friendly Development.
- Conceptual Framework of Tourism and Eco-friendly Tourism.
- Overview of Green Tourism.
- International Efforts to Promote Green Tourism.

Literature Review

- Study by ([Amrouche Tournia, 2008](#)) Titled "Eco-friendly Tourism in Algeria: Issues and Requirements - Case Study of Boumerdes City." This Master's thesis in Urban Management Techniques, with a focus on the Ecological Management of Urban Environments from Mohamed Boudiaf University in M'sila, aims to Highlight the relationship between urban planning tools, tourism development tools, and tourism projects, Analyze the laws and regulations governing the tourism sector. This study heavily focuses on the legislative aspect, specifically the legal tools implemented by the state.
- Study by Bouachache Samia (2013) Titled "Ecotourism in Mountain Areas - Case Study of the Tikjda Mountains in Bouira." This Master's thesis in Management Sciences, with a specialization in Environmental and Tourism Management from Algiers 3 University, aims to Highlight the current state of ecotourism in Algeria's mountainous regions and explore ways to develop it, using the Tikjda Mountains in Bouira as a model. This study emphasizes the importance of mountain tourism and how its development can contribute to eco-friendly development ([Latifa, 2020, p. 02](#)).
- Research Paper by Camelia Surugiu and Marius Razvan (2014) Titled "Tourism is Going Green, But Economy is Going Greener? Some Evidence Related to Romania Tourism", The Young Economists Journal, Vol. 01, Issue 22, 2014. This study aims to highlight the environmental impact of tourism by focusing on its contribution to greenhouse gas emissions and how this impact is assessed for mitigation, The study employed a descriptive-analytical approach to reach its conclusions. The study found that many regions worldwide are experiencing the environmental impacts of tourism development and are seeking optimal ways to balance economic growth with environmental protection.
- Study by ([Fadila Salima, Bourahla Miloud, and Masoudi Zakaria , 2019](#)) Titled "Eco-friendly Tourism: Contribution to Economic Growth and Eco-friendly Development in the Maghreb – A Comparative Study of Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco" This research aimed to diagnose the tourism sector in the Maghreb (Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco) by examining the effect of tourism revenues on the growth of the economy in each country. The empirical study revealed that the tourism sector positively affects the gross domestic product (GDP) in these Maghreb countries in both the short and long term.
- Study by Thamer Mohsen and Bahi Youssef (2020) Titled "The Role of Cultural Tourism in Achieving Eco-friendly Development - The Case of Oued Souf

Province", in this study, the researchers concluded that the tourism industry plays a significant and prominent role in supporting comprehensive development, whether economic or social. Tourism contributes to job creation, employs local labor, facilitates the inflow of foreign currencies, and attracts foreign capital. Therefore, Algeria should consider diversifying its economy by developing other sectors like tourism, agriculture, and others, rather than relying heavily on the hydrocarbons sector, which is subject to volatile prices in global markets and is ultimately a finite resource (Mohsen & Youssef, 2020, p. 22).

1. Conceptual Framework of Eco-friendly Development

The idea of eco-friendly development emerged as a broader alternative to previous developmental concepts. This new paradigm posits that meeting the needs of the present and enhancing social well-being cannot come at the expense of the future generations' ability to meet their material and spiritual needs. It advocates for the protection and improvement of natural resource bases and calls for integrating environmental considerations into economic and social development policies. In other words, eco-friendly development accounts for the interdependencies between the environment, economy, and society.

1.1 Definition of Eco-friendly Development:

1.1.1 Robert Solow's Definition (1991):

Solow defined eco-friendly development as avoiding harm to the productive capacity of future generations. According to him, productive capacity encompasses not only the consumable resources used by the present generation but also extends to its material and knowledge aspects. This includes the nature and extent of savings, the quality of investment in these surpluses, and the prudent consumption of current and future natural resources. (Youssef & Amroush, 2022, p. 22)

1.1.2 Edwerd Barbier:

Defines eco-friendly development as an activity aimed at maximizing social well-being while minimizing the utilization of natural resources and causing minimal environmental damage. He clarifies that eco-friendly development differs from traditional development due to its complexity and the interconnection of economic, social, and environmental factors. (Amari, 2008, p. 04).

Such definitions of eco-friendly development revolve around two main points:

- Eco-friendly development involves managing and maintaining the natural resource base and guiding technological and institutional changes to ensure that human needs for current and future generations are met continuously. This type of development conserves land, water, and genetic resources of animals and plants, avoids environmental degradation, is technologically appropriate, economically viable, and socially acceptable.
- Utilization, Preservation, and Enhancement of Enjoyment Resources: It also focuses on the use, maintenance, and improvement of resources to sustain the ecological processes essential for life and to enhance the overall quality of life both now and in the future.

From this viewpoint, the economic definition of eco-friendly development entails fairness towards future generations. It implies that the present generation should leave a resource base for future generations that is at least equal to, if not better than, the one they received. This requires accomplishing several key objectives. (Amari, 2008, p. 04):

- Prudent Use of Non-Renewable Resources, This includes resources like water, oil, and gas, implying that we should conserve natural assets to leave an equivalent or better environment for future generations, especially since there are no industrial substitutes for many environmental assets.
- Respecting the Environment's Limited Capacity to Absorb Waste.
- Eco-friendly development requires using renewable resources within their eco-friendly yield.

The definitions related to eco-friendly development consistently derive from its three core principles: economic progress, social equity, and environmental protection. In this context, the Swedish philosopher Jonas Hans expresses the concept of eco-friendly development in his book "The Principle of Responsibility." He combines the three dimensions of development—economic, social, and environmental—to formulate the following comprehensive definition of eco-friendly development:



Figure 01: The Concept of Eco-friendly Development

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on (Amari, 2008, p. 04)

1.2 Definition of Eco-friendly Development from an Economic Perspective:

In its economic concept, eco-friendly development focuses on resource management to achieve the minimum necessary for economic growth while preserving the quality of natural resources. Economic growth often affects the environment due to the pressure on natural resources. From the perspective of continuous development, this concept emphasizes closely linking the economies of developing countries with environmental roots. For developed countries, it implies reducing energy consumption to safeguard the rights of future

generations ([Mohsen & Youssef, 2020](#)).

1.3 Objective s of Eco-friendly Development:

On September 25, 2015, the United Nations Eco-friendly Development Summit adopted the agenda titled "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Eco-friendly Development," which includes 17 Eco-friendly Development Objective s (SDGs). These objective s are as follows ([United Nations, 2021](#)) :

- Eradicate poverty in all its forms globally.
- Attain food security, enhance nutrition, and promote eco-friendly agriculture.
- Ensure healthy lives and well-being for all at every age.
- Provide inclusive, equitable, and quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for everyone.
- Attain gender equality and empower all women and girls.
- Guarantee availability and eco-friendly management of water and sanitation for everyone.
- Ensure access to affordable, reliable, eco-friendly, and modern energy for all.
- Sustained, inclusive, and eco-friendly economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.
- Develop resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and eco-friendly industrialization, and foster innovation.
- Reduce inequalities within and among countries.
- Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and eco-friendly.
- Encourage responsible consumption and production.
- Take immediate action to combat climate change and its impacts.
- Conserve and sustainably use oceans, seas, and marine resources for eco-friendly development.
- Protect, restore, and promote eco-friendly use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, and stop biodiversity loss.
- Promote peace and justice.
- Enhance the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for eco-friendly development.



Figure 02: The Eco-friendly Development Objective s
Source: Prepared by the researcher based on United Nations Website

2. Conceptual Framework of Tourism and Eco-friendly Tourism

Tourism is not a modern social phenomenon; it is as ancient as human history itself. Humans have engaged in tourism since their earliest days. The concept of tourism is even mentioned in the Quran and the Hadith. For instance, Allah says: **" the repentant, the worshippers, the praisers [of Allah], the travelers [for His cause], those who bow and prostrate [in prayer], those who enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong, and those who observe the limits [set by] Allah. And give good tidings to the believers."** (Surah At-Tawbah, 9:112). Additionally, He states: **"Do they not travel through the earth and see what was the End of those before them? They were more numerous than these and superior in strength and in the traces (they have left) in the land: Yet all that they accomplished was of no profit to them."** (Surah Ghafir, 40:82). In addition, in another verse: **" who believe, who are devout, who turn to Allah in repentance, who worship (in humility), who travel (for Faith) ..."** (Surah At-Tahrim, 66:5).

In Islamic context, tourism is associated with the pursuit of knowledge and understanding. One of the key benefits is recognizing the signs of the Creator in the diversity of His creations—their races, colors, languages, customs, and traditions—and in their thoughts, cultures, behaviors, and hobbies. This exploration deepens faith in His greatness and increases devotion. Additionally, one of the pillars of Islam, the pilgrimage to the House of Allah (Hajj), is a form of religious tourism for those who are able to undertake it (Tawfiq, 1997, p. 21).

2.1 Definitions of Tourism According to Leading Researchers

Tourism is often referred to as the industry of the 20th century, a nourishment for the soul, and the oil of the 21st century. Over time, researchers have attempted to provide a comprehensive concept of tourism. These attempts date

back to 1910, when Schullard defined tourism from an economic perspective, stating: "Tourism encompasses all economic operations directly related to the entry, stay, and movement of foreigners within or outside a particular country, city, or region" (Tawfiq, 1997, p. 21). Hunziker and Krapf emphasized that tourism encompasses "the sum of the phenomena and relationships arising from travel and stay of non-residents, insofar as they do not lead to permanent residence and are not connected with any earning activity" (Abdullah, Al-Mousawi, & Al-Kanani, 2014, p. 23). Ogilvie is considered one of the earliest researchers to describe the term "tourist." He explained that a tourist is someone whose movements meet two conditions:

- The person is away from their usual residence for a relatively short period, not exceeding one year.
- The person spends money from sources other than those earned in the place they are visiting.

2.2 Definitions by Official Bodies

Various official organizations have also contributed to enriching the concept of tourism by providing their own definitions based on their perspectives:

2.2.1 International Academy of Tourism:

The International Academy of Tourism views tourism as encompassing leisure travel and all related activities that satisfy the needs of the tourist. In a 1937 definition by the United Nations Statistical Experts Committee, it was recommended that a tourist be defined generally as "any person who travels for a period of 24 hours or more to a place other than where they reside permanently" (Daabs Y. , 2002).

2.2.2 United Nations' Definition of Tourism:

At a 1963 United Nations meeting on international tourism, an international tourist was defined as "any person temporarily staying in a foreign country and living outside their usual place of residence for 24 hours or more" (Al-Sukkar, 1999).

2.2.3 British Tourism Association (1981):

As stated by the British Tourism Association, tourism is defined as "a series of specialized and chosen activities conducted outside the home, including staying and spending time outside of one's normal place of residence " (Al-Houri & Al-Dabbagh, 2001).

2.2.4 World Tourism Organization (1963):

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) provided a detailed definition of tourism in 1963, distinguishing between different types of visitors. Any person traveling to a country where they do not usually reside, typically for various purposes other than engaging in paid work, Tourists, on the other hand, are temporary visitors who stay for at least 24 hours in the country they are visiting. Their reasons for visiting can include leisure, relaxation, health, vacations, sports, visiting relatives, or attending conferences and cultural, political, or scientific events. Excursionists, on the other hand, are visitors whose stay does not exceed 24 hours (Samira, 2015).

2.3 Importance of Tourism:

Tourism holds significant importance due to its numerous benefits, including the following (Allal, Chaanbi, & Bourdash, 2021):

- Tourism is an economic sector that contributes a substantial portion to the national economy.
- It serves as a means of intellectual guidance and facilitates the exchange of cultures among different peoples.
- From a social perspective, tourism provides physical relaxation and psychological enjoyment.
- Tourism increases revenues from foreign currency.
- It plays a crucial role in the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and is one of the sectors that offer rapid returns on investment at a lower cost.
- Tourism helps correct imbalances in the export structure of countries aiming to advance by diversifying their exports.
- It promotes social development and aids in the development of rural and desert areas.
- Tourism supports and enhances infrastructure, particularly in transportation, accommodation, water, sewage, and electricity networks, as well as the establishment of new international airports.

2.4 Tourism Development:

Tourism development centers on offering amenities and services to fulfill the needs and preferences of tourists. It includes positive impacts such as creating new job opportunities and generating new incomes (Mrazga, 2010). Tourism development is a central focus in the tourism industry across all tourist countries. It involves creating and enhancing the tourism product or engaging in continuous organized efforts to boost the tourism industry (Hassan & Hassanein, 2006). Douglas Pearce defines tourism development as "the expansion or extension of the facilities and services base to meet the needs of tourists" (Fouad, 2008).

2.5 Eco-friendly Tourism Development:

2.5.1 Definition of Eco-friendly Tourism Development:

Eco-friendly tourism development is defined as the approach that meets the needs of tourists and host communities while also protecting and providing opportunities for the future. It involves managing resources in a way that addresses economic, social, and cultural requirements while ensuring cultural integration and environmental sustainability, including biodiversity and supporting life systems (Kharboutli, 2004).

Some tourism experts prioritize one key objective of eco-friendly tourism development: the effective implementation of land use planning measures that optimize the potential economic and environmental advantages of tourism while reducing the risk of environmental and cultural degradation (Daabs Y. , 2002).

Table 1. Comparison between Traditional Tourism Development and Eco-friendly Tourism Development

Traditional Tourism Development	Eco-friendly Tourism Development
General Concepts	
Rapid development	Development occurs in stages
No boundaries and limited regenerative capacity	Limited boundaries and specific regenerative capacity
Short-term	Long-term
Mass tourism	Niche tourism
Managed primarily by external entities	Managed by involving local communities
Development Strategies	
Fragmented sectoral planning	Integrated and comprehensive planning
Focus on establishing and expanding facilities	Focus on meeting environmental conditions and planning
Traditional urban and architectural patterns	Innovative architectural designs based on sustainability
Programs for resource allocation	Programs based on eco-friendly use of resources
Tourist Characteristics	
Large and varied groups of tourists	Small and tailored groups
Short stay periods	Longer stay periods
Quantity-focused and performance-driven	Balanced and eco-friendly use
Repeat visits and high visitor turnover	Preference for unique and less frequent visits
Diverse education levels	High levels of education and awareness

Sources: *Mohamed Ibrahim Araqi and Farouk Abdel Nabi Atta Allah (2007)*

2.5.2 Objective s of Eco-friendly Tourism Development:

The objective s of eco-friendly tourism development includes the following:

Ensuring the long-term productivity of tourism resources while maintaining environmental diversity, creating a balance between the culture of the host community and the expectations of tourists, actively involving the local community in the eco-friendly tourism development process.

The following figure summarizes these objective s:

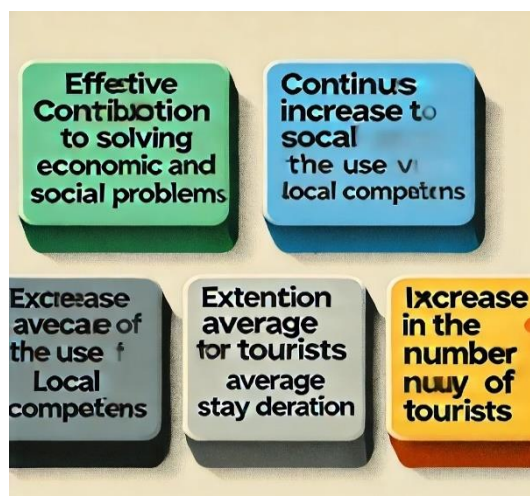


Figure 3. Objectives of Eco-friendly Tourism Development
 Sources: Belkacem Ben Allal, Mariem Chaanbi, Shahrazad Bordash (2021)

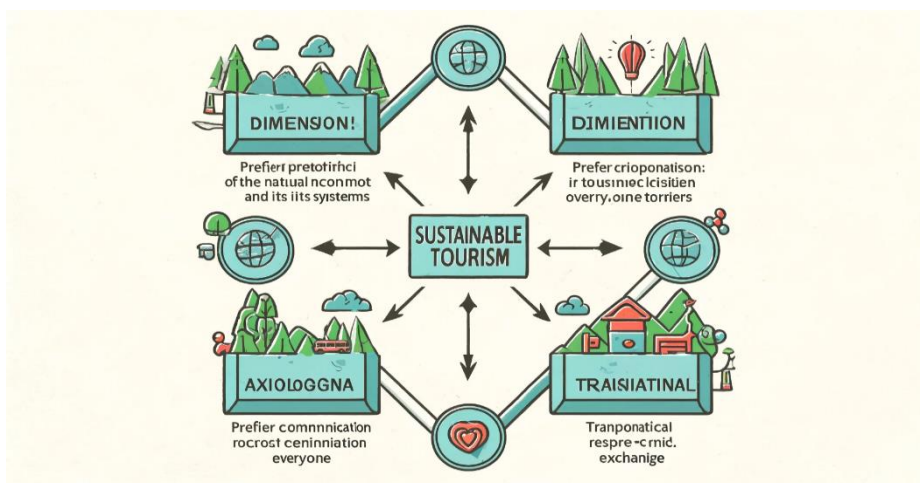


Figure 4. Strategic Pillars of Eco-friendly Tourism
 Sources: Line Bergery, 2002, P 127

3. Overview of Green Tourism

3.1 Conceptual Framework of Eco-friendly Economy and Green Finance:

The spread of the green economy concept reflects a new perspective on the interconnectedness between the economic and environmental dimensions of eco-friendly development, as well as the social dimension. This approach supports the achievement of eco-friendly development by adopting a new conceptual framework that not only complements eco-friendly development but also enhances the integration of its three dimensions: economic, social, and environmental (ESCWA, 2011).

According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the green economy is defined as an economy that improves human well-being and social equity while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities (United, 2014).

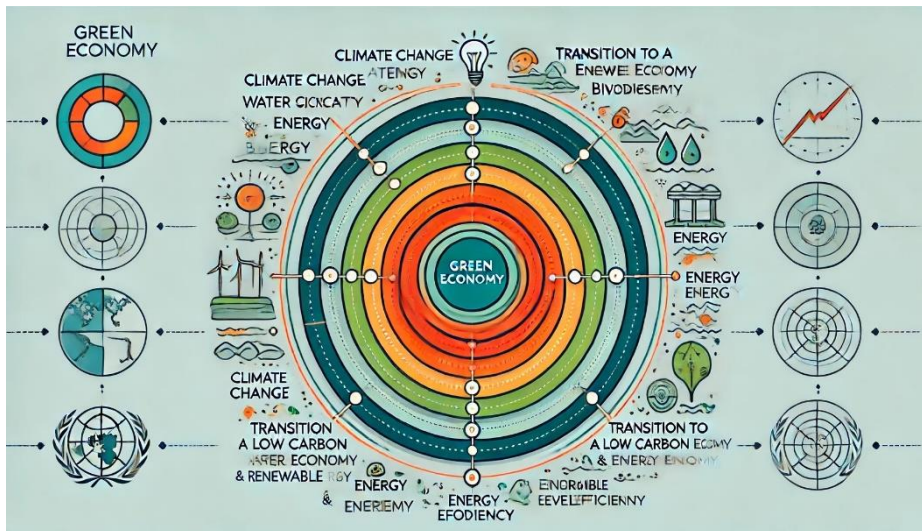


Figure 05: The Relationship Between the Green Economy and Eco-friendly Development

Sources: *Moufak Seham, “Tunisia’s Catch” (2018)*

3.1.1 Definition and Origin of Green Finance:

The concept of "Green Finance" is founded on the idea of greening the financial system by effectively managing environmental risks across financial networks. There are various definitions of this term. Green finance, which considers the environmental impact of investments alongside pure financial returns, can expedite achieving the desired objectives for many countries in the region. It can contribute to economic diversification, job creation, and attracting foreign investments if utilized correctly. To seize this opportunity, governments need to focus on four primary priorities: enacting sustainability-related policies, establishing new entities specializing in green investment, enhancing financial markets, and creating standardized and transparent mechanisms for environmental performance reporting or joining relevant global organizations.

Green finance is a modern and crucial topic that requires attention as it garners the interest of the international community and environmental protection organizations. It represents a new model of rapid economic development directly dependent on green investments aimed at addressing the reciprocal relationship between natural environmental resources and the exploitation of these resources in ways that benefit society, achieve economic welfare, and mitigate the adverse effects of human activities on climate change, global warming, and resource depletion.

Currently, investment in eco-friendly practices is significantly overshadowed by the capital flow into fossil fuels and other uneco-friendly sectors. According to

estimates by global climate change institutions, approximately \$2.4 trillion, or around 2.5% of the global GDP, needs to be invested annually in clean energy between 2016 and 2035 to mitigate global warming. Meeting this target seems unlikely at current investment levels, highlighting the importance of green finance as a vital pathway to eco-friendly funding (SSEI, 2017).

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) defines Green Finance as financing aimed at achieving economic growth while minimizing pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, reducing waste to the minimum, and improving the efficiency of natural resource use. More broadly, it is defined as the use of financial products and services, such as loans, insurance, equity investments, and bonds, to fund green or environmentally friendly projects.

The International Finance Corporation (IFC) defines green finance as “investments and loans that fund projects aimed at protecting the environment and conserving natural resources” (Lahcen, 2018).

Additionally, green finance is described as “financing investments that provide environmental benefits within the broader context of environmentally eco-friendly development.” The primary benefits include reducing air, water, and soil pollution; decreasing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions; improving energy efficiency; and mitigating and adapting to climate change (SSEI, 2017). Green finance encompasses the following aspects:

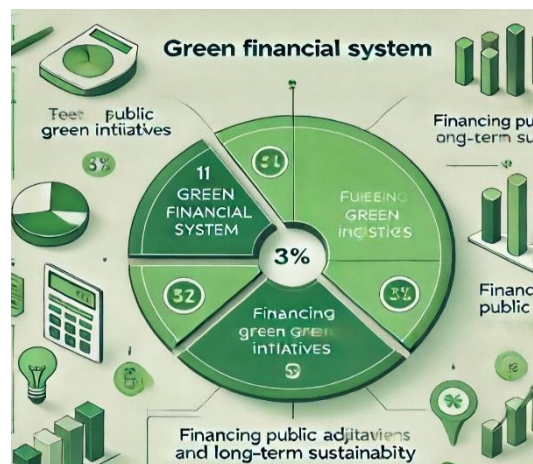


Figure 6. Components of Green Finance

Sources: *Nannette Lindenberg, 2014*

3.1.2 Areas of Green Finance:

Investment in green finance focuses on the following areas:

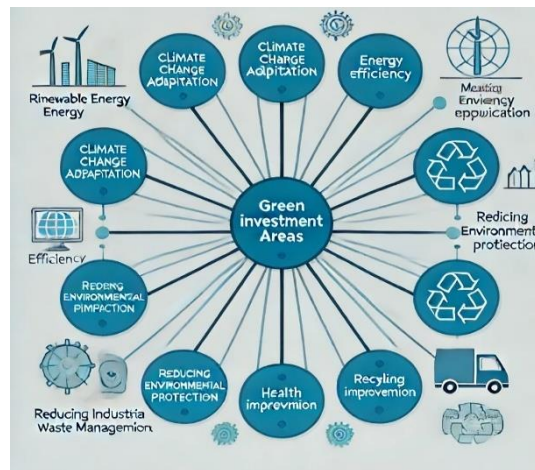


Figure 7. Investment Areas in Green Finance
 Sources: *Nannette Lindenberg, 2014*

3.2 The Essence of Green Tourism:

The concept of Green Tourism is associated with tourism practices that are environmentally friendly and minimize several negative impacts related to tourists traveling from one country to another. These impacts include environmental destruction, unethical treatment of wildlife and animals, harm to communities and their heritage, and significant emissions from air travel. The term is often applied to companies that engage in eco-friendly activities.

Green tourism falls under the broader concept of Eco-friendly Tourism, which encompasses all forms of tourism and destinations people travel to, not just natural areas. Eco-friendly tourism seeks to reduce the adverse effects of tourism as much as possible while maximizing the positive effects, ensuring that the entire tourism industry is eco-friendly in the long term.

The idea of eco-friendly tourism is closely tied to Eco-friendly Transportation, as tourism heavily relies on fossil fuels, which contribute to climate change. Statistics indicate that 72% of carbon dioxide emissions in tourism are due to transportation, 24% come from accommodations, and aviation alone accounts for 55% of these emissions.

To reduce the carbon emissions caused by airplanes, aircraft manufacturers are working to develop more fuel-efficient engines, leading to lower carbon emissions. Additionally, some countries are attempting to impose compensatory measures on international aviation, using these compensations to fund activities aimed at reducing carbon emissions.

3.2.1 The Difference between Green Tourism, Ecotourism, and Eco-friendly Tourism

The term Green Tourism is the oldest concerning environmental protection and preservation. Initially, hotels started using it as a brand to market themselves as

environmentally friendly. However, many of these hotels did not implement water conservation programs, recycling, or the use of eco-friendly products. This led to the emergence of the terms Ecotourism and Eco-friendly Tourism.

Ecotourism refers to travel to natural areas that conserve the environment and promote the well-being of local communities. It focuses on the preservation of wildlife. Participants in ecotourism should ensure that the sites they visit are protected from unnatural external impacts.

Eco-friendly Tourism is broader and more comprehensive than ecotourism. It addresses the environmental, economic, and social aspects of tourism development, aiming to balance these aspects to ensure its sustainability. Eco-friendly tourism also emphasizes the local community's role, ensuring job opportunities and seeking to maximize the benefits while minimizing the negative impacts of tourism.

The human element is crucial in tourism. The more awareness there is among travelers and tourists, the better we can apply the concept of eco-friendly tourism. To achieve this, tourists can take several actions, such as:

- Using ground transportation as much as possible to reduce their carbon footprint.
- Carrying reusable bags and using silverware instead of plastic utensils.
- Eating local food instead of purchasing expensive, non-local options. This also helps tourists discover and enjoy the local cuisine of different countries (Mrazga, 2010).

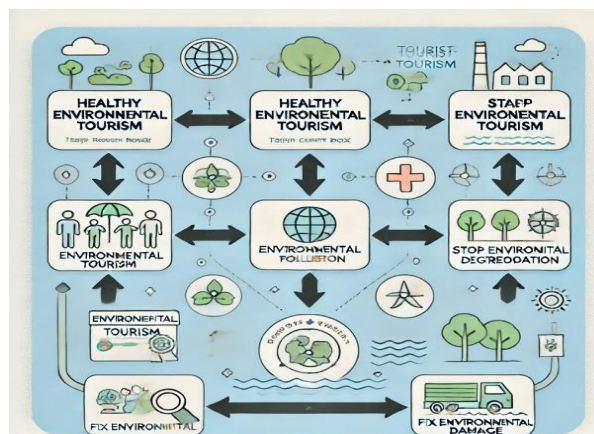


Figure 8. Stages of the Green Tourism Concept
Sources: *Mohsen Ahmed Al-Khodiri, 2005*

3.2.2 Requirements for Green Tourism:

Implementing the concept of Green Tourism and incorporating the environmental dimension into tourism activities means fostering clean, eco-friendly, and community-friendly tourism with high economic viability. This can only be achieved by integrating environmental considerations into key tourism components such as hotels, transportation, and tourist sites.

A. Green Hotels:

Green Hotels, also known as Ecologically Friendly Hotels, are defined as accommodations that are environmentally eco-friendly. They are characterized by significant environmental improvements and the adoption of energy conservation measures aimed at reducing negative impacts on the natural environment without causing any harm to it.

The global hotel industry is increasingly adopting the green hotels' slogan alongside implementing eco-friendly tourism practices. These practices focus on environmental care, efficient use of water and electricity, and employing tools that do not affect the ozone layer or exacerbate issues of pollution and sewage (Ayuso, 2019).

One of the most critical questions arising with the growing trend towards green hotels is "Why?" What reasons drive the need for such initiatives from individuals, industries, and authorities? Why is there a push to establish procedures that lead to reduced environmental impact? Given the significant importance of the hotel industry worldwide, studies and statistics reveal several direct environmental impacts caused by hotels:

- Hotels contribute to ozone layer depletion through the use of refrigerators and air conditioners that emit chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) into the atmosphere. Additionally, hotels consume substantial amounts of water, with the average annual water consumption per room ranging between 220 and 360 cubic meters.
- The hospitality industry consumes various types of energy that contribute to gas emissions and global warming. According to the World Tourism Organization, the tourism sector accounts for 5% of global carbon dioxide emissions, with hotels and other accommodations comprising 2% of that total.

Beyond the advantages of applying sustainability standards in terms of cost reduction and increased investment returns, experts highlight those destinations employing green tourism and eco-friendly practices will be more attractive to tourists. This is due to the rising awareness of environmental issues and the growing popularity of the "Eco-Friendly" concept. Consequently, hotels worldwide are striving to obtain certifications that acknowledge their commitment to these practices.

Research carried out in the United States on a group of Small Luxury Hotels revealed that guests increasingly focus on these hotels' adherence to environmental standards and eco-friendly tourism requirements. The study included a selected sample of 121 small luxury hotels in nations like the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia. Notable findings of the study included, **70%** of American tourists are willing to pay an additional \$150 during their stay at a hotel that prioritizes environmental concerns, **55%** of American tourists are inclined to book their stays in eco-friendly hotels.

B. Green Transportation:

Experts from the World Tourism Organization acknowledge that tourism-related travel contributes to about 8% of the total human impact on radiative forcing, which influences the earth's energy balance. Additionally, it accounts for 5% of harmful gas emissions. Estimates suggest that greenhouse gas emissions from tourism could grow by 161% by 2035 under a "business as usual" scenario. Environmental and climate experts attribute part of the responsibility for gradual climate changes to the 846 million tourists traveling annually.

The following figure illustrates the sources of greenhouse gases in the tourism sector:



Figure 9. Sources of Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Tourism
Sources: [Ministry of Tourism, Oman \(2008\)](#)

Eco-friendly transportation encompasses travel methods that are sustainable, socially fair, and economically practical. Its goal is to reduce the adverse environmental effects of transportation and enhance urban residents' quality of life. Implementing eco-friendly transportation strategies allows cities to tackle multiple essential challenges at once.

Achieving eco-friendly transportation can be done through various measures and transformations, such as:

- Providing incentives and benefits that motivate people to use eco-friendly transportation options.
- Enhancing the infrastructure for eco-friendly transportation by upgrading roads and developing modern networks for trains and other green transport modes.
- Incorporating advancements in the transportation sector, including self-driving cars and electric bus systems.

C. Natural Reserves:

Natural reserves are vital natural resources for tourism; they often define the lifestyle of both humans and animals. Natural vegetation forms a crucial foundation for the tourism industry due to its aesthetic value, which is evident in reserves, parks, and public gardens. These areas offer various types of tourism activities, including leisure tourism, recreation, sightseeing, and learning about

different plants. They also provide opportunities for fishing and are mainly used for short-term tourism, such as weekend getaways ("domestic tourism") for residents of nearby areas who seek enjoyment, relaxation, and a break from work, noise, and pollution.

4. International Efforts to Promote Green Tourism

4.1 Developing Green Tourism in Dubai:

On the global tourism map, Dubai continues to set a competitive lead as one of the most attractive and best destinations, surpassing major global cities. In its vigorous efforts to preserve the environment and support the United Arab Emirates' eco-friendly development objectives, the "Dubai Eco-friendly Tourism" initiative, part of the Dubai Department of Economy and Tourism, has achieved numerous milestones since its launch. This is part of the department's ongoing efforts to maintain environmental standards and sustainability within its tourism ecosystem. Simultaneously, the department continues to enhance and develop its comprehensive initiatives and strategies in line with Dubai's ongoing urban and tourism advancements ([Al-Tayer, 2020](#)).

4.1.1 Clean Energy Pathways and Waste Management in Dubai:

Dubai's Clean Energy Strategy 2050 aims to diversify energy sources and increase the contribution of clean energy to Dubai's energy mix to 7% by 2020, 25% by 2030, and 75% by 2050.

A. Infrastructure:

One notable initiative is the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Solar Park, which stands as the largest single-site solar energy project in the world, with a projected capacity of up to 5000 MW by 2030.

B. Legislative Framework:

The second approach emphasizes creating a legislative framework to support clean energy policies. This involves two phases: the first, known as the "Shams Dubai" initiative, encourages homeowners and building owners to install solar panels on their rooftops. The second phase involves collaborating with Dubai Municipality to implement a series of decisions requiring the integration of energy conservation and production technologies and the installation of solar panels on all buildings in Dubai by 2030. ([Dubai Electricity and Water Authority, 2020](#))

C. Green Fund:

The third pathway focuses on providing financing solutions for investment in research and development related to clean energy and its applications. This includes the establishment of the "Dubai Green Fund," valued at up to 100 billion dirhams.

D. Eco-Friendly Energy Mix:

This pathway involves utilizing an eco-friendly energy mix according to the proportions outlined in the following figure by the year 2030. ([Dubai Electricity and Water Authority, 2020](#))

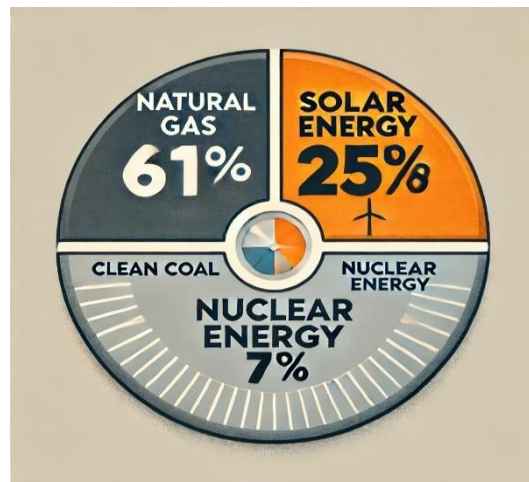


Figure 10. Diversification of Dubai's Energy Mix by 2030

Sources: *Dubai Electricity and Water Authority, Energy and Climate Change (2019)*

The following figure provides a summary of Dubai's Clean Energy Strategy 2050.



Figure 11. Dubai Clean Energy Strategy 2050

Sources: *Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (2020)*

4.1.2 Waste Recycling:

Dubai Municipality launched the "My City - My Environment" project, aiming to separate recyclable materials at their source, recycle them, and reduce the amount of household waste sent to landfills by over 35%. The project also initiates the development of a strategy to supply sufficient materials to establish a national recycling industry. This environmental initiative followed a series of studies conducted by the municipality on various environmental projects aimed at preserving the environment, separating recyclable materials at their source, and involving the private sector in implementing these projects.

4.1.3 Adopting Sustainability in the Tourism Sector:

The Government of Dubai has emphasized the need to adopt sustainability standards in the tourism sector to embody the concept of a green economy. This was prominently showcased during the UAE Green Tourism Conference and the Dubai Green Tourism Initiative.

A. Green Tourism Conference:

The Green Tourism Conference for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries was held as part of the UAE Green Festival at the Ramada Ajman Hotel, UAE, in 2014. The conference highlighted the efforts and development plans of GCC countries in eco-friendly tourism and explored ways to enhance sustainability in tourism projects, particularly for eco-friendly investors and developers. The conference also discussed the adoption of green buildings and hotels through various initiatives and strategies aimed at preserving and developing the ecotourism sector, raising awareness, protecting the environment, and increasing economic diversity. The following topics were addressed at the conference:

a) Environmental Awareness:

Raising awareness among tourists is a crucial effort in environmental protection and essential for preserving protected areas amid existing biodiversity.

b) Environmental Footprint:

Every human activity on Earth leaves an environmental impact or footprint. Responsible behavior generally leads to eco-friendly success. The Environmental Footprint Initiative was launched in the UAE in 2017. The UAE is the third country, after Switzerland and Japan, to undertake extensive research on its environmental footprint.

c) Green Economy:

The significance of the conference lies in attracting tourists to the country, promoting green tourist attractions, and developing the tourism economy. The government's focus on the green economy and environmental resource protection aims to safeguard the environment and guarantee the sustainability of resources. The conference provides an opportunity to exchange expertise in the tourism sector.

d) Eco-Friendly Hotel:

The Ramada Ajman Hotel is a pioneer in environmental protection in the Middle East, positioning itself as an eco-friendly hotel. It has implemented green agriculture throughout its premises and uses specialized devices and systems for the scientific recycling and treatment of various types of waste.

e) Diverse Nature:

The UAE is characterized by its diverse nature, including seas, deserts, and eco-tourism landmarks such as valleys in Ras Al Khaimah and other Emirates. These natural assets should be optimally utilized to enhance and develop eco-tourism.

B. Dubai Green Tourism Initiative:

In 2016, the Dubai Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing announced the "**Dubai Green Tourism Initiative**" to promote the sustainability of the tourism sector and contribute to clean energy and eco-friendly development

objective s ([Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, 2019, p. 54](#)). Four key entities, in partnership with Dubai Tourism, aim to enhance the Dubai Green Tourism Initiative as follows:

a) Dubai Carbon Centre of Excellence:

The Dubai Carbon Centre of Excellence is responsible for ensuring the adherence to green practices by all stakeholders. Their partnership with the Dubai Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing will achieve significant milestones in implementing these practices. They will also assist and support the tourism and hospitality sector in the Emirate in making positive strides towards becoming eco-friendly institutions.

b) ESCO (Energy Service Companies) Association:

This initiative is a critical step towards making Dubai a green and environmentally eco-friendly city. The ESCO Association will help Dubai hotels save on electricity and water, making them more eco-friendly and efficient.

c) Emirates Environmental Group:

In collaboration with the Dubai Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing, the Emirates Environmental Group is working to implement the Dubai Eco-friendly Tourism Initiative. This initiative aims to help advance the sustainability agenda within Dubai's tourism sector.

d) Emirates Wildlife Society:

Through its partnership with the Dubai Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing, the Emirates Wildlife Society seeks to promote eco-friendly practices within Dubai's tourism sector. The initiative exemplifies successful public-private partnerships that can accelerate the progress of the sustainability agenda in the UAE. ([Buckley, 2002](#))

4.1.4 Green Tourism Certifications and Awards in Dubai

A. Green Globe Certification

The Green Globe Certification is based on the following international standards and agreements:

- Global Eco-friendly Tourism Criteria.
- Global Partnership for Eco-friendly Tourism Criteria (GSTC Partnership).
- Baseline Criteria for the Eco-friendly Tourism Certification Network of the Americas.

B. Green Key Certification

The Green Key certification program was launched in Denmark in 1994 and has been managed by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) since 2002. The Emirates Green Building Council took over local management of the program in the UAE in 2013.

The Emirates Green Building Council provides services to the hospitality sector by developing and implementing training programs tailored to the needs of hotel properties in areas such as green hospitality, sustainability, energy and water management, responsible procurement, waste management, indoor air quality, eco-friendly food and beverages, housing, eco-friendly communication, and social

development. The certification is awarded after an evaluation process that includes four aspects and encompasses twelve criteria, as detailed in the table below:

Table 2. Standard Criteria for Green Key Certification

Aspects	Criteria
Energy Conservation	Efficiency in using energy for lighting.
	Smart temperature settings.
	Utilization of energy-saving equipment.
Water Conservation	Implementation of efficient water systems.
	Provision of training and awareness.
	Regular maintenance to prevent leaks.
Waste Management	On-site waste management.
	Segregation and optimal disposal of waste practices.
	Reducing the use of hazardous materials and chemicals.
Participation in Sustainability	Creating a green performance label and promoting it through efficient management systems.
	Encouraging employees to adopt eco-friendly practices.
	Engaging employees and raising awareness through focused campaigns.

Source: *Dubai Eco-friendly Tourism, 2017*

4.2 The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Experience with "Green Hajj"

By 2022, Saudi Arabia's tourism sector had rebounded to approximately 70% of its pre-pandemic levels. Since the launch of Vision 2030, the sector's contribution to the gross domestic product (GDP) has seen a significant change. Currently, tourism accounts for 5.3% of Saudi Arabia's GDP.

In 2016, the year Vision 2030 was announced, the number of foreign tourists visiting Saudi Arabia exceeded 18 million. In comparison, the latest statistics for this year show 29.5 million foreign visits, marking a growth of over 60%. Thus, by 2022, the number of foreign visits to the Kingdom has already surpassed half of the Vision 2030 target of 55 million visits by 2030.

Saudi Arabia aims to lead in the field of eco-tourism through several pioneering projects in this specialized area. The Kingdom has announced a variety of eco-tourism initiatives as part of its future plans under Vision 2030. This ambitious vision seeks to partially reduce the Kingdom's dependency on oil by boosting tourism to account for 10% of Saudi Arabia's GDP by 2030, up from 3% today. Vision 2030 outlines a plan to enhance sustainability efforts across the Kingdom, from large-scale "Giga" projects to a massive tree-planting campaign.

The NEOM Project contributes to achieving Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 through its three main pillars: a vibrant society, a thriving economy, and an ambitious nation. The project aims to develop key economic sectors for the future and address economic leakage by supporting these sectors through development funds. Nine key economic sectors have been identified to enhance the project's

economic presence.

According to the NEOM project website, “NEOM will provide a new model for urban sustainability, focusing on setting new standards for community health, environmental protection, and the productive and efficient use of technology. It is being designed, built, and managed independently, free from the outdated economic and environmental infrastructure that hinders other countries.”

In 1439H (2018), the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques Institute for Hajj and Umrah Research initiated the Green Hajj project to mitigate the environmental impact of pilgrim camps at sacred sites. The initiative began with waste sorting in Mina's pilgrim camps, initially involving three camps of various nationalities.

The Green Hajj project, also known as the Green Pilgrimage Camps, is based on strict environmental standards, focusing on recycling the waste generated by pilgrims within their camps. This recycling is done by the pilgrims themselves.

The first phase of the “Green Hajj” initiative began in 1439H (2018) under the slogan “Hajj without Plastic”. This initial phase is part of the broader Green Hajj initiative, monitored by a working group formed by the Deputy Governor of the Makkah region. In the short term, the initiative aims to raise environmental awareness, promote and develop positive behaviors among pilgrims, and contribute to maintaining cleanliness and preserving the environment of the sacred sites.

The Ministry of Hajj and Umrah has urged companies and institutions providing services to domestic pilgrims to expand the Green Hajj Camp initiative to all camps in Arafat. This includes increasing pilgrims' awareness of the importance of cleanliness, in line with the recommendations from the preparatory workshop for the Hajj season titled "Development of Municipal Waste Management and Environmental Sanitation System during Hajj."

Challenges faced included managing waste generated from setting up camps for domestic pilgrims and in Arafat, and delays in the preparation of these camps. Therefore, the following recommendations were made, study the possibility of contracting with companies to control public health pests in buildings and camps. This includes providing eco-friendly pest control measures such as mosquito and fly traps, allowing municipal insect exploration teams to access these facilities, addressing water leaks, draining swamps within the camps, and ensuring kitchen cleanliness, additional recommendations include:

- Ensure that pilgrim accommodations in Mina and Arafat are prepared before the start of Dhul Hijjah.
- After the season ends, transport waste from dismantling camps to designated sites allocated by the municipality.
- Ensure that waste is removed from the camps at times that do not interfere with the transportation schedule of pilgrims.
- Avoid excessive construction of camps in Arafat.
- Field service offices in Arafat should provide rooms for collecting meal waste.

On Tuesday, 15 Muharram 1440 AH (corresponding to September 25, 2018), the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, inaugurated the Haramain High-Speed Rail. This project is the largest transportation initiative and the first high-speed electric train in the Middle East. The train features five stations: one in Mecca, one in Medina, one at King Abdullah Economic City in Rabigh, one at King Abdulaziz International Airport in Jeddah, and one in the heart of Jeddah. The following figure illustrates the Objective of the Haramain High-Speed Rail.



Figure 12. Objective of the Haramain High-Speed Rail
Source: Mohamed Saleh Benten, 2020

4.3 Performance of OIC Countries:

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) countries are pivotal in the global Islamic tourism market due to their Muslim-friendly environments. OIC nations have excelled in various indicators related to this sector, including the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI). In the 2021 edition of the GMTI, OIC countries achieved the highest average scores (55.8) compared to other country groups, with the global average for that year being 41.5.

OIC countries scored particularly high in the environment sub-index, with some dimensions of this sub-index, such as security (99) and religious beliefs-related limitations (92.5), exceeding a threshold average of 90. However, they recorded the lowest typical scores in the destination promotion dimension (10.8) under the communication sub-index. Additionally, the OIC countries scored relatively low in the dimensions related to the number of incoming visitors (20.6) and connectivity (35.3), which are areas receiving significant investment to advance Islamic tourism.

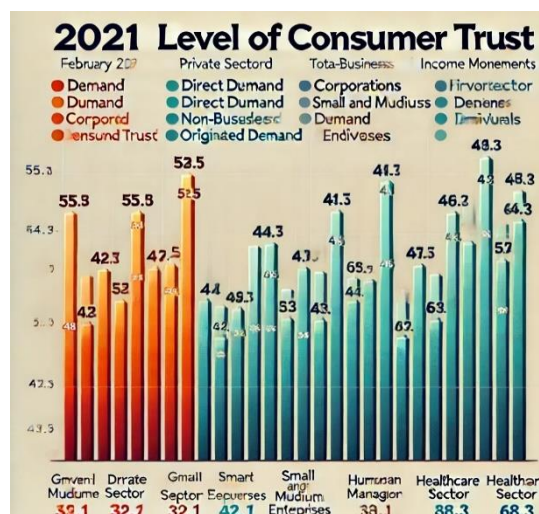


Figure 13. Scores of OIC Countries on the Global Muslim Travel Index (Top) and Sub-Indices of the Same Index (Bottom), 2021

Source: Master Card and Crescent Rating, 2021

Note: A higher score on the index indicates a more favorable environment for Muslim tourists.

Responsible Tourism is defined as "creating better places for people to live in and better places for people to visit." This concept was articulated in the "Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism," which was developed by the Responsible Tourism Partnership and Tourism in Western Cape in 2002 during the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa (Goodwin, 2014).

By tackling present challenges such as destination capacity strain, overuse of natural resources, and tourism's effects on climate change, the tourism sector can responsibly recover from the pandemic. This recovery process can also enhance the ability to balance the needs of travelers, operators, and the environment moving forward.

Table 3. Overview of Growth Opportunities and Challenges for Major Tourism Sectors, 2021-2022

Sectors	Growth Opportunities	Obstacles
Sun and Sand	There will always be demand even when supply is limited.	Climate change can significantly impact these destinations, as seen with COVID-19, leading to closures.
Cultural and Religious	Strong appeal if focused on unique and authentic gatherings.	Major events will benefit from vaccines and/or low risk profiles among attendees.
Medical and Wellness	Highly attractive if visitors seek places with	Increased demand due to health concerns, but poor

Sectors	Growth Opportunities	Obstacles
	lower risk and strong adherence to protocols.	implementation could reduce attractiveness.
Adventure Travel	Can greatly attract visitors if there is confidence in protocols and safety measures, maintaining adventure allure.	The risk of demand exceeding the capacity of natural destinations.
Luxury Travel	Recovery of demand expected if there is confidence in higher health standards.	May require significant investment to ensure exclusivity and privacy on a broad scale.
Business Travel and MICE	Increased demand for flexible group travel options. Companies will invest more in technology and eco-friendly practices to adapt.	Despite demand, group travel may face lower investment efficiency. COVID-19 might result in long-term changes in how large international groups travel.

Source: Endorsed by the World Tourism Organization and the Asian Development Bank, 2021

Conclusion

Eco-friendly tourism has become one of the most significant concepts embraced by many thinkers, academics, and policymakers in contemporary times due to its association with comprehensive growth and eco-friendly development. Beyond this, the tourism industry, like other sectors, contributes significantly to the gross domestic product (GDP) of economies, making it a vital source for wealth creation, job provision, and attracting foreign currency.

Eco-friendly tourism can integrate various concepts such as green tourism, solidarity tourism, responsible tourism, ecotourism, and cultural tourism. This integration can help Algeria achieve economic diversification, allowing for eco-friendly development.

Results

Based on the discussion in this study, the following points have been observed:

- The global tourism industry has developed significantly and become a vital contributor to economic growth and development in numerous countries around the world.
- As policymakers strive to improve current tourism activities, they must place greater emphasis on the concept of "responsible tourism" to safeguard nature and promote sustainable development.
- It is expected that a growing number of destinations will compete in the tourism market by emphasizing new factors such as the low carbon footprint of tourism activities, participation in nature conservation efforts, and respect for local communities.

- The tourism sector is one of the most important infrastructure sectors in the economy, playing a crucial and foundational role in both advanced and developing economies.
- Tourism is essential for economic and social development because it addresses human psychology, comfort, and recreation, which are of utmost importance in the broader context of development issues.

Recommendations:

Reflecting on some concepts of eco-friendly development and eco-friendly tourism, we recommend the following:

- The pandemic has highlighted the significance of investing in digitization across various sectors, including education, health, and tourism. It is anticipated that digital and virtual solutions will become increasingly prevalent in the post-pandemic world.
- Algeria has the potential to excel in all types of tourism. The country can focus on various tourism forms, including religious, mountainous, cultural, sports, and solidarity tourism.
- OIC countries must prioritize ensuring that vulnerable groups are included in post-COVID-19 recovery efforts within the travel and tourism sectors. This can be accomplished by offering flexible work arrangements, enhancing support and legal protections, and removing existing employment barriers.
- Implement dedicated educational programs to enhance the skills of these vulnerable groups.
- There is a need to rationalize spending in the tourism sector.
- Focus on promoting local tourism products through various media channels to raise awareness and attract visitors.
- Achieving eco-friendly development through tourism requires a shared awareness among citizens, responsible authorities, and tourists.
- Give priority to developing tourism infrastructure and ensuring tourism security.
- Provide more favorable conditions, exemptions, privileges, and facilities beyond what current laws offer.
- Simplify access procedures to tourist areas and utilize modern technologies in airports, seaports, and border points to facilitate smoother entry and travel processes.

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