



**IDENTIFYING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM
ACTIVITIES IN ERBIL**

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MASTER THESIS
TOURISM MANAGEMENT**

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APPROVAL

I certify in my opinion that the thesis presented by Abdulhadi Saad Hadi AL–DOORI entitled “IDENTIFYING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM ACTIVITIES IN ERBIL” is well suited in terms of scope and quality as a thesis for a Master of Science degree.

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DECLARATION

I thus affirm that this thesis is the product of my own research and all information presented has been acquired and elucidated in adherence to the academic guidelines and ethical principles stipulated by the institution. Furthermore, I hereby affirm that all assertions, findings, and materials that are not original to this thesis have been appropriately credited and referenced verbatim.

I acknowledge and assume full responsibility for any moral and legal repercussions that may arise from the detection of any actions that contradict the aforementioned statement, without imposing any temporal limitations.

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FOREWORD

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. YURDANUR YUMUK, for his unwavering commitment and investment of time and effort in providing guidance and support to me. I also extend my thanks to the honourable members of the jury, Prof. Dr. Nurettin AYAZ and Assoc. Prof. Gul ERKOL BAYRAM. The acquisition of knowledge played a pivotal role in the successful culmination of my thesis. The present study is an outcome of the individual's bravery and assistance in the form of significant guidance and suggestions. Ultimately, I would want to extend my appreciation to my familial support system, particularly my paternal and maternal figures, as well as my siblings, for consistently providing me with unwavering support. Providing me throughout my most challenging occasions and aiding me in my academic pursuits. I would want to express my profound appreciation and gratitude to the benevolent nation of Turkey, its government, citizens, and leadership for their compassionate approach, as well as their affection. May divine protection shield them from any form of adversity. I would like to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the staff members of the Deanship of Scientific Research and Graduate Studies, as well as the Karabuk University library, for their invaluable assistance in procuring reference materials despite the various challenges encountered throughout my academic pursuits.

ABSTRACT

This qualitative study aims to collect data about the current situation of sustainable tourism in Erbil and will explain the identification of sustainable tourism activities through to prepare the questions that are the main tool for data collection in this study, the researcher extracted the main issues in the field of sustainable tourism through a comprehensive review of the literature that was addressed in the previous chapters of this research and theory. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with the participants. The results of the data showed By identifying the strengths and weaknesses of sustainable tourism practices, such as infrastructure and limited resources, achieving a balance between real development and preservation of heritage, dependence on external factors, and difficulties in the field of global marketing, as well as preserving historical sites while promoting cultural activities, community participation and Economic Benefits, Environmental Awareness One of Erbil's notable strengths is its dedication to educating both locals and tourists about the importance of sustainable tourism practices. the study titled "Identifying Sustainable Tourism Activities in Erbil " highlights the significance of adopting a holistic approach to tourism that takes into account cultural sensitivity and environmental responsibility. The case of Erbil provides significant insights and implications for other regions that aspire to leverage tourism as a catalyst for sustainable development and the preservation of cultural heritage.

Key Words: Sustainability, Tourism, Sustainable Tourism, Erbil.

ÖZ

Bu nitel çalışma, Erbil'de sürdürülebilir turizmin mevcut durumu hakkında veri toplamayı amaçlamaktadır ve sürdürülebilir turizm faaliyetlerinin tanımlanmasını bu çalışmada veri toplamanın ana aracı olan soruları hazırlamak için açıklayacak, araştırmacı, bu araştırma ve teorinin önceki bölümlerinde ele alınan literatürün kapsamlı bir taraması yoluyla sürdürülebilir turizm alanındaki temel konuları çıkarmıştır. Veriler, katılımcılarla derinlemesine görüşmeler yapılarak toplanmıştır. Verilerin sonuçları, altyapı ve sınırlı kaynaklar gibi sürdürülebilir turizm uygulamalarının güçlü ve zayıf yönlerini belirleyerek, gerçek kalkınma ve mirasın korunması, dış etkenlere bağımlılık ve küresel pazarlama alanındaki zorluklar arasında bir denge sağlamanın yanı sıra kültürel faaliyetleri, toplum katılımını ve Ekonomik Faydaları teşvik ederken tarihi alanların korunmasını, Çevre Bilinci Erbil'in dikkate değer güçlü yönlerinden biri, hem yerel halkı hem de turistleri sürdürülebilir turizm uygulamalarının önemi konusunda eğitmeye olan bağlılığıdır. "Erbil'de Sürdürülebilir Turizm Faaliyetlerinin Belirlenmesi" başlıklı çalışma, turizme kültürel duyarlılığı ve çevresel sorumluluğu dikkate alan bütüncül bir yaklaşım benimsemenin önemini vurgulamaktadır. Erbil örneği, turizmi sürdürülebilir kalkınma ve kültürel mirasın korunması için bir katalizör olarak kullanmak isteyen diğer bölgeler için önemli içgörüler ve çıkarımlar sunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sürdürülebilirlik, Turizm, Sürdürülebilir Turizm, Erbil.

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ABBREVIATIONS

WCED	: World Commission on Economic Development
STD	: Sustainable Tourist Development
WWF	: World Wildlife Fund
FAO	: Food And Agriculture Organization
UNESCO	: United Nations Educational, Scientific, And Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	: United Nations Framework Convention On Climate Change
MLP	: Multi-Level Perspective
SNM	: Strategic Niche Management
TM	: Transition Management
TIS	: Technological Innovation Systems
DRIFT	: Dutch Research Institute For Transitions
TIS	: Technological Innovation Systems
BEST EN	: Building Excellence For Sustainable Tourism Education Network
JCLP	: Journal Of Cleaner Production
SDGs	: Sustainable Development Goals
UNWTO	: United Nations World Tourism Organization
IPCC	: Intergovernmental Panel On Climate Change
GSTC	: Global Sustainable Tourism Council
EMS	: Environmental Management Systems
STEP	: Sustainable Tourism Education Program
WTTC	: World Travel And Tourism Council
WTO	: World Tourism Organization

SUBJECT OF THE RESEARCH

The ability to meet current needs without endangering the ability of future generations to meet their own needs is known as sustainability. In the context of the tourist industry, sustainability means putting plans into place to manage tourism in a way that protects and improves the environment, helps local communities, and guarantees the financial well-being of all parties involved (Verma, 2019). Tourism has the potential to impact sustainability in both positive and negative ways. The tourism industry possesses the capacity to bolster the conservation of environmental and cultural assets, provide jobs and revenue for nearby communities, and promote cross-cultural communication and understanding. On the other hand, if tourism is not well controlled and maintained, it may lead to socioeconomic inequality, cultural heritage damage, and environmental degradation (Archer et al., 2012).

All stakeholders in the tourism industry, including the government, travel industry players, communities visited by tourists, and travelers themselves, must work together to promote sustainable tourism. Governments can enact laws and regulations to ensure sustainable tourism management, and tourism industry players can implement sustainable practices into their own business operations. These might entail taking steps like conserving energy and water, reducing waste and pollution, supporting locally produced goods and services, encouraging community-based tourism initiatives, and exhibiting respect for regional customs and culture (Achmad & Yulianah, 2022; Roxas et al., 2020).

This thesis, which uses the interview technique, aims to expose the practices of tourism stakeholders in Erbil for sustainable tourism

PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH

This research aims to collect data about the current situation of sustainable tourism in Erbil and will explain the identification of sustainable tourism activities through a qualitative descriptive research method, to arrive at some reliable answers to the research questions, and a list of basic interview questions, which are those around the world and will be designed to be used in Interviews managers in the hotel sector, managers in the municipality, the Tourism Authority, the Tourists Syndicate and related

sectors. The findings and conclusions of this research may be useful to the authorities and persons responsible for sustainable tourism in the public sector or the private sector in Erbil. On the other hand, since education and training in this field require a permanent upgrade of equipment and technology, keeping the workforce involved in this field professionally updated through on-the-job training courses, and understanding and awareness of the negatives. And strengthening with regard to sustainable tourism will be of great help to meet and achieve these goals, all of which will affect the increase of state income. It is very important to know what definitions have been given by researchers in this field and what contributions have been made by international and local organizations in this regard and which can be exploited by interested parties who enjoy the benefits of the tourism industry.

METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

Since this research aims to identify sustainable tourism activities in Erbil at the present time, the qualitative descriptive methodology was followed. The research title is also a good guide to indicate the type of research and the data collection . Qualitative research is usually based on observation and interview with open-ended questions and the interviewees answer a predetermined list of questions freely, subjectively rather than coercively and objectively

POPULATION AND SAMPLE (IF AVAILABLE)

20 person made the study participants as participants. which are those around the world and will be designed to be used in Interviews managers in the hotel sector, managers in the municipality, the Tourism Authority, the Tourists Syndicate and related sectors.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS / DIFFICULTIES

There are limitations in this study, as the first of these limits is the objective limits of the study, as the subject of the study was limited to sustainable tourism, and the limitation lies in the dynamic and evolving nature of both the concepts of tourism and

sustainability. The tourism sector is witnessing dynamic transformations as a result of various factors, including global economic patterns, technological progress, and evolving tourism trends. Likewise, the understanding and application of sustainability is constantly evolving. This means that research findings have the potential to quickly lose relevance or may not comprehensively include the latest developments and methodologies in the field of sustainable tourism. As for the spatial boundaries, it was limited to Iraq, specifically and in particular to Erbil. Given its distinct historical, cultural and geopolitical characteristics, the implications and observations obtained from the analysis of sustainable tourism practices in this particular city may have limited applicability to alternative settings. The unique circumstances that Erbil faces, including its rich historical heritage, complex political environment, and distinct economic landscape, may exhibit marked disparities compared to other geographic regions. Hence, it is necessary to exercise caution when attempting to extrapolate these findings to diverse cultural or geographic contexts. The third limit was the selection of participants, which was limited to twenty managers from various institutions related to touri

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND

Tourism is a fast-growing industry that is now one of the biggest in the world. The effects of tourism are very different. On the one hand, it plays a big and definitely positive role in the social, economic, and political growth of the countries where people move to. For example, it creates new job opportunities. Also, in some cases, it can help people learn about and respect the different cultures and ways of life, which can help them understand them better. On the other hand, it has not done what was hoped for as a way to create jobs. At the same time, complaints from tourist destinations about how much tourists hurt the environment, culture, and way of life of the locals have led to calls for tourism to grow in a more sustainable way. For sustainable tourism to be created, many people will have to work together (Bianchi & Man, 2021).

The expansion of tourism in a location might have unintended consequences for the local community. The goal of sustainable tourism development is to strike a balance between these impacts, making it possible for the community that is visited as well as the destination to enjoy an improved standard of living. Sustainable development, as defined by the World Commission on Economic Development (WCED), refers to the process of achieving development that fulfills the requirements of the current generation without impeding the ability of future generations to fulfill their own needs. During this session, a closer look will be taken at a number of the regulations that have been proposed to ensure that travellers in the tourism sector of the future have enriching and environmentally friendly experiences while on the road (wced, 1987).

This study started with the question of why, nearly twenty years after the Brundtland Report (World Commission on Environment & Development, 1987), brought the idea of sustainability to the world's attention, the results of sustainable tourism development are still a problem and continue to make people angry. Academic tourism literature talks about how tourism is a complex phenomenon, but much tourism research still takes a reductionist approach that doesn't take into account its complexity (Kozinets, 2020).

Reductionism is a way of looking at the world that separates people from nature and sees nature as an inanimate object. It also separates facts about nature from values about nature (Lozano, 2022). When nature and values are separated, those who are in charge of developing natural resources for tourism don't always understand how complicated tourism is. This misunderstanding is demonstrated by the current argument in the tourist literature about whether or not sustainable tourism outcomes are, in fact, sustainable. At the level of the community, there are still debates over the use of natural resources in the construction of tourist sites (Fossgard & Fredman, 2019).

Tourism is an industry that is becoming more aware of how important the natural environment is to most destinations and how it can be used as a major resource product (Fossgard & Fredman, 2019). During the 1980s, people became more aware of the environment, which made them rethink the role of tourism and become more aware of its negative effects (Koens, et al., 2018). Even though it is known that tourism damages the environment and can be self-destructive (Sorrell & Plante, 2021), it is also known that tourism has the potential to make a big difference for the environment and the economy (Martín et al., 2018).

It was requested of the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) in 1992 at the Rio Earth Summit to make the travel and tourism industry a model sector for the improvement of the environment and to strive towards the sustainable growth of the sector. This has been happening for the past decade (Butler, 1998). In the scholarly work about tourism that was produced during that decade and after it, there has been a recurring theme: tourism that destroys the resource base from which it derives its possibilities and harms people without providing anything in return is not sustainable. Sustainability is now a widely accepted idea that guides how natural and cultural resources are managed within the realm of tourism research, there is a consensus that it is essential for the hospitality industry to assimilate the idea of sustainable practices. Tourism that uses natural and cultural resources needs to use methods that minimize bad effects and maximize good ones if it wants to help develop tourism in a sustainable way (Twining et al., 2002).

While sustainable tourist development (STD) is widely acknowledged as an important industry objective, its successful implementation has proven challenging. As a means of getting closer to STD objectives, several different strategies have been

proposed. Programs like the Eco-certification Scheme fall within this category, Green Globe21 (Green Glob, 2005), the use of best practice development of sustainable tourism indicators and the development of alternative forms of tourism, such as ecotourism (Fennell, 2003). Despite these advances, there is debate about the best approach to achieving sustainable tourism's stated aims. In reality, progress toward any of the SDGs has been slow (Butler, 1998).

Because of the lack of consensus on what is meant by "sustainable development" or "sustainable tourist development" within the tourism academic literature, these terms are problematic in and of themselves argues that attempts to offer definitions for sustainability terminology have become a 'cottage industry' in the academic literature since the terms are interpreted in different ways and there is no consensus on what they imply. There is a plethora of sustainable tourism and sustainable tourist development definitions in the literature (Sharpley, 2000).

Because various people place different values on the same natural resource, it's challenging to conceptualize how to promote tourism in a way that is both sustainable and equitable. Walsh, et al. (2001) say that including everyone's beliefs and ideals into planning for the future of tourism is an integral part of the normative process. Oftentimes, many user groups with varying priorities and ethics make use of the same natural resource (Holden, 2005). The optimum paths to attain sustainable results will be influenced by the values that people ascribe to a resource and the way they perceive that resource (Hall, 2001). According to, Ideas whose origin is the world are what give meaning to what a person sees.

When ideas and concepts grow, they lead to methods that help people think about how they see the world and decide on values and rules. Before setting goals for When undertaking sustainable tourism development, it is crucial to comprehend the values, perceptions, and objectives of stakeholders in order to establish effective planning and management processes. The absence of a shared consensus on the definition of "sustainable development" is indeed a fact." shows that people don't understand how important values are to the idea (Butler, 1998).

The study titled "Identifying Sustainable Tourism Activities in Erbil" highlights the significance of adopting a holistic approach to tourism that takes into account cultural sensitivity and environmental responsibility. The case of Erbil provides

significant insights and implications for other regions that aspire to leverage tourism as a catalyst for sustainable development and the preservation of cultural heritage.

1.2. DEFINITION OF SUSTAINABILITY

The word "sustainability" can be explained in different ways. Some people say that sustainability is the ability of humans to keep the natural resources we have and not use them up so much that we won't have enough in the future. It has been suggested by a few individuals that it is the procedure of formulating policies. The majority of individuals, however, appear to subscribe to the definition that was presented by the United Nations Commission on Economic Development in the Brundtland report that was published in 1987. According to the World Resources Institute's study titled "Our Common Future, The concept of sustainability can be defined as the ability to fulfill the requirements of the current generation without impeding the ability of future generations to achieve their own objectives (United Nations, 1987). However, certain writers have encountered issues with this definition (Taylor, 2002), yet, most believe that it meets most aspects of sustainability in its wide applications.

According to Taylor (2002) said that the UN's definition was flawed because it did not take into account the fact that people's needs in the future can be different from their needs in the present. He also noted that there is a significant gap between how individuals in wealthy and developing nations view their individual requirements. The definition provided by the United Nations of sustainability has been the subject of considerable discussion, but it still manages to address the two most pressing problems: the environmental harm caused by economic expansion and the need for that growth to eliminate global poverty.

Barton and Plessis (2000) explain sustainable development can be better understood if depicted as a network of three interdependent areas. These overlapping fields demonstrate the interdependence of society, the economy, and the natural world. Barton and Plessis (2000) say that for the world to have sustainable development, there must be a fair amount of balance in how these sectors interact with each other.

1.3. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

According to Sutton (2004) says that environmental sustainability means keeping the things and ways of doing things that improve the quality of the environment over time.

In spite of this criticism, most people agree that environmental deterioration is progressing at an alarming rate. Even more so in the emerging nations experiencing industrialisation, the planet is undergoing alteration at a dizzying speed. There can be no debate about the importance and size of the human imprint on Earth. Our use of natural systems as both raw materials and garbage dumping grounds is at an all-time high and steadily rising (Rees, 1996). Communities, enterprise groups, governments, and the global community all have a vested interest in achieving sustainable development and striking a balance between the planet, its economy, and humanity. Efforts are being made to foster cooperation between developing and industrialized countries in the pursuit of environmental sustainability (Ghai & Vivian, 1995).

Another explanation of what it means for an environment to be sustainable has been presented by Daly & Cobb (1989):

1. Output rule: The local environment's ability to absorb waste absorptive capacity of a proposed project or action should not exceed its assimilative capacity in order to prevent future waste accumulation. or other key functions from being unacceptably degraded.
2. Input rule: Harvest rates of renewable resources inputs (forest, fish, etc.) should be kept within the regeneration capacity of the natural system that creates them. According to the Serafian quasi-sustainability rule, the pace at which non-renewable resource inputs are depleted should be lower than the rate at which renewable equivalents have historically been generated via human invention and investment. Obtaining sustainable alternatives should get a quantifiable share of the revenues from the sale of nonrenewables.

1.4. HISTORICAL REVIEW OF SUSTAINABILITY

The club of rome an organization comprised scientists corporate leaders, govenmental officials, and intellectuals from throughout the world, was the first to adopt

the term "sustainable" in political discourse. The study "The Limits to Growth" from 1972 made this point clear. The paper disputes the concept of development that views the future as an unending source of potential for development and progress by contrasting it with the past. This concept failed to consider that finite resources imply that growth based on resources cannot continue indefinitely (Jackson, 2009).

The authors of "Limits of Growth," a study on the topic of "sustainability," state their goal as producing "a model output that displays a world system that is: 1. Stable and won't break apart abruptly and out of control; and 2. Able to provide the fundamental material requirements of all its people" (Meadows et al., 1972).

The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) all worked together on a document that was published in 1980 and named "The World Conservation Strategy." Those in positions of power, particularly those active in policymaking, environmental protection, and international development were among the target audience for this research. To conserve something means to "Effectively govern the utilization of the biosphere by humans to maximize its sustainable advantages for present generations while safeguarding its capacity to fulfill the requirements and ambitions of future generations." as mentioned in the World Conservation Strategy. additionally, it was mentioned that development is "the alteration of the biosphere and the utilisation of human, monetary, living, and nonliving resources to satisfy human demands and to enhance the quality of human existence" (Ogunkunle et al., 2019). When establishing plans, you should take into account not just the potential benefits in the near term that may result from a certain course of action, but also the potential drawbacks that could emerge in the farther future. The provision of resources (financial, biological, and inorganic), with the goals of satisfying fundamental human needs and elevating the general level of people's living conditions. When making plans for the future, it is essential to take into consideration both the short-term and the long-term repercussions of the decisions you make, as well as the immediate advantages of particular courses of action (IUCN, 1980).

Sustainable development was first defined in 1987 by the Brundtland Commission, which was the impetus for the Rio summit in 1992. This definition states

that sustainable development is "Progress that meets the current demands without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." (un, 1987).

However, the Rio de Janeiro 'Earth Summit' of 1992 brought sustainable development to the forefront of international politics. Ultimately, the summit's goal was to strike a better balance between using nature's potentials and preserving its resources. The complexity of the challenges confronting the globe was represented in the message, which pointed to both extreme poverty and the wasteful spending of the world's wealthiest people as major contributors to environmental degradation. This call to action caused governments throughout the world to rethink their international and domestic policies to better account for environmental impacts associated with economic decisions (Bruno et al., 2002).

There have been strong arguments between campaigners calling for increased economic growth and those for sustainable environment prior to the 1987 Brundtland report and the 1992 Earth Summit report in Rio de Janeiro. Activists have claimed that if sustainability means significantly lowering use of natural resources and industrial activity, then economic progress would be stifled. The controlled growth interests are primarily from the developed countries because they are the ones who have voiced concerns about the rapid depletion of the planet's natural resources and the resulting pollution and environmental degradation, both of which, they say, will eventually lead to a catastrophic event if they are not stopped. The United Nations attempted to foster a political settlement between these factions with the 1987 Brundtland report and the 1992 Earth Summit report (Redclift, 2006).

Although neither report took a side in the debate, it did stress the importance of striking a middle ground, coining the term "Sustainable Development" to describe an approach that prioritizes current needs without compromising future generations' potential to achieve their own objectives. To pave the way for a new era of economic growth, the UN study argued for a more nuanced approach in which technological advancements and social organization are both carefully monitored and enhanced. Both parties felt they had achieved some measure of success, and a common understanding developed on how best to work toward a healthy environment on a global scale. The Rio Declaration, the Forest Principles, the Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, and Agenda 21 were the five primary accords established at that

time. The Earth Summit's most notable outcome was the endorsement of Agenda 21, a comprehensive framework aimed at attaining sustainable development in the twenty-first century. However, there was not enough time for everyone to stick to their agreement (McGranahan et al., 2001).

Proponents of perpetual growth have pointed to the evident importance of rapid growth in reducing poverty, particularly in emerging nations. For the negative throughput growth in the developed nations to counteract the increase in the developing countries, it was emphasized that the wealthy countries must make more room in the environment by cutting back on their usage of natural resources and pollution. While the vast majority of industrialized nations argue forcefully for the need of sustainable development, some of them are unwilling to accept the suggestions put out by emerging economies. Because of this, there was even more back-and-forth, which hampered the international efforts (Clemens et al., 2007).

In 2002, Johannesburg, South Africa hosted yet another World Summit on Sustainable Development. This summit was a continuation of the Earth Summit in Rio, which was called after governments failed to make significant progress on the agreements they made there. Among the many major topics discussed and agreed upon at the Johannesburg Summit were the following: promoting the implementation of national sustainable development strategies; reducing biodiversity loss; increasing access to energy services; increasing energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy; and increasing access to safe drinking water (Bäckstrand, 2006).

The Kyoto Protocol of 1997 was an additional attempt to establish a worldwide cooperation towards sustainable development. The Kyoto Protocol is an international agreement that is related to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The main objective of the Kyoto Protocol was to establish legally binding carbon reduction targets for industrialized nations and the European Community. Following the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities," the protocol placed a greater burden on developed countries. These countries were identified as primarily responsible for the current high levels of greenhouse emissions in the atmosphere due to their past industrial activities (Stone, 2004).

Although it was adopted on December 11, 1997 in Kyoto, Japan, the Kyoto Protocol did not enter into force until February 16, 2005. Countries are categorized as

either Annex I (the industrialized nations), Annex II (the developed nations), or Annex III (the developing nations). Over the course of the next five years, from 2008 to 2012, 55 developed nations will need to cut their greenhouse gas emissions by an average of 5.2% compared to 1990 levels. While developing nations are not required to do anything in particular, wealthy nations are responsible for covering the expenditures associated with developing nations' technical advancements. As part of these efforts, developing nations may acquire money and technology from the developed world or earn revenue by selling carbon emission credits to the developed world (Erdogdu, 2010).

As Shaw (2002) points out, the Kyoto Protocol's many holes show that its political origins, rather than a focus on fairness in distributing the cost of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, were at the root of its design flaws. United States is one of the countries that has not yet met its emission objectives under the Kyoto Protocol. While China and India are also major contributors to global greenhouse gas emissions, they have shown less enthusiasm for additional reductions than the United States. as of December 3, 2009, only 189 nations and one regional economic integration organization (the EEC) have submitted their instruments of ratification, accession, approval, or acceptance. the continuous rise in greenhouse gas emissions has been associated with significant occurrences of major floods, wildfires, cyclones, and other extreme weather events. There is still widespread agreement that we must take action to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, and there is even broad consensus on how to do so.

The Copenhagen conference in Denmark in December 2009 was the most recent follow-up to the Kyoto Protocol. Since the Kyoto agreement was set to end in 2012, the goal was to make sure that countries would do more to cut their greenhouse gas emissions. But (Taylor, 2010) says that the meeting didn't do enough to turn the countries' promises into an international agreement. This was meant to be the foundation for the idea of a global market for trading carbon.

As it stands, the majority of greenhouse gases are being produced by emerging nations like China and India, and as such, the Kyoto conference was met with widespread criticism for failing to address their contributions. To that end, the Copenhagen summit was meant to be the first step in addressing the loopholes that permitted China and other nations like Brazil, South Africa, and India to avoid making greater pledges to decrease emissions. While an agreement to keep global warming

below two degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) was reached, details on how to achieve global emission objectives by 2020 or 2050 were left out (Chakravarty et al., 2009).

Despite the debates that have surrounded the international agreement to reduce emissions, several private groups and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are already making significant strides in the direction regarding sustainable development. The notion of sustainability, sometimes known as the "triple bottom line," encourages businesses to consider not just their financial but also their social and environmental impacts (triple P) (Elkington, 1997). Managers today are focusing on the "triple bottom line," which includes "people," "planet," and "profit." There has been a rise in corporate responsibility in environmental and social matters, reflecting growing awareness of the need for accountability to various constituencies. They are reporting on their progress and future plans for sustainable development (Baskin, 2006).

A consortium of 29 multinational corporations has just come together to create a plan dubbed Vision 2050. Just a small subset of the corporations involved include household names like Volkswagen, Accenture, Alcoa, Boeing, P&G, and Toyota. The project's overarching objective is to outline a plausible future in which the global economy, governance, and population are all on the path to sustainability by the year 2050. By shifting to low-carbon energy systems and vastly improving demand-side energy efficiency, businesses can cut global carbon emissions in half (relative to 2005 levels) by 2050; stop deforestation and boost yields from planted forests; improve resource and material use by four to ten times; and increase production by 50 percent by the year 2050. However, getting more businesses on board with the Vision 2050 is necessary if we're going to see the results we're after. Companies will drive market shifts through improving efficiency, developing a competitive edge, and responding to consumers' wants and requirements. As the world moves in a more sustainable direction, it will usher in zero-waste cities, improved ecosystems and livelihoods, and new possibilities in the fields of finance, IT, and cooperation. The public is now much more aware of global environmental challenges because to the work of governments, businesses, NGOs, and the United Nations, and there is a general understanding of the need to reduce the negative effects of economic activity on the planet. While progress toward a more sustainable future has been made because to increased awareness and new approaches, more work needs to be done. For widespread success, it's essential to

consider environmental sustainability in the context of its social and economic consequences (wbcasd, 2010).

1.5. SUSTAINABILITY TRANSITIONS

The concept that our existing linear economic system requires significant reform has been shown over the last four decades by the growing popularity and relevance of sustainability in public debate and, more lately, also in the formulation of public policy. This viewpoint has been exemplified by the rise of sustainability as a topic. The recognition that our existing methods of production and consumption have resulted in the creation of systemic problems, such as the depletion of natural resources, pollution, and the extinction of biodiversity, among other problems, has been a driving force behind the rise in popularity of sustainable living. In light of these circumstances, national governments and supranational organisations have come up with new policies and goals with the intention of transforming our economic system into one that takes into consideration the requirements of society and the environment. The circular economy is the most widely adopted technique that policy makers utilise in trying to replace the existing economic linear system with a cyclical system that simultaneously handles environmental and social concerns. This new system would be more sustainable and would allow for more social and environmental responsibility (George et al., 2015). A circular economy may be viewed as a strategy that drives a transition to a more sustainable economic system since this entails a fundamental change away from the existing mode of functioning of our economy, which is motivated by an innate urge to adopt a more sustainable economic system (Jedelhauser & Binder, 2018).

The process by which socio-technical systems evolve to achieve greater sustainability is known as the "sustainability transition," and this term is used to describe this process. The shifts towards more environmentally friendly modes of production and consumption have been characterized as long-term, multi-dimensional, and fundamental transformation processes (Markard et al., 2012). These hybrid socio-technical systems consist of various sections and components. Socio-technical systems, as defined by Geels (2004), encompass a comprehensive range of elements such as technology, science, regulation, user practices, markets, cultural factors, infrastructure, production, and supply networks. To create, execute, and enhance these socio-technical systems

(users, special-interest groups, and the media), those on the supply side (businesses, institutions, and government agencies) and those on the demand side (consumers) work together (Geels & Kemp, 2007). Examples of socio-technical systems are agro-food systems, housing, mobility and energy.

The goal of research on sustainable transitions is to develop analytical frameworks that can identify the preconditions, driving processes, broad patterns, and possible outcomes of sustainable changes in socio-technical systems (Kanger et al., 2020). The theoretical frameworks that were initially developed to research innovation and technological transitions have, to some extent, made it feasible for this particular field of study to exist (Haan & Rotmans, 2018). In contrast, research in the subject of sustainability transitions has picked up steam in recent years, and as a result, its practitioners have developed their own conceptualizations and theoretical frameworks.

Transitions towards sustainability can be characterised by a few fundamental aspects the user's text is empty. Sustainability transitions are complex and multifaceted processes characterized by interconnections between various dimensions changes that take place at varying speeds in distinct niches of the socio-technical system. These niches may be broken down into three categories (Köhler et al., 2019). The transformations are made possible by a diverse group of players, including people, governmental institutions, civil society organisations, academic institutions, and industrial stakeholders. However, the fact that sustainability transitions overlap with both stability and change is the single most significant facet of these transitions. Our contemporary modes of production and consumption are firmly embedded inside the socio-technical system, which has resulted in the formation of a robust path-dependency (Walker. 2000). In this way, the linear economic ideology serves as a "trap" for the consumption and production patterns that we have. At the same time, sustainable technologies are being launched that strive to steer away from this path-dependency. The friction that this causes is the fundamental topic of research that focus on the transition from unsustainable to sustainable practises. The premise that the effective implementation of new system regimes is contingent upon socio-technical system transitions being supported by an adequate number of technological advances in an environment that is favourable is the core tenet of the field of innovation studies. According to (Geels, 2004), socio-technical systems include three primary dimensions: actors and institutions, as well as technological and material artefacts.

The Multi-Level Perspective (MLP), Strategic Niche Management (SNM), Transition Management (TM), and Technological Innovation Systems (TIS) are the four primary theoretical frameworks that may be found within the topic of sustainability transitions (Meelen & Farla, 2013). In contrast to the more analytical MLP and TIS techniques, the more practical TM and SNM frameworks are shown here. The Multi-Level Perspective (MLP) is the first framework that has been developed, and it is now the most popular and widely used paradigm in the academic subject of sustainable transitions. This theory contends that transitions take place when there is interaction between three distinct levels, namely the regime level (the structures of the existing socio-technical system that force path dependency), the landscape level (the exogenous sociotechnical context), and the niche level (radical innovation in specific spaces) (Kivimaa & Virkamäki, 2013). Transitions may be thought of on a micro level, which is represented by niches. In this domain, radical innovations that are distinct from the predominate socio-technical systems that are in existence are introduced. The development of solar panels is an illustration of an example of a niche innovation. Solar panels are an environmentally friendly innovation that have the potential to supplant traditional energy sources such as coal and gas.

The regimes are the most fundamental structures that may be thought of as existing on a meso-level between transitions. They are responsible for maintaining a socio-technical framework. Certain laws or ideas, infrastructural systems, regulatory frameworks, and so on can all be examples of regimes. A regime may be thought of as anything that ensures the continued operation of a socio-technical system in the manner in which it functions. It is the regimes themselves that are responsible for imposing path dependence and making transitions exceptionally challenging. Changing our energy networks to make them more sustainable is tough since doing so would require reorganising the whole architecture of the energy sector, developing rules that take into consideration sustainable energy, and a variety of other steps (ONeill & Gibbs, 2014).

Landscapes, which encompass political ideology, cultural values, macroeconomic movements, the macro level of transitions, as defined by Geels (2012), encompasses all overarching trends that influence specific niches and systems. The recognition of climate change as an issue requiring attention is increasingly becoming a widely accepted perspective in contemporary society. This recognition serves as a significant catalyst for the advancement of solar panels and the transition towards the

utilization of renewable energy sources within the energy sector. According to the MLP method, in order to successfully support socio-technical changes, it is necessary for niches, regimes, and landscapes to all be working towards the same goal. Additionally, they coexist and mutually support one another in this way. Since socio-technical transitions involve movements from one regime to another, the MLP lays an emphasis on the regime level as the primary component of its methodology (Geels, 2011). Since the niche and landscape levels are dependent on the regime, they have been seen as "derived concepts." This is because of the relationship between the two.

According to Kemp et al (1998) the MLP strategy is intricately linked to Strategic Niche Management (SNM) method. This framework is centred on the provision of theoretical and practical insights into the ways in which niches may be promoted in order to allow sustainable growth and, as a result, can contribute to the transformation of the regime (Safaryńska et al., 2012). The primary application for this paradigm is the examination of radical breakthroughs and how such innovations contribute to efforts made towards sustainable development.

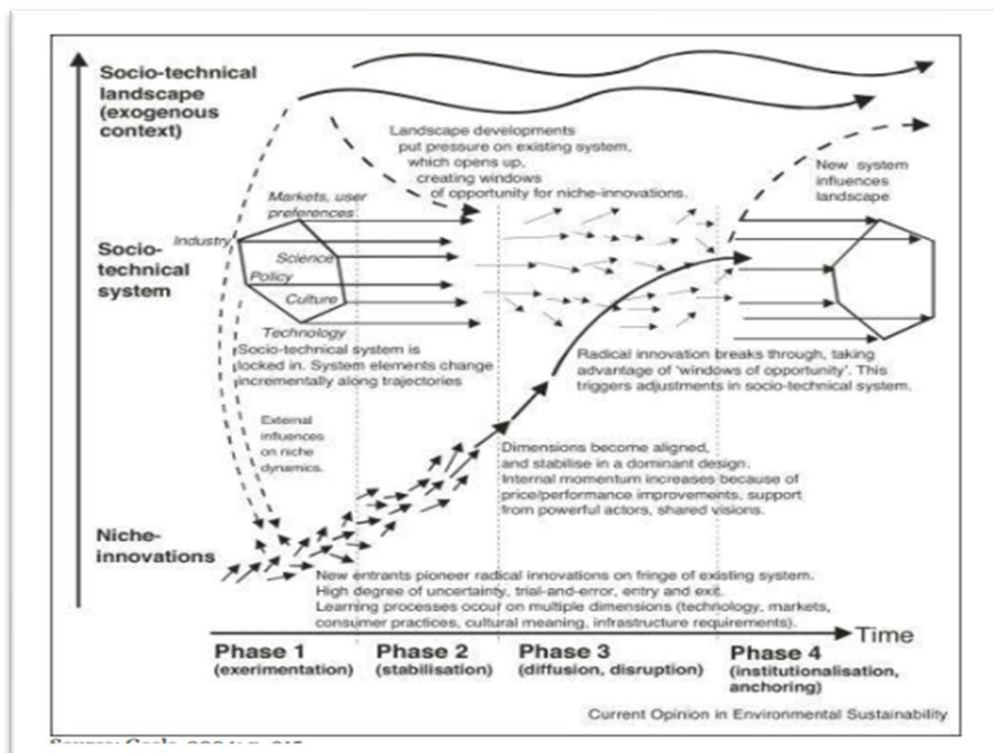


Figure 1: The Multi-Level Perspective (MLP) Interpretation Of (Sustainability) Transitions.

Suorce : (Geels, 2011).

Transition Management (TM) is a policy-oriented framework that can be seen as the practical counterpart to MLP. TM has developed a prescriptive framework consisting of four methods that policy makers can employ to support sustainable transitions (Köhler et al., 2019). Policymakers have access to various strategies, including strategic planning (establishing norms and long-term objectives), tactical planning (managing actions and interests), operational planning (developing initiatives and programs), and reflexive planning (assessing and evaluating existing policies) (Loorbach et al., 2009). The framework commonly employed by policy-makers, including the Dutch government (interview 10), is transition management. Therefore, the interpretation of sustainability transitions through the lens of transition management is similar to the MLP viewpoint. The Transition Management approach, also known as DRIFT in the Netherlands, developed with the assistance of the Dutch Research Institute For Transitions, identifies three distinct scale levels in a transition: macro, meso, and micro. These three levels have a significant correlation with the MLP perspective's landscape, regime, and niche levels, respectively (Lodder et al., 2017).

According to DRIFT, a transition goes through four consecutive stages:

1. Predevelopment: During this period, the socio-technical system is undergoing some change, although these alterations are not yet obvious to the public.
2. Tipping phase: During this stage, the transition is just beginning to gain momentum, and noticeable structural shifts are beginning to take place.
3. Reconfiguration: During the third phase, the shift starts to become obvious in society and is becoming an increasingly dominating force. This phase also marks the beginning of the final phase.
4. Stabilisation: The de facto leadership of the country has been replaced, and the transition will soon be finished.

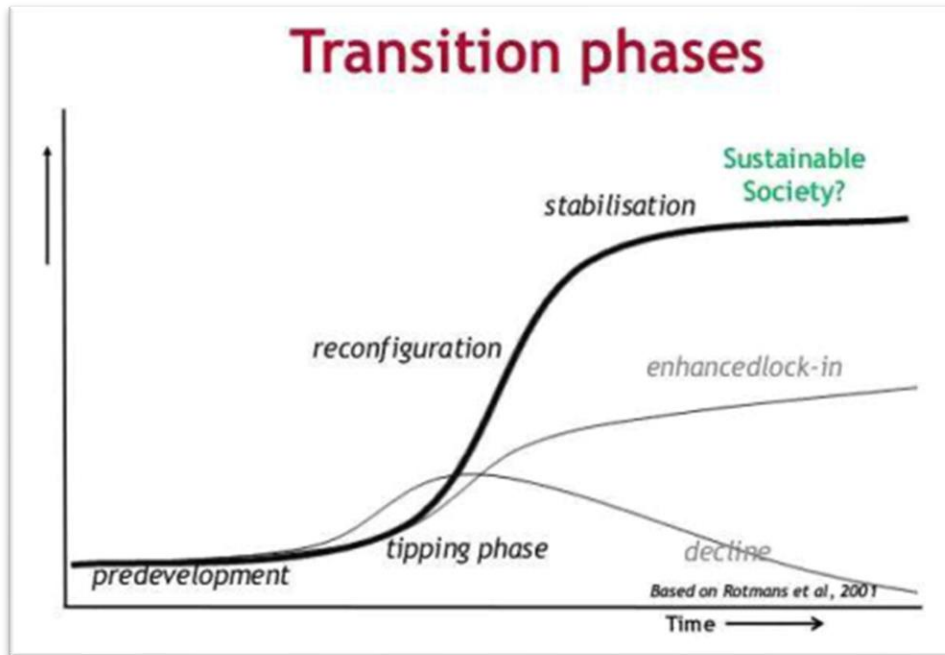


Figure 2: Transition Phases Visualised.

Source: (DRIFT, 2013).

In conclusion, The Technological Innovation Systems (TIS) approach focuses on the development of new innovations and specifically examines the factors that promote or hinder a successful transition to a different socio-technical system with a focus on sustainability. TIS is concerned with the emergence of innovations (Safaryńska et al., 2012). This has been produced expressly with the intention of informing policymaking on transitions towards sustainability (Markard et al., 2012). To establish an understanding of how a society might transition from one socio-technical system to another, all frameworks attempt to do one thing in common: highlight the multi-dimensional character of sustainability transitions. Another thing that all frameworks have in common is that they all have the same goal.

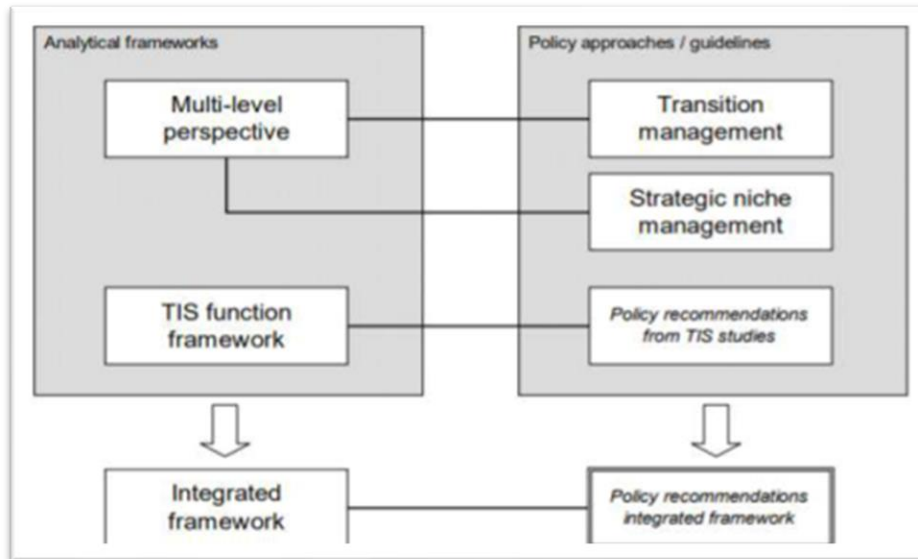


Figure 3: Schematic Presentation Of The Four Sustainability Transition Frameworks.

Source: Meelen & Farla, 2013.

1.6. SUSTAINABILITY TRANSITIONS AND POLICY MAKING

In the topic of sustainable transitions, there is another body of research that focuses explicitly on determining the policy combinations that are most likely to be successful in assisting societies in their transition to new socio-technical systems. This subfield of the field is known as the policy mix literature. The term "policy mix" encompasses a compilation of policy objectives, strategies, and tools, and procedures that have an effect on a certain sector or system (Kanger et al., 2020). Over the past few years, there has been consistent progress made in the body of written work that expressly examines the importance of policy mixtures in sustainability transitions. Based on the work of other academics, (Kivimaa & Virkamaki, 2013) developed an analytical framework for policy analysis.

On the other hand, it has been brought up on a number of different times that there is still a dearth of scholarly work on the topic of the link between sustainability transitions and policy mixtures. Research on the identification and assessment of suitable policy support mechanisms is uncommon, as (Turnheim et al., 2020) point out. More specifically, research on which particular aims and goals policy makers should focus in order to successfully assist society in its transition is still a work in progress (Mazzucato, 2018). This is due to the fact that policy mixes that are aimed at stimulating

sustainability transitions are particularly difficult to research for the following reasons they address multiple policy domains, there is a lot of uncertainty about the direction that future developments will take, and they are complex because they not only address changes in infrastructures, but also changes in social practises and market arrangements (Kern, 2019). By examining the topic of science, technology, and innovation (STI) policy, one may gain a deeper comprehension of the ways in which decision-making at the policy level might play a role in bringing about transitions that are more environmentally responsible (Kern et al., 2019). In order to accomplish goals on a national level, these are the policies that encourage the development, dissemination, and use of scientific and technological information (Lundvall & Borrás, 2005). Research from the field of STI policy has a significant impact on the development of the TIS approach to sustainability transitions, and the establishment of a new theoretical framework for STI policy helps explain why policymakers are pushing sustainability transitions (Scordato et al., 2018).

1.7. THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is not a new idea, and tourism is not the only place where people have doubts about how well it will work (Berry & Ladkin, 1997). They have been talked about long enough in other fields to show that focusing on the concept's flaws is not the best way to make progress. As people learned more about the limits of the concept, they came to agree that changing society to be more sustainable is a complicated process with many different parts that all work together (Huisinigh, 2007).

In dynamic systems like tourism, transformational change also depends on how well the different people involved can adapt to new ways of doing things (Calgaro et al., 2014). A society's ability to change and adapt is also important to its survival and growth. To do this, core values and how they are shown through social institutions, processes, and individual actions need to be looked at again. Anthropologists usually try to figure out how cultural values, norms, and practices came to be based on the society's situations, circumstances, and conditions. People form different groups and cultures to figure out how to deal with their immediate environments and surroundings. In this situation, tourism has the potential to make a big difference by changing how people all over the world see the Earth as a global community. But there is evidence that tourism

doesn't always help society in a good way. Some of the articles in look at how sustainability can be used as a way to bring people together and share values that make humanity stronger (Gössling & Hall., 2006).

To bring about transformative change, academia is in a good position to help people improve their skills through education. Graduates who want to work on projects with a lot of social importance need to be good at critical thinking and self-reflection. There has been a shift in pedagogy (Jamal et al., 2006), as well as modifications in the content and structure of curriculum, as a result of this (Bramwell & Lane, 2014; Busby, 2003). Because of this, sustainability is one of the most important topics in tourism education and elsewhere (Bramwell & Lane, 2011). (Moscardo, 2015) talks about The SV is home to the Building Excellence for Sustainable Tourism Education Network (BEST EN). BEST EN has actively contributed to the transformation of tourism education both within and beyond higher education. BEST EN's activities are all about helping everyone think better about tourism and sustainability and helping tourism change in a way that is more positive. Moscardo and Benckendorff are working on a book about education for sustainability in tourism, which will go beyond what needs to be done to change tourism and talk about how tourism itself could help teach people about sustainability in general (Moscardo, 2015).

Graduate students and academics working in subjects unrelated to tourism are interested in the ways in which tourist activities contribute to societal shifts on a broader scale, such as the development of sustainable urbanisation or sustainable mobility (Høyer, 2000). Along with goods like clothes, food, shelter, travel, and sports equipment, leisure is one of the most commonly purchased items by consumers, for instance, the goal of Ecological Economics is to " enhance and merge the examination and management of the natural environment (ecology) and the human society (economics). While more such articles appear in tourist journals, the number published elsewhere is still negligible. journal of cleaner production (JCLP) is a forum for interdisciplinary study that promotes the development of more sustainable societies. It serves as a meeting place for scientists working in disparate fields who share a common goal in improving the state of the world (Sabini et al., 2019).

1.8. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

An increasing number of people are realizing that the conventional economic model can't bring about long-term environmental and economic sustainability, and this has prompted the introduction of innovative policies. Since the 1960s, several events have shown the flaws in the economic growth paradigm, such as the widening gap between rich and poor, the spread of environmental catastrophes, economic downturns, and so on. As time went on, the conflict between monetary expansion and environmental and social requirements grew more apparent (Kates et al., 2005).

The research that was conducted by the World Commission on Environment and Progress, commonly known as the Brundtland report, was the first substantial effort to reconcile economic progress and environmental integrity, two concepts that had long been regarded as being incompatible with one another (Caldwell, 1984). Sustainable development, as proposed in the Brundtland report, has become a central concept in worldwide policy discussions (Purvis et al., 2019). According to the definition provided in the study, sustainable development is "development that satisfies the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to satisfy their own needs." (UNESCO, 2019). In the Brundtland study, economic expansion was not seen as the source of the issue, but rather as the solution. In order to develop a system that is cohesive and effective overall, the standard economic model needs to be modified to incorporate environmental and social concerns. Since this book came out, scientists, think tanks, national governments, and international organizations all use the term sustainable development (Holling, 2001).

This quickly led to what are called the "three pillars of sustainability," which are profit, the environment, and people (Purvis et al., 2019). Another name for these three aspects of sustainability is the economic, environmental, and social pillars of sustainability (Purvis et al., 2019). Scholars have agreed that sustainable development is when economic, environmental, and social needs are all met at the same time (Sen, 2013). But it's still not clear what that harmonisation should look like in real life. Some scholars see sustainable development as the way the three pillars work together and affect each other (Ranjbari et al., 2021). They do this through mutual causation and positive feedback (Geissdoerfer et al., 2017). This is often shown as a Venn diagram, which Jacobs and Sadler made popular. Another way to look at it is that the three pillars

move in their own ways, but they need to work together to be sustainable. From this point of view, sustainability is the sum of better social, economic, and environmental practices (Pozzebon, 2009). One last way to look at sustainability is to say that the different parts are less important than each other. In this view, the economic pillar is the most important part of sustainability, while social and environmental needs are not as important. Culture is sometimes added as a fourth dimension to this way of seeing things.

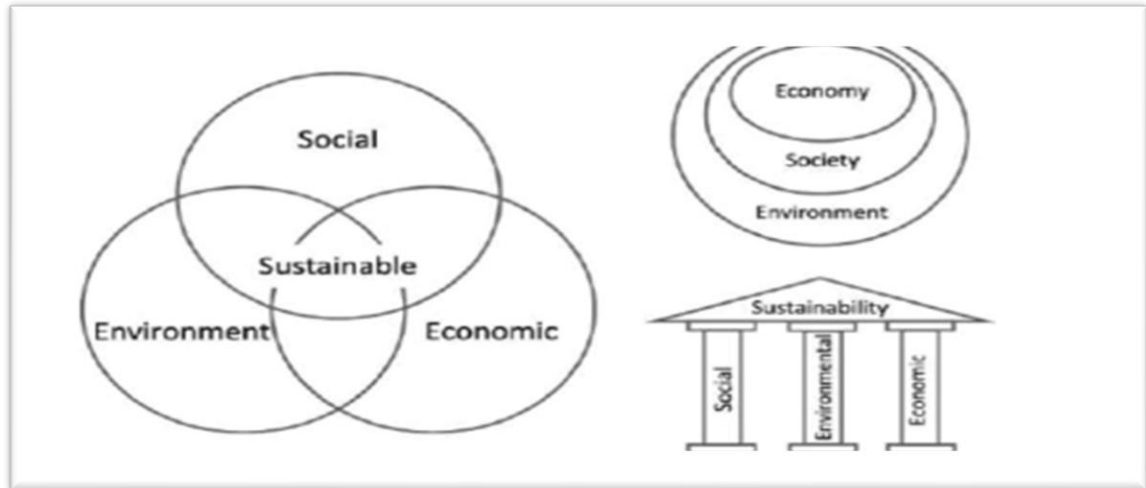


Figure 4: Visualisation Of The Interpretations Of Sustainable Development In Academic Literature.

Source: (Purvis et al., 2019)

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which were formulated by the United Nations, were essential in assisting policymakers in increasing their focus on sustainable development. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of seventeen objectives that the global community needs to accomplish by the year 2030. These objectives vary from putting a stop to world hunger to bringing about more equality in the world. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are centred on the overarching objective of achieving sustainable development on three fronts simultaneously: socially, economically, and environmentally. Both the European Union (EU) and the Dutch government have stated, in official policy papers, that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) serve as the basis for their respective sustainability policies. Altering the economy in such a way that it takes into consideration the requirements of society and the environment is the most audacious plan that has been proposed by both the European Union and the Netherlands. This plan

proposes switching from a linear economy to a circular economy (Van Buren et al., 2016).

2. CHAPTER TWO

2.1. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SUSTAINABILITY AND TOURISM

There have been numerous attempts made over the course of time to define the term "sustainable," but it is interesting to note what the Brundtland Commission says: "The essence of sustainable development is the way we must organise ourselves to use land resources to meet our own needs and aspirations so as not to compromise the hopes of future generations to meet their needs at the same time." It is interesting to take note of what the Brundtland Commission says since it states: "The essence of sustainable development is the way we must organise ourselves" (Hjorth & Bagheri, 2006).

The link between tourism and sustainability refers to the manner in which tourism and the activities that are associated with it have an influence on the natural, cultural, and social environment of destinations, as well as the ways in which sustainable practises may be implemented to minimise these consequences (Khan et al., 2020).

Sustainability is the capacity to fulfill present requirements without jeopardizing the capacity of future generations to fulfill their own requirements. Within the framework of the tourism sector, sustainability entails the implementation of strategies to effectively manage tourism in order to safeguard and enhance the natural environment, provide support to the local communities, and ensure the economic prosperity of all stakeholders (Verma, 2019).

Tourism can exert both beneficial and detrimental effects on sustainability. Tourism has the potential to support the preservation of natural and cultural resources, generate employment and income for local communities, and foster cultural exchange and mutual comprehension. Conversely, tourism can result in environmental deterioration, erosion of cultural heritage, and social disparities if it is not effectively regulated and sustained (Archer et al., 2012).

The ideas of ecotourism, responsible tourism, and cultural tourism are intimately connected to the notion of sustainable tourism, which builds on their foundations. These types of tourism place an emphasis on reducing the adverse effects of tourism while maximising its beneficial effects on the host community. Cultural tourism, on the other

hand, places an emphasis on the protection and conservation of cultural legacy and traditions, whereas ecotourism places an emphasis on the protection and conservation of natural resources (Andari & Setiyorini, 2016).

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) has made promoting environmentally sustainable tourism a top priority in its efforts to advance the global tourism industry. In 2015, the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) embraced the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a framework for advancing sustainable tourism. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) include objectives such as alleviating extreme poverty, fostering sustainable economic growth, conserving the environment, and promoting social inclusion (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2020).

To reach these objectives, sustainable tourism needs a concerted effort on the part of all parties involved, including the government, the participants in the tourism sector, the communities that tourists visit, and the visitors themselves. To guarantee that tourism is managed in a sustainable manner, governments can set legislation and regulations, and participants in the tourist sector can embrace sustainable practises in their own operations. It is possible for local communities to be given the ability to contribute in the development of tourism, and visitors may be encouraged to adopt sustainable behaviours such as reducing their trash and honouring the traditions of the communities they visit (Roxas et al., 2020).

It is essential to implement sustainable tourism practises if one want to guarantee that tourism will be around for the foreseeable future. This can involve actions such as limiting the amount of energy and water used, cutting down on waste and pollution, promoting local goods and services, lending support to community-based tourist efforts, and showing respect for local culture and customs. It is possible for destinations to ensure that tourism will continue to benefit both tourists and the communities in which they are located in a manner that is both ecologically and socially responsible if they implement sustainable tourism practices (Achmad & Yulianah, 2022).

We think that sustainable development is a very flexible idea that can be interpreted in many different ways (Robinson, 2004). It is seen as a constant process of change that is closely tied to the needs and priorities of the local area. Many professionals don't need a single definition of this idea. This makes it clear that the

problem is the same no matter how we define it: we need to make sure that the people of the world and the planet Earth have a sustainable future. To reach this goal, there needs to be a lot of international cooperation, careful management of the process, political involvement, and a lot of hard work. In short, all of these involve changing the way people act so that they can help the economy grow in a way that is sustainable. People can get involved in the following ways: (Álvarez Arenas & Mirón, 2007).

1. Working to get rid of poverty, changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, and protecting and managing natural resources for economic and social growth;
2. Getting people to talk and work together, no matter their race, illness, religion, language, culture, or tradition;
3. Working toward stable partnerships with all major groups, while respecting each one's unique role;

Helping with programs for sustainable development and taking part in them (Tonami& Mori, 2007). So, the human resources can help with the process of sustainable development if they do what was said above. Tourism is a very important industry that should take some steps in this direction (Murphy & Price, 2012). This is an area of human activity that is changing quickly. It is a reflection of the changing economic and social conditions that support modern views of individual freedom of expression through consumer choice, as well as the new technologies of transportation and data communication that allow a large number of people to spend their free time in faraway places (Gough, 2017).

The tourist business is faced with a variety of possibilities and problems as a result of all these developments. There are five primary problems or obstacles that can be found (Ramona & Carmen, 2009).

The need to get more accurate and consistent numbers about how big tourism is and how much money it brings in;

1. The pressure to compete better with other ways to have fun and relax. This is especially hard for small and medium-sized businesses, which make up a big part of the tourism industry in many places (Bichler et al., 2021).

2. The need to deal with the fact that tourists are becoming more different from each other. We're talking about the fact that tourism markets will become more diverse in terms of culture, age, family structure, and experience, which will make it harder to make products and manage how tourists and hosts and tourists interact with each other;
3. The need to make sure that infrastructure development and maintenance keep up with growing demand. We say that infrastructure in this case doesn't just mean transportation and buildings, but also the training and education of the people who work in tourism.
4. The need to make sure that tourism development is sustainable. This becomes the main way of thinking, and the well-being of the host community and the protection of social and environmental assets become the main goals. Hunter C. presented four different ways to develop in a way that is sustainable, based on the four types of sustainability:

To summarise, tourism is a sector of the economy that plays a significant role in the overall production of goods and services around the world. Scholarly research that has been conducted on the topic, tourism can be seen as a means of relieving stress and escaping the monotony of regular life by participating in activities that are designed to be out of the ordinary (Wang et al, 2020). When seen and considered from this angle, tourism may also be understood and analysed as a system. It contains input data, which includes material resources, financial resources, visitors, and tourist goals; a process, which includes going on walks and visiting museums, as well as other activities; and it has output data, which includes what tourists do while they are on vacation.

Taking into consideration the fact that the principles of sustainable tourism development apply to all different kinds of tourism and all different kinds of destinations, ranging from mass tourism to niche tourism, there needs to be a balance between the environment, the economy, and society in order for sustainable development to be possible and for tourism to grow in the long run (Diamantis & Ladkin, 1999).

The concept of sustainability can be utilized in a diverse range of contexts and can have an extensive range of connotations. In a broad sense, sustainability refers to a system's capacity to preserve itself while also withstanding a range of pressures from the

environment. In the field of ecology, the term "sustainability" refers to the capacity of biological systems to continue being productive, healthy, and unaltered over long periods of time (Rout et al., 2020).

From a social, economic, and environmental point of view, sustainability in tourism means keeping an eye on the effects on tourism, the steps taken to fix problems, and the steps taken to keep problems from happening in the first place. More than that, it also includes the tourists' needs and how happy they are. The idea of sustainable tourism has been around for almost 50 years. It is based on a whole-person approach that takes into account business ideas, political ideas, and the environment (Lane, 2018).

In the current world, where resources are becoming more and more scarce, it has become a global responsibility to focus on efficient consumption. Because of this, it is important to understand the relationship between the growth of tourism and the use of resources (Desbiolles, 2018).

Environmental education can be a key part of making tourism more sustainable. As social and ecological changes become more complicated, society needs to find ways to improve the quality of the environment. From a different point of view, sustainability has a lot to do with how people buy things and how aware they are that there are different options on the market for tourist products that are in line with the principles of sustainable development (Tölkes, 2018).

Sustainable tourism must be looked at and treated from the point of view of everyone involved in the tourism process. According to some specialised papers, tourism, when viewed through the eyes of the local community, tourism service providers, and tourists, must meet the following conditions: "to contribute to the conservation and protection of the environment; to use the local human resources; to have an educational purpose and teach respect for nature" and "to have minimum negative impact on nature and the sociocultural environment " (Nistoreanu et al., 2011).

The concept of sustainable tourism is one that is supported by all parties involved, and it involves the defence and maintenance of the natural environment. There is a connection between sustainability and how good care is taken of the surrounding environment. Studies and other specialised literature have revealed that the economic, environmental, and social-cultural components are the most important factors in determining whether or not tourism is sustainable (Kumar, 2014).

The concept that tourism might have a "multiplying effect" is one that can be discussed when taking into account the economic aspect of responsible vacationing. The multiplying impact is the result of the contribution made by a variety of various elements to the immediate community. From a psychological point of view, the term "sustainability" is used in the tourism industry to push the visitors' consciences to use the available resources in a responsible manner (Pulido-Fernandez et al., 2019).

While this is happening, the consequences of globalisation may also be felt in the tourist industry, and they are not limited to being felt through global tourism service providers. Emigration, for instance, has grown increasingly widespread, which has both positive and negative consequences in certain regions, depending on the region. Some of the positive aspects of globalisation include the fact that it paves the path for individuals to earn more money by optimising their use of land and assisting in the restoration of ecosystems (Khan et al., 2020).

Tourism businesses must take into account how tourists buy when making decisions about how to expand their offerings. Listening to what customers want can make you more competitive, which is why this goal has surpassed the goal of making more money. In terms of the growth of tourism in terms of numbers, this can be seen in the rise in the number of types of tourism, the increase in the number of services offered, the building of tourist units, etc. The quality improvement focuses on how friendly the hosts are (Helgadóttir, 2018).

The economic growth of a region or county is undeniably contingent upon the efficient collaboration of its production factors, namely capital goods, land, and labor. (Fogel, & Railroads.1964).this also applies to the tourism industry. The concept of "sustainable development" is widely comprehended by numerous individuals. Sustainable development entails achieving equilibrium between the economic and natural aspects. Additionally, it plays a crucial role in facilitating sustainable tourism practices that minimize harm to the environment. Long-term development and sustainability are inherently interconnected as the success of tourism hinges upon satisfying both of these prerequisites in order to thrive over an extended period of time. Sustainability and long-term development in tourism primarily focus on the environmental impact rather than the economic impact (Paunović & Jovanović. 2017).

2.2. TOURIST AND TOURIST RELATIONSHIP, TOURIST AND TOURISM WORKERS

Given that the consumption of travel experiences occurs over an extended period of time, as opposed to other types of consumption, it affords tourists greater opportunities to engage with fellow tourists (Crompton,1979). According to Cohen (1972), TTI is argued to be more feasible and probable compared to interactions between tourists and local individuals, primarily due to cultural disparities between tourists and locals. Therefore, TTI is expected to have a significant role in influencing tourists' experiences and their assessments of those experiences. Only a limited number of studies have investigated the influence of interactions between tourists on their overall experiences. Holloway (1981) has documented that social interactions among tourists in a coach tour setting are an essential component of their overall experiences. Gorman (1979) has posited that the camaraderie cultivated among tourists during a journey exerts a substantial impact on their experiences.

Sørensen (2003) has demonstrated the role of spontaneous social interaction among backpackers in fostering a distinct backpacker travel culture. LokerMurphy and Pearce (1995) have stated that engaging with fellow backpackers is crucial for the development of optimal backpacking experiences. Furthermore, a cruise ship, being a transient society, can be considered a liminal space that diverges from the routines of daily life (Yarnal et al., 2005).

Consequently, certain researchers have directed their attention towards cruise tours in order to investigate the dynamics between tourists. They have demonstrated that establishing connections with fellow passengers enhances the overall cruise experience (Huang & Hsu, 2010). In addition, Wei et al. (2017) have examined the significance of TTI centrality in contemporary events and have verified that the level of engagement of conference attendees is strongly influenced by their involvement in TTI. Furthermore, the emergence of technology has facilitated the ability of travellers to engage with fellow travellers prior to their journeys via social media and online travel communities (Roozen & Raedts, 2018). Typically, these online interactions seek to acquire information about the location, activities, and experiences provided by individuals who share details about their recent encounters with the tourism services (Bilgihan et al., 2016).

Aratuo et al, (2019) labour is the most important factor in the hospitality business, which has verified that economic growth is occurring in all six tourism sub-industries in the United States (US). There have only been a handful of studies conducted on the hotel industry in the Alps and Adriatic nations up to this point. In addition, research for the analysis of time series data is much less common (Baggio & Sainaghi, 2016). Acknowledged the significance of employment in the tourist business and laid the groundwork for determining how to measure the amount of employment produced by the tourism industry collaborated with multiple international agencies to establish standards for the sector. Furthermore, several studies have endeavored to examine the correlation between tourism and employment (Ahlert, 2008). (Williams et al., 1988) advocated for tourism as a promising avenue for fostering employment expansion in the United Kingdom (UK). in order to advance the conversation about employment opportunities driven by the tourist industry. The authors underline the need for additional extensive sector research, with a special focus on tourism-led employment as an area worthy of particular attention. (Townsend, 1992) conducted research that suggested urban tourism has the capacity to enhance employment opportunities in low-income regions by providing access to areas with greater job prospects. These findings were published in a scholarly article titled "New Directions in the Growth of Tourism Employment" (Tosun et al., 2021).

As a result of the investigated intricacies of tourist employment markets, the existing body of study offers an approach to research that draws from several disciplines and encourages conversation between various points of view about tourism labour markets (Baum, 2018). According to UNWTO and ILO (2014), employment in the tourism industry, employment in sectors that provide inputs to the tourism industry, employment as a result of consumer spending, and job creation due to the employment multiplier effect in the tourism sector all contribute to a positive economic impact and show that the tourism industry is an effective tool in the fight against unemployment. According to UNWTO and ILO (2014), employment in tourist industries is one of the least researched aspects of tourism despite the industry's potential to generate significant new jobs (Solnet et al., 2014).

Chhetri et al (2017), who modelled employment clusters in tourism and hospitality using spatial econometric approaches, came to the conclusion that employment in rural tourist districts in Australia is more concentrated in operational

tourism services. In contrast, urbanised areas have a comparatively large percentage of their population working in the hotel industry.

Based on a variety of panel data models (Brandt, 2018) explored the factors that determine an individual's income while they are working full time in the tourist industry in Sweden. He provides further evidence that tourism has a favourable impact on employment. On the other hand, he provides evidence that the average income of those working in tourism-related businesses is lower than the average income of people working in other sectors of the economy. The research conducted by (Ahmat et al., 2019) came to very similar results on the way people see their employment.

Castillo et al, (2015) investigated the association between tourist policies and employment by utilising a synthetic control technique and combining it with econometric methodologies of programmed treatment assessment. This allowed for the flexibility to control for a variety of different cofounders and allowed for the robustness of the results to be checked. The findings of the study conducted by Castillo et al, (2015) lend credence to the concept of public involvement in the tourist industry. Castillo et al. found the implementation of the tourism development policy led to a substantial increase in employment within the tourism industry. the latter is especially important for the discussion on how well tourist strategies can be evaluated using contemporary microeconomic methods (Južnik, 2019). Moreover, justify state intervention in tourism in order to promote tourist employment, which is considered as a reasonable policy option that gives the economic advantages of tourism to local job development at a level that is socially desirable. Additionally, investments in the tourist industry can help alleviate local poverty, mostly through the development of new employment opportunities (Winters et al., 2013).

As a result, job opportunities generated by tourism are seen as a viable strategic alternative. This requires taking into account the hospitality industry's long-term labour market and resource developments (Li et al., 2017). Tourism sectors have the potential to create new jobs, protect existing jobs, and preserve employment, all of which can assist to halt economic decline and contribute to economic expansion (Badulescu et al., 2021; Cheng et al., 2021). According to Dogru and Bulut Since the beginning of the severe economic crisis in 2008, employment in the tourist industry, including areas such as hotels, has increased at a rate that is greater than the average annual growth rate

reported by other service sectors. There is a possibility that the hospitality industry might make a contribution to the local job development and economic growth in places that are less developed and more isolated. According to the findings of (Sergo, 2019), which are derived using The application of the generalized method of moments and Granger causality tests in panel data models, the tourist industry in the EU has a beneficial influence on employment.

3. CHAPTER THREE

3.1. SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

The term "sustainable tourism" was first used in policy about the growth of tourism about 20 years ago (Sharpley, 2020). It was seen as a good way to deal with the problems caused by the size, scope, and effects of tourism development in particular. It was a reflection of the rise of sustainable development in general and the widespread acceptance that followed. That is, since the middle of the 1960s, tourism, especially international mass tourism, has grown quickly. At the same time, the so-called "pleasure periphery" has been spreading around the world (Turner & Ash, 1975) had been accompanied by more and more calls for it to slow down. By the early 1990s, the examination of both the perceived adverse impacts of tourism and alternative approaches to its development was conducted from the perspective of sustainable tourism. Subsequently, sustainable tourism has become the primary emphasis in both scholarly research on tourism and the development of policies and strategies for tourism (Ashley et al., 2001).

There is a common sense that the discussion around sustainable tourism is fragmented, conceptually incorrect, and founded on shaky or erroneous assumptions (Liu, 2003). Additionally, it has been claimed for a considerable amount of time that the fundamentals of sustainable tourism are not much more than a modest response to a significant challenge. Second, there is not much evidence to suggest that the principles of sustainability or sustainable development have been adopted by individual tourism businesses, sub-industries of the travel and tourism industry, or even at the national level. However, the travel and tourism industry remains one of the largest industries globally. Without a doubt, achieving sustainable tourism as a worldwide policy aim is still important (Wheeller, 1991).

The concept of sustainable development has expanded to encompass all forms of economic expansion and growth, including tourism (Bramwell & Lane, 1993). It is still difficult to define sustainable development in tourism, and many various concepts have been proposed in an effort to find out what qualifies as sustainable development in tourism and what does not qualify as sustainable development in tourism. Coccossis (1996) says that there are four distinct ways in which one might interpret the concept of

sustainable tourism. “Economic sustainability of tourism”, “Environmentally sustainable tourism”, “Sustainable tourism development”, where the need for environmental quality is clear, but the focus is on long-term viability of the industry, and “Tourism as part of a strategy for sustainable development” are the four perspectives which constitute “economic sustainability of tourism,” “environmentally sustainable tourism,” and “sustainable tourism development.”

Sustainable tourism refers to a form of tourism that considers and addresses its economic, social, and environmental consequences, both presently and in the future. It also takes into account the requirements of visitors, the industry, the environment, and the local communities that serve as hosts (Welford et al., 1999).

People frequently assert that the discussion around environmentally responsible tourism is fragmented, theoretically incorrect, and founded on shaky or erroneous assumptions (Bess, 2003). Additionally, it has been claimed for a considerable amount of time that the fundamentals of sustainable tourism are not much more than a modest response to a significant challenge (Wheeller, 1991). There is not a lot of evidence to suggest that the principles of sustainability or sustainable development have been adopted by individual tourism businesses, parts of the travel and tourism industry, or even at the national level. This is a problem because these principles are essential to the success of the industry. Take pleasure in the fact that encouraging environmentally responsible travel is still a priority for international policymakers (Berno & Bricker, 2001).

The idea of sustainable development has grown to include all types of economic growth and development, including tourism. Sustainable development in tourism is still hard to define, and many different ideas have been put forward to try to figure out what does and does not count as sustainable development in tourism. Coccossis (1996) says that sustainable tourism can be understood in four different ways. "Tourism as part of a plan for sustainable growth," "Sustainable tourism," "The sustainable consumption of tourism," and Sustainable tourism development where the need for environmental quality is clear however the focus is on the lengthy viability of the industry, are the four perspectives.

The definitions of sustainable tourism stress the following important points (Rivera & Gutierrez, 2019):

1. **Quality:** Sustainable tourism gives visitors a good time while improving the well-being of individuals who live there and keeping the environment in good shape. The definitions of sustainable tourism stress the following key points:
2. **Continuity:** Sustainable tourism makes sure that the natural resources on which it is based and the culture of the host community stay the same and give visitors a good time.
3. **Balance:** Sustainable tourism strikes a good balance between the needs of the tourism industry, people who care about the environment, and the people who live in the area. Sustainable tourism also puts an emphasis on the visitors', the host community's, and the destinations' shared goals and ability to work together.

Attaining sustainable development entails striking a harmonious equilibrium among four distinct pillars (Lehtonen,2004):

1. The Economic Pillar is all about bringing prosperity to different parts of society and making sure that all economic activities are as cost-effective as possible.
2. The Socio-Cultural Pillar is founded upon the principles of upholding human rights and ensuring equal opportunities for all individuals in society, necessitating a fair allocation of advantages.
3. The environmental pillar focuses on the preservation and administration of resources, including natural and cultural resources, biodiversity, and waste disposal.
4. The transversal tillar provides support to the Economic, Socio-Cultural, and Environmental Pillars through mechanisms such as governance and infrastructure.
5. Taking these four pillars into account, sustainable tourism should do the following to make sure it will be around for a long time:
6. Ensure long-term, sustainable economic operations that provide socioeconomic benefits to all stakeholders in a fair way. These benefits include stable employment and income-earning opportunities, social services for host communities, and helping to reduce poverty.
7. Adhere to the genuine sociocultural characteristics of the communities you visit, safeguard their physical and social cultural legacy, and promote mutual understanding and acceptance between different cultures.

8. Get the most out of the environment's resources, which are a key part of developing tourism, keeping important ecological processes going, and helping to protect natural resources and biodiversity.

Sustainability is defined by the World Commission on Environment and Development as "a strategy to fulfill the demands of the present without damaging the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." (Tomislav,2018).

Tourism can be an important part of sustainable development for two main reasons: the industry is growing and changing quickly, and it has a big impact on the economies of many countries and tourist spots. Also, tourism activities require a special relationship between consumers (tourists), the industry, the environment, and local communities (Zaei , 2013).

The tourist meets both the producer and the product. This is one of three important and unique ways that tourism and sustainable development are similar and different. Tourists are people who interact with the local environment, the people who live there, and the people who work there (Ei & Karamanis, 2017).

Tourism's impact on the host community and its natural and social surroundings is significant and has far-reaching consequences for long-term growth and prosperity (Malviya, 2005).



Figure 5: The Dimensions: Environmental, Social And Economic Sustainability
Suorce: (Oláh et al., 2018).

3.2. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IN TOURISM

The tourist sector relies largely on natural resources and ecosystems to attract visitors, hence environmental sustainability is crucial to the success of the tourism industry (Baloch et al., 2023). The exact attractions that bring in tourists might be damaged by environmental deterioration if tourism isn't managed in a sustainable manner (Zhao & Li, 2018). Deforestation, water pollution, and harm to coral reefs and other delicate ecosystems are just a few examples of how tourism may negatively affect the natural world. Strain on local infrastructure, as well as increased trash and pollution, might result from an influx of tourists to a popular site (Cunha & Cunha, 2005).

Sustainable tourism has the potential to improve the lives of locals while also bolstering conservation efforts for biodiversity and cultural artefacts (Zhong et al., 2011). Among the many possible components of sustainable tourism are the use of renewable energy, the minimization of waste and pollution, the encouragement of local conservation initiatives, and the promotion of environmentally friendly activities and modes of transportation (De Witt et al., 2015). The tourist business can't thrive in the long run if it pollutes the environment. Sustainable tourism destinations maintain their natural and cultural resources while also improving their guests' entire experience, which in turn increases tourism numbers and positive word of mouth (Aylward et al., 1996).

With the generation of new business and employment opportunities, sustainable tourism may aid in the growth of a region's economy. Ecotourism, which encourages people to visit natural places in a considerate manner, may help local economies by providing jobs in areas like guiding, lodging, and the selling of handcrafted goods (Fennell et al., 2003). Climate change is becoming an increasingly urgent issue for the tourist sector, but sustainable practises can assist to lessen its impact. Transportation and lodging contribute significantly to the tourist industry's overall carbon footprint. The tourist sector may help lower its carbon footprint and alleviate the impact of climate change on natural and cultural resources by adopting sustainable practises including employing renewable energy sources and decreasing waste (McKercher et al., 2010).

There has been a dramatic increase in the number of locations and businesses in the tourist industry that are adopting environmentally friendly policies in recent years. Sustainable tourism practises are being promoted and laws and standards are being developed by governments, non-governmental organizations, and the corporate sector

working together (Kennedy et al., 2009). The importance of environmental sustainability to the tourist industry cannot be overstated. Unsustainable tourism practises can degrade natural and cultural resources, which in turn can have a detrimental effect on local communities and the tourism sector as a whole. Yet, sustainable tourism practises can help reduce the negative effects of climate change while also safeguarding natural and cultural resources and boosting local economies. To maintain the tourist industry's long-term profitability and the conservation of our world, it is crucial that environmental sustainability be prioritized (Holden, 2005).

3.2.1 Financial Contributions

Travel and tourism have the potential to make a direct contribution to the protection of ecologically important locations and habitats. It is possible to designate a certain portion of the funds collected from entry fees and other similar sources to pay for the administration and maintenance of ecologically sensitive regions. It is possible to collect specialised fees from tourists as well as tour companies in order to fund operations or conservation actions (Agarwal et al., 2019).

Tourism in developing countries like Thailand helps to mitigate issues such as overfishing and forest loss by fostering the creation of alternative economic opportunities. The government are able to assist in the construction of facilities for both the natives and the visitors thanks to the income that is produced by tourism (Lundqvist, 2016).

3.2.2 Environmental Sustainability

According to the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Trade (Organisation, 2005), one of the most significant aspects of mitigating the negative effects of tourism on the surrounding environment is effectively managing tourist attractions. When it comes to developing and running tourism facilities in a way that has the least amount of negative influence on the surrounding environment, cleaner production practises are vital tools to have at your disposal. The hotel sector in the majority of nations is taking measures to minimise its impact on the environment by employing green construction practises. Green building involves the use of energy-

efficient and non-polluting building materials, sanitation systems, and energy sources. Considering that waste treatment and disposal are frequently significant and ongoing environmental challenges in the tourist sector, the implementation of pollution prevention and waste reduction technology is of utmost significance for the tourism industry.

3.2.3 Development and Improvement of Infrastructure

According to Kreag (2001) and Kodoatie et al, (2015) the concept of infrastructure is a physical system that provides transportation, irrigation, drainage, building, and other public amenities that are necessary to support the basis of human demands within the social and economic scopes. Seetanah et al. (2011) state that there are a number of different aspects that concurrently provide intriguing experiences from the tourist location. They brought attention to the significance of the infrastructure services, which included transportation service and other services.

According to Glasson et al (1995), the component of a region tourist product is the tourism infrastructure. The term "infrastructure" refers to the fundamental device that consists of the building and service institution whose presence is necessary for the correct management to satisfy the requirements of both the economy and the community. The term "tourism infrastructure" refers to the collection of the many different gadgets and institutions that constitute the fundamental components and managements for the expansion of the tourist industry. It is made up of three fundamental components, which are dining and drinking establishments, places to store and transmit information, and places to sleep (Tang, 2012).

In general, the following are the components that make up an area's tourism infrastructure, which together make it possible for tourists to stay there and participate in various activities (Timothy & Tosun, 2003):

Examples of lodging facilities include hotels, resorts, apartments, hostels, and campers. Other types of sleeping facilities include apartments and hostels.

1. place for eating and drinking, including a restaurant, a bar, and a café
2. Transportation to the destination

The provision of transportation to the location; - The provision of services in and around the recreational areas, including golf club, diving school, sailing school, and resort sky;

1. Retail network, in addition to

Other services (including information and rental of vehicles, diving equipment, and a variety of other items).

Tourism offers an incentive for investments in infrastructure, such as transport networks, and also provides cash for local medical, educational, and other critically necessary services. The revenue generated from tourists frequently makes the preservation and restoration of ancient structures and monuments possible. Visitors and locals alike will reap the benefits of a community's efforts to prepare for tourism by beautifying public spaces with works of public art such as murals, monuments, and water fountains. These sorts of efforts are required to get a town or neighbourhood ready to welcome tourists. The tourism sector is typically seen as a "clean" industry since it does not include the production of physical goods and instead relies on establishments such as hotels, restaurants, stores, and attractions (Hall, 2001: Page, 2020).

1. Environmental Negative Impacts

Tourism places a significant burden on the usage of land in the surrounding area, which can result in the degradation of soil, an increase in pollution levels, the destruction of natural habitats, and an increase in the amount of pressure placed on endangered species. These consequences have the potential to slowly damage the environmental resources upon which tourism depends (Hunter and Green, 1995; Everingham, 2016).

2. Pollution

The environmental problems that can be caused by tourism are comparable to those caused by any other type of business: air pollution, noise pollution, instances of environmental degradation include the improper disposal of solid waste and litter, the release of sewage, oil, and chemicals into the environment, as well as the negative impact of architectural and visual pollution (Camarda & Grassini, 2003).

- Air Pollution and Noise

As a result of an increase in the number of visitors and their increased mobility, there has been a significant expansion in the provision of transport through air, road,

ship, and train. Acid rain, global warming, and photochemical pollution have all been related to emissions from transportation as well as emissions from the production and use of energy. The air pollution that is caused by tourist transportation has effects on a worldwide scale, in particular the carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions that are caused by the utilisation of transportation energy. Additionally, it may add to the already severe air pollution in the area. Some of these effects are almost entirely attributable to activities associated with tourists (Glensor et al., 2004).

A concern that comes along with contemporary living is the increased amount of noise pollution caused by things such as airplanes, automobiles, and buses, as well as leisure vehicles like snowmobiles and jet skis. not only does it result in discomfort, tension, and potential hearing impairment in humans, but it also induces distress in wildlife, especially in areas that are vulnerable to its impact (Crimes, 2004).

- Solid Waste and Littering

The World Tourism Organisation estimates that annual revenue from international tourism is growing, yet your vacation to that great foreign place may be generating more issues than it solves, since there are various ways in which tourism may negatively effect the natural environment. These include placing a significant strain on the city's energy and resource supply as well as its waste management system. According to estimates provided by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), visitors are responsible for producing 4.8 million tonnes of rubbish annually, which accounts for 14% of all solid waste. This garbage has the potential to overburden the systems that are responsible for waste management. In regions that have a high concentration of tourist activities and appealing natural features, waste disposal is a big concern, and incorrect disposal may be a major contributor to the degradation of the natural environment, rivers, scenic places, and roadsides. The physical look of the sea and the coastline can be negatively affected by solid waste and littering, which can also lead to the mortality of marine species (Belsoy et al., 2012).

It has been determined that irresponsible tourist boat operators are to fault for throwing their waste into the ocean, which led to a significant volume of garbage washing up onto one specific beach. It is not only making the beaches unclean and hurting tourism, but it is also the primary cause of mortality for a great number of aquatic

species, such as whales and turtles – and it is causing a great deal of environmental damage (Budeanu, 2007).

- Sewage

The construction of new hotels, recreational facilities, and other types of infrastructure frequently results in an increase in the amount of sewage pollution. Waste water pollutes the oceans and rivers that are near tourist destinations, which is bad for the flora and wildlife in those areas. The discharge from sewage systems causes significant harm to coral reefs. Alterations in salinity and transparency have the potential to have far-reaching effects on the habitats around coasts. In addition, contamination from sewage can be hazardous to people's and animals' health. Due to the fact that sewers and sewage treatment facilities have fallen behind the development boom, the majority of untreated sewage is now discharged into storm drains, which ultimately go to the ocean. There are a variety of different estimates on the severity of the pollution, but one research demonstrated that around 10,000 cubic metres of raw sewage run into the water each day along Pattaya beach. The National Environmental Board conducted a research that found the amount of faecal matter in the water to be seven times greater than the acceptable level (Smith & Duffy, 2003).

- Aesthetic Pollution

The modern world has an increasing propensity to assign a monetary value to everything and to commodify both tangible and intangible things. However, the values that exist in our society cannot be reduced to a simple monetary calculation. Money may, of course, make economic values concrete and responsible but, this is not the sole kind of value. Simmel (2004) proposed that money is essentially a social phenomena, a type of human interaction. According to Smith and Duffy (2003), the monetary value of anything will never adequately reflect how we feel about a person or how we react to breathtaking landscape.

Aesthetic value is one of the factors that is used in tourism to evaluate natural reserves, and it is also one of the criteria that is used to evaluate cultural resources, as stated in the criteria that UNESCO uses to evaluate candidate sites for the World Heritage List. The "feeling" that people experience about various landscapes is what gives them their aesthetic worth. The landscape might evoke specific feelings in people, and depending on the individual's personal value system, they could assign varying

degrees of aesthetic value to the same landscape. Because of this resonance, the traveller may convert their visual impressions into a particular form of sensation and store that feeling on a particular page in their memory bank. The aesthetic impression needs to be included into tourism planning in order to guarantee that travellers and tourists will have positive recollections of their experiences (Oh et al., 2007).

The following items are some examples of unwanted flotsam and jetsam that can be found in recreational waters: wooden crates, palettes, cardboard cartons, newspaper, steel drums, plastic containers, foam products, rubber goods like vehicle tyres, bottles, cans, human hair, discarded clothing, hypodermic syringes, needles, bottle tops, cigarette butts and packets, matchsticks, fish netting, and rope ends. In addition, uneven natural environments and natural environments that have been disturbed are visible in the majority of nations across the world. Tables and chairs in restaurants located in coastal areas and armchairs located in sand areas are major contributors to the degradation of the natural attractiveness of their surroundings (Khaosod, 2017).

3.3. SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY IN TOURISM

Both the substantive (goals) and procedural (means) aspects of the social, also known as the people or equity pillar of the sustainability idea, are conceived of simultaneously. The procedural dimension is concerned with the methods of accomplishing those aims, such as access to information, democratic decision making, empowerment, and democratic government. The substantive dimension roughly refers to the needs, rights, and well-being of people (Boström, 2012). Emphasises reciprocity and trust between company and society as vital to social sustainability in general, which gives weight to responsible tourism and corporate social responsibility in tourism as a beneficial component in resident quality of life (Mathew & Sreejesh, 2016).

Research utilising quantitative methodologies has been conducted on the substantive aspect, which consists of the social repercussions of tourism; relationships with a variety of social factors, including gender, age, class, status, and economics, have also been evaluated (Deery et al., 2012). The findings usually lend credence to the Social Exchange Theory postulate that a good attitude towards tourism is related to perceived advantages, notably economic benefits (Andereck et al., 2005). Although revenue from tourism is the most evident social exchange component contributing to resident

satisfaction with tourism, other factors such as resident subjective well-being and resident image of place are also essential and contribute significantly (Rivera et al., 2014). Because of this, we decided to focus our attention on those who are not immediately benefited monetarily by tourists.

Many studies hypothesise that the presence of tourists has an effect on the residents' quality of life in tourist locations by investigating the locals' perspectives on the subject of repercussions on communities and the environment. According to the findings, it is essential for the locals to see an improvement in their quality of life as a result of increasing tourism (Lundberg et al., 2017). When attempting to make conclusions regarding the effects of visitors and the tourism sector, quality of life is an essentially subjective experience that measures an individual's level of life satisfaction. There are numerous indicators of quality of life, and these indicators need to be weighted for their relative relevance to locals (Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011).

Ridderstaat et al, (2016) describe the connection between high quality of life and the growth of tourism as a complicated and mutually dependent interaction between high quality of life, tourism, and the economy. Criticise earlier research for failing to take into account the fact that high quality of life impacts the growth of tourist. The perspectives of locals on the challenges of sharing public space and products with tourists and tourism are extremely pertinent to this discussion. This refers to the infrastructure and services that have been constructed for the benefit of a community by taxpayers, such as a transportation system, police and search and rescue services, health care and cultural institutions, and the built environment as a common resource (Helgadóttir. 2018). Housing is another concern, as is the influence that tourism has on the local real estate market at the destination (Martin et al., 2018).

Since at least the beginning of the 1970s, the problem of overcrowding has been a perennial focus of discussion in the field of tourist studies (Oklevik et al., 2019) It is generally considered interchangeable with the more contemporary phrase of "overtourism." (Milano et al., 2018). This focus leads to the notion that society has certain tolerance boundaries that are beyond the ability for adaptation and that the development of tourism will ultimately approach these limits, causing a shift from a positive to a negative attitude among the people of the surrounding area (Canavan, 2014; Milano et al., 2018) The term "overtourism" should be understood to mean "the

excessive growth of visitors leading to overcrowding in areas where residents suffer the consequences of temporary and seasonal tourism peaks, which have forced permanent changes to their lifestyles, access to amenities, and general well-being." This rising critical discussion on overtourism is not short on examples of disputes between locals and visitors (Oklevik et al., 2019), highlighting the necessity to do more study and address the issues that are being raised by what is occurring at this interface. One way to gain an understanding of this is to consider resiliency. In this respect, the findings of Nunkoo & Ramkissoon (2012) highlighting the importance of residents' trust in the balance of perceived benefits and costs, their trust in government, and empowerment in the face of tourist development are crucial. These findings indicate the relevance of residents' faith in the balance of perceived benefits and costs.

The term "tourism resilience" refers to the ability of a destination town to preserve a quality of life that is considered to be attractive (Lew & Cheer, 2018). The concept of community resilience in regard to tourism is frequently discussed in terms of decline, which refers to the detrimental effects of a declining tourist sector on communities that are economically dependent on tourism (McLennan & Moyle, 2016). Although the concepts of resilience and the social sustainability of tourism may appear to be similar at first glance, it is essential to comprehend both of their distinctions and their synergies. The concept of resilience is more procedural in nature, serving as a means to the overarching objective of sustainability (Farrell & Twining-Ward, 2005), whereas social sustainability corresponds to more substantial aspects (Adger, 2003). Recent discussions have centred on the concept of resilience, which can be defined as the ability to adapt to change, and sustainability, which may be defined as the more normative goal to limit or prevent change (Burns, 2018). Both phrases clearly share aims and research perspectives (Lew, 2018), which are relevant to the topic of tourist growth and quality of life for residents. The terms "quality of life" and "quality of life for residents" are both abbreviations for "quality of life." Residents are subjected to a variety of consequences, all of which should be taken into account throughout the tourist industry's planning and marketing processes (Ridderstaat et al., 2016). Furthermore, residents are most affected by tourism in countries where tourist arrivals (as a percentage of country population) are large and rapidly growing (Ivlevs, 2017). This finding suggests that Icelandic residents are particularly likely to experience significant effects

of tourism in line with the exponential growth in tourist arrivals in the post-crisis period of 2008–2018.

3.4. ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY IN TOURISM

Many times, the economic consequences of tourism are classified as either tangible (quantitative or directly measurable in monetary values) or intangible (qualitative or not directly quantifiable). This is because tangible effects may be measured in terms of monetary values (Woltering, 2009; Metzler, 2007). The advantages that tourism brings to society and economies may be broken down into two categories: tangible and intangible consequences. According to Dwyer (2020), the economic advantages of tourism do not match the economic effect of tourism or the economic contribution of tourism. According to the concept of the economic advantages of tourism, a geographical entity or a citizen has to be in a better financial position with tourism than they would be without tourism. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct an analysis of the net benefits, which include not only a consideration of the expenditures associated with the development of tourism but also the opportunity costs associated with activities associated with tourism (Dwyer et al., 2020). Opportunity costs are defined as lost revenue from other investment options (Mayer, 2012). This idea is connected to the sometimes overlooked distinction between real and distributive effects (Hanusch 1994; Schonback et al., 1997) real effects contribute to an overall improvement in the supply of products available to private households and, as a result, have a positive influence on the overall level of welfare. distributive effects, on the other hand, have the opposite effect. In contrast, distributive effects are the sum total of all monetary changes that occur as a result of a policy change. This occurs when the gains in one sector of the economy match the losses that occur in another area; as a result, the overall level of welfare does not change (Mayer, 2013). Other unfavourable economic implications of tourism for destinations include increased pricing as a result of imported inflation and growing demand (Bull. 1991), as well as the possibility of increased taxes as a result of the necessity for governments to support expensive tourism infrastructure (Stynes, 1997).

Dwyer et al (2020) defines the economic contribution of tourism as the significance of tourism in terms of its impact on Gross Domestic Product (Regional

Product), household income, value added, foreign exchange earnings, and employment through tourism-related spending." Tourism Satellite Accounts is one typical method that is utilised in the process of quantifying the economic impact of tourism (TSA) (Elgar, 2006; Frechtling, 2010). However, TSA can only quantify direct impacts because it is an accounting strategy; in order to evaluate indirect and induced effects, modelling approaches such as input-output (IO) models or more recent improvements need to be used. This indicates that the outcomes of the TSA and IO methodologies cannot be compared head-to-head (Ahlert, 2003).

Tourism development can be a powerful driver of economic growth and development, particularly in less economically advanced nations. However, it is important to ensure that such development is sustainable, meaning that it can continue to benefit the local economy and community over the long term without causing environmental or social harm (Roseland, 2000).

Here are some key factors that contribute to the economic sustainability of tourism development:

Diversification of the local economy: Tourism should be seen as one part of a diverse local economy, rather than the sole driver of economic growth. This can help to ensure that the local economy is resilient in the face of changes in the tourism industry, Promotion of local businesses: Encouraging the growth of locally owned and operated tourism businesses can help to ensure that the benefits of tourism are distributed more widely throughout the local community (Altinay, 2000).

Preservation of local culture and environment: Protecting the natural and cultural resources that draw tourists to a destination is essential for ensuring the long-term viability of the tourism industry. This can include measures such as limiting development in sensitive areas, promoting responsible tourism practices, and educating tourists about the importance of sustainability. Investment in infrastructure: Adequate investment in infrastructure such as transportation, utilities, and public facilities can help to ensure that tourism can continue to grow without causing negative impacts on the local community (Gill & Williams, 1994).

Collaboration and partnership: Successful tourism development requires collaboration and partnership between various stakeholders, including the government, local businesses, community organizations, and tourists themselves. This can help to ensure that tourism development is responsive to the needs and concerns of the local community, and that the benefits of tourism are shared more widely. Employment opportunities Tourism development can create new jobs and opportunities for local residents, particularly in sectors such as hospitality, transportation, and retail. However, it is important to ensure that these jobs are fairly compensated and that local workers are given the necessary training and support to succeed in these roles (Bramwell, 2011).

Management of tourism impacts: Sustainable tourism development requires careful management of the impacts that tourism can have on the local environment and community. This can include measures such as waste management, water conservation, and limiting the number of tourists in sensitive areas. **Responsible tourism practices:** Encouraging tourists to behave responsibly and sustainably while visiting a destination can help to minimize the negative impacts of tourism. This can include promoting responsible travel practices, supporting sustainable tourism initiatives, and educating tourists about the importance of respecting local cultures and environments (Buckley, 2012).

Monitoring and evaluation Regular monitoring and evaluation of tourism development projects can help to ensure that they are meeting their intended goals and that any negative impacts are being addressed. This can involve collecting data on economic, environmental, and social indicators, and using this information to make informed decisions about future tourism development (Burak et al., 2004).

3.4.2 Economic Development in Tourism and its Positive and Negative Effects

3.4.2.1 Positive Impacts of Tourism

It is the potential for good economic consequences that frequently convinces governments, businesses, and people to participate in the development of tourism destinations (Kumar & Hussain, 2014). Hotels, caravan parks, guesthouses, and other tourist attractions that provide cash for stakeholders and employment opportunities for

the local community are examples of tourism-related businesses. According to Stynes and Jago (2012) the travel and tourism industry has the potential to have a wide range of beneficial effects on the economy, the following being among the most significant of these effects:

1. Rising domestic revenue and foreign currency profits
2. Economic multiplier effect
3. Rise in job opportunities
4. Enhanced physical facilities and systems

The travel and tourism industry is responsible for the generation of income and wealth for private individuals, local councils, companies, voluntary bodies, and national governments. This ranges from the modest income earned by a couple operating a farmhouse bed and breakfast business to the millions of pounds generated by large travel companies and the billions of pounds earned from tourism. Spending money generated by tourists in a nation can have a significant impact on the country's overall balance of payments when seen from an international perspective (Makens & Choy, 1984).

The revenue created by tourist development is frequently essential to the economic well-being of a place, and the multiplier effect is an important notion that helps to raise that revenue. According to the findings of recent studies, the money that is spent by tourists in a particular region is put back into the economy of that region. One of the primary reasons that governments support the expansion of tourism can be attributed to the industry's potential to generate employment opportunities. Hotels, transportation companies, travel agencies, tourist attractions, tour guides, as well as government offices and tour operators all provide direct job opportunities in the tourism industry (Lieper, 1979). Additionally, tourism generates job opportunities in areas that are not directly related with the sector. For instance, employment opportunities can be found in the banking industry, design firms, and transportation businesses. According to Mathieson & Wall (1982), the development of tourism not only generates revenue and creates jobs, but it also contributes to the improvement of infrastructure within the specified locations. Examples of how tourism development contributes to infrastructure improvements include enhancements to road and rail systems, airport expansions, advancements in telecommunications, and upgrades to utility services such as water and

power supply. The enhancements made to the amenities that are offered for visitors might ultimately help the local population as well.

3.4.1.2 Negative Impacts of Tourism

In spite of the fact that tourism often has a good influence on the economy, it is possible for it to have certain unintended consequences, such as the loss of conventional jobs, an increase in the number of people who are unemployed during peak tourist seasons, and an increase in the cost of living. In the tourist industry, a leakage takes place if money is lost from a destination region. It's possible that this is due to the fact that the hotels are owned by corporations that are based in other nations, which means that the earnings aren't staying in the local region. Additionally, in order to achieve the lowest possible costs, larger travel and tourism businesses typically consolidate their product and service purchases (Cooper, 2008). When people shift from traditional sectors like farming, forestry, mining, and fishing into service positions in the tourist industry, this might result in the loss of traditional jobs. The retention of employees in basic sectors is a challenge shared by many developing nations, including those that are making significant efforts to draw visitors. In tourist locations that are not busy throughout the whole year, seasonal unemployment can be a concern, which places an additional pressure on the resources of both the local and national governments. The number of tourists that flock to a vacation spot has the potential to drive up the price of goods and services, especially when there is a high demand during peak seasons (Cooper et al., 1993). Residents of the locality face a disadvantage as they may be subjected to elevated prices for various commodities such as food, beverages, entertainment, transportation, and events. It is possible for the local population to be required to pay additional fees in order to subsidise the provision of facilities and services for tourists.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.1. TOURISM CERTIFICATION AS A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT TOOL

Certification for quality in tourism has been around for almost a century and has gained a lot of respect in the market. It took decades to come up with the five-star rating system for hotels, which is now recognized and used all over the world. Sustainable tourism certification, on the other hand, has been around for about 30 years and has had many problems with its credibility and legitimacy in the market (Conaghan & Hanrahan, 2010).

More than sixty tourism certification programs were made between the Earth Summit in 1992 and the International Year of Ecotourism in 2002 (Withyman, 2015). At first, these programs were mostly about how well businesses treated the environment, and many of them were made for eco-tourism businesses in particular. In 2000, the international Mohonk Agreement was the first agreement that everyone agreed on and made a clear distinction between ecotourism and sustainable tourism. This agreement said that "sustainable tourism products" are those that work well with the local environment, community, and culture, so that they are the ones who benefit in the long run (Spenceley & Bien, 2013). Sustainable tourism ideas can be used for any type or size of tourism. Ecotourism is a type of sustainable tourism in which the business and its clients have a clear relationship with nature, conservation, and the local culture. Interpretation and learning are important parts of ecotourism products. In this document, there was also a suggestion for an international certification program for ecotourism and sustainable tourism (Font, 2002).

4.2. GLOBAL STANDARDS FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM CERTIFICATION

More than 170 certification programmes all around the world are devoted to promoting environmentally responsible tourist practises. These programmes contain criteria and standards that encourage commitment and performance in terms of conducting business in a manner that is beneficial to both people and the environment

(Honey, 2002). According to Dodds and Joppe (2005), the past 10 years have seen a significant increase in the attention placed on the creation of worldwide standards for tourist certification. Because there were so many programmes, it was believed that the notion would become meaningless because there were so many of them. This would confuse both the tourism operator and the visitor (Font & Sallows, 2002; Haaland & Aas, 2010). These worldwide standards are now in effect as a result of the establishment of the worldwide Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) and the formulation of a set of criteria that are acknowledged on a global scale and are applicable to hotels, tours, and locations. It is the responsibility of the GSTC to grant accreditation to certification programmes that are up to the requirements set by the GSTC. So far, it has been determined that the criteria of twenty programmes meet the requirements set out by the GSTC (Withyman, 2015). EarthCheck and the Promotion of Ecotourism Two of these programmes, including Australia's ECO Certification, are promoted as being accessible to firms involved in the tourist industry in Australia. According to (Buckley, 2012), on the other side, certain multinational government organisations were not pleased with the strategy that the GSTC took, which was to function as a consultative mechanism with optional evaluation criteria. The United Nations Environment Programme Global Partnership for Sustainable Tourism is one of the most significant of these, and it has established its very own parallel systems. A number of other organisations have launched websites and programmes with names that are strikingly similar to those of these projects in order to capitalise financially on the exposure that has been generated by these endeavours. In an industry where there was already a great deal of confusion, the certification process for the tourism industry has made matters even more perplexing for both travellers and the businesses that serve them.

Furthermore, certification and accreditation are frequently misunderstood, which contributes to the existing uncertainty. These are two phrases that are frequently used interchangeably, despite the fact that they refer to entirely distinct concepts. The formal process of ensuring that a building, product, process, or service satisfies a given standard is referred to as certification. Certification can be performed by an independent agency (Margaryan & Stensland, 2017). A logo or an eco-label is awarded to companies who not only meet but also surpass the baseline criteria. In the grand scheme of things, this is interpreted as an indication of the product's excellent quality as well as a sign that it is beneficial to the economy, society, and the environment. Both commercial businesses

and public organisations are able to administer programmes leading to certification (Mic, 2021).

Accreditation is a more advanced procedure in which an organisation that is not affiliated with any specific certification programme confirms that certification programmes as a whole fulfil a specified standard (Withyman, 2015). This certification establishes quality requirements for the industry as a whole as well as for individual markets. In addition to this, it lends greater credibility and legitimacy to certified certification programmes (Klintman, 2012). It is believed that accreditation is especially vital in the tourist business, because there are so many different programmes and standards that it would be simple to accuse someone of "greenwashing." and customer cynicism (Jarvis et al., 2010).

4.3. PROCESS- AND PERFORMANCE-BASED CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

The tourism industry's stakeholders are interested in ensuring that businesses that cater to tourists adhere to stringent guidelines and obtain appropriate certification. This is due to the fact that it is seen as a beneficial instrument that assists in defining and explaining to customers in the wider market what responsible and sustainable practises are (Bendell & Font, 2004). The majority of individuals who are in favour of certification are of the opinion that the more a certification programme takes into account the natural and social environment (of economics and culture), the more it may contribute to the tourist industry's sustainable growth on a global and local scale (Hamele, 2012).

There isn't a single certification programme that isn't structured differently from the others, despite the fact that they all adhere to the same principles and strive to accomplish the same things. In the field of tourism, there are primarily two categories of certification programmes: those that are based on the process, and those that are based on the outcomes of the process. There are arguments that may be made in favour of both kinds of programmes, as well as arguments against them. Certification programmes are increasingly incorporating aspects from each of these methodologies. It is essential to be familiar with the many approaches to a problem. They alter the procedures that are

used to put a programme into operation as well as the criteria that are used to evaluate and report the program's long-term success (Bowman, 2011).

A significant component of process-based strategies is the implementation of environmental management systems (EMS) in order to monitor and enhance performance. Performance standards are not established by certification programmes that are based on processes (Heras-Saizarbitoria et al., 2013). Instead, they provide answers to problems related to management and policy. Process-based programmes are frequently utilised to assist management in the conduct of baseline research, the training of employees, and the establishment of mechanisms for continuing monitoring. Programmes that are based on processes concentrate more on the steps that are taken to complete a task rather than the results of those steps. This indicates that in order to assist enhance business practises, they consider not just the outputs of a company but also how that company operates. According to proponents of the process-based approach, this method is superior for collaborating with one another and satisfying the requirements of enterprises ranging in size and scope. Process-based programmes have been criticised for their failure to ensure sustainability due to the fact that they place more emphasis on the grey components of the process than than the green aspects of quantifiable outcomes. In addition, small organizations typically find it difficult and costly to implement process-based systems since it can be expensive to construct an EMS with the assistance of external experts. It is also argued that they are more difficult to assess and evaluate in comparison to the standards of the industry (Bien, 2007; Chan, 2011). The most well-known and widely used of all process-based standards is the ISO 4001 standard for "green" hotel accreditation. The ECO Certification programmes, which are also known as NEAP programmes, are managed in Australia by Ecotourism Australia. Additionally, the Gumnut Award programme is managed for the caravan and camping sector. The Eco-Friendly STAR Certification programme is managed by the tourism industry (Withyman, 2015).

Schemes that are based on performance are focused on assessing indicators and reaching benchmarks in areas such as the amount of water and energy that is utilised as well as the amount of waste that is produced (Font, 2007). Businesses are able to be compared to one another using this particular sort of certification since they all utilise the same unit of measurement. In addition, they are important due to the fact that they enable accurate reporting and comparisons from one year to the next. However,

according to (Bowman, 2011), performance-based programmes may be expensive to set up, manage, and monitor since they need to be inspected on a regular basis and have plans for continual development. This might make it difficult to justify their usage in some circumstances. Despite this, they are considered to be the sorts of certification programmes that are the most valuable and helpful because of this reason. Both the globally utilised EarthCheck programme and the locally designed and administered Queensland ecoBiz programme, which are both focused on performance, are available to tourist enterprises in the state of Queensland. Prior to 2009 the earth check programme was known as the Green Globe programme.

When performance criteria are used to ensure that minimal standards are satisfied, and a process-based approach is used to ensure that the organisation is proactive about making changes in the future, they operate most effectively. In addition, certification programmes are seen to have a higher level of legitimacy when they are enshrined in government law and validated by an independent body. Credible certification programmes expose both the standards themselves and the criteria by which they are judged to prospective candidates (Black & Crabtree, 2007).

4.4. BENEFITS AND CRITICISMS OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM CERTIFICATION

4.4.1 Benefits of Sustainable Tourism Certification

A lot of research shows that sustainable tourism certification is good not only for the business that gets it, but also for consumers, governments, local communities, and the environment. But there isn't a lot of research on how much of these benefits are actually delivered as shown results.

Literature says that certification has two main benefits for tourism businesses: better business practices and performance in terms of sustainability, and better market performance for certified businesses (Font & Epler Wood, 2007). Certification is a tool for management that can help businesses improve their quality, productivity, and environmental and social management. Certification is also seen as a useful CSR reporting tool because it helps businesses set up a consistent set of procedures, policies, and practices that guide business operations (Dodds et al., 2022). Argues that the most

important thing to keep in mind is that certification is not the end goal. Instead, the educational part of the certification process is seen as a major benefit (Bien, 2007). Certification is said to help business owners become more aware of the environment, protect sensitive areas, use fewer resources, and let the community and visitors know about their sustainable efforts (Conaghan & Hanrahan, 2010). Even though the process has its own benefits, cost savings and better economic performance are usually the result of better business performance and better use of resources (Rao & Holt, 2005).

It has been suggested that certification can assist firms in marketing themselves by providing certified businesses with a method to differentiate themselves from the businesses that they compete with (Font, 2002, 2003). Certification is supposed to provide companies with a competitive edge by bringing them in contact with distribution channels and customers through marketing. This is another way certification may help firms. It is also seen as a method of demonstrating what the most effective strategies for sustainable tourism are (Graci & Dodds, 2015).

Certification is beneficial for more than just the individual tourist companies themselves. Additionally, it is beneficial to management organisations, the government, the community at large, as well as tourists. Certification provides governments and management organisations with opportunities to advertise their destinations while also helping them safeguard certain market segments (Jarvis et al., 2010). It can also help lower the cost of protecting the environment through regulations by encouraging people to do things on their own using the certification framework.

Since tourism is a primarily uncontrolled business, voluntary programmes such as certification are seen as being of utmost importance (Tepelus & Cordoba, 2005). These programmes ensure that high-quality, environmentally friendly items are always available to consumers. According to (Buckley, 2012), a well-known authority on tourism, eco-friendly and sustainable certification is still a relatively untapped subject in the field of tourist research. As a part of several research initiatives, a number of certification programmes have been evaluated and evaluated. The Sustainable Tourism Education (STEP) accreditation programme was investigated by Hansen (2007). Hamele (2002) discusses the use of eco-labels (also known as certification) across Europe as well as the development of the VISIT certification programme. The researchers (Blackman, 2012) investigated how the Blue Flag Programme in Costa Rica contributes

to the growth of local businesses. In order to develop a Norwegian certification system, Font & Harris (2004) analysed five programmes from a variety of countries based on their socioeconomic criteria. Haaland & Aas (2010) compared the standards, organisation, and management of three national certification programmes from Australia, Costa Rica, and Sweden.

Importantly Ayuso (2007) conducted a research on the usefulness of voluntary sustainability tools in the hotel industry in Spain. These instruments include codes of conduct, certifications and prizes, environmental management systems, and performance indicators. According to the findings of this study, formal certification systems appear to be the most effective means to improve the sustainable performance of organisations and offer a larger variety of advantages, both real and intangible. However, there has been a lot of discussion concerning the merits and drawbacks of certification, as well as the question of whether the "proposed" advantages of certification are actually realised in practise.

4.4.2 Criticisms of Sustainable Tourism Certification

Recently, there has been significant discussion and concern regarding certification programs and the effort to achieve global harmonization of certification standards. According to Bowman (2011), there are concerns that the globalization of certification is unjust towards small tourism businesses and less developed tourist spots. According to critics, globally recognized certification programs are associated with significant initial and operational expenses, complex and time-consuming processes, and excessive bureaucratic procedures (Jarvis et al., 2010). In addition, Carlsen, et al, (2006) discovered that numerous small tourism enterprises face a significant disadvantage due to their insufficient knowledge about certification procedures and their lack of the necessary skills and time to obtain certification. Font (2007) says that most people agree that small and medium-sized businesses are treated badly in global certification programs. Most of the time, this is because they have less money, knowledge, and motivation than bigger businesses to meet certification criteria and get certified.

This makes it hard to live up to the (Mohonk Agreement's, 2000) value that "the development of a certification scheme should be a participatory, multi-stakeholder, and multi-sectoral process." There are signs that small tourism businesses are being left out

of the process of making certification programs. So, they are more likely to be disengaged and not value their certification because of this disagreement, researchers are now calling for more attention to be paid to the involvement of stakeholders and local participation in decision-making when setting criteria and systems for certification (Jamal et al., 2006).

Certification programs have also been criticized in the past for putting too much weight on accommodation and ecotourism providers and for favoring environmental benefits too much (Font et al., 2002), Many early plans didn't take into account social and cultural issues. Also, everyone agrees that they tend to focus too much on management processes and not enough on performance results (Buckley, 2012).

Even though there are different points of view, certification is still seen as a useful tool for helping the industry reach its sustainability goals. But if certification in the tourism industry is to grow and become the useful tool it is said to be, we need to learn more about what makes businesses want or not want certification and what stops them from getting it.

4.5. MOTIVATIONAL DRIVERS OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM CERTIFICATION

The way tourism operators see the drivers, benefits, and limiting factors affects how much they want to use certification as a tool for sustainable management. Motivation refers to the things that start, guide, and keep people moving toward their goals. Motives are what drive us to do what we do. They are the "whys" behind our actions. You can't actually see a motive, but you can figure out what it is based on how someone acts (Nevid, 2013).

Two types of motivation are recognized: intrinsic and extrinsic. Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is prompted by factors external to the individual, and it typically involves the anticipation of some kind of reward. Competition, appraisal, recognition, money, and other material rewards are all examples of extrinsic motives. In contrast, an individual's intrinsic drive is generated entirely from inside. It is entirely voluntary and motivated only by intrinsic factors like intrinsic interest, delight, and fulfillment (Amabile et al., 1994). According to Ayuso (2007), there are two types of

incentive to take into account when thinking about the reasons why tourist firms choose environmental and sustainable instruments like certification. The understanding and ideals of the individual who is responsible for running a tourist business provide the impetus for acting ethically. Companies are motivated to take strategic actions because they believe doing so will provide them with advantages in the marketplace. Motivators are things like these that help people work toward their goals. The term "drivers" refers to the external forces that motivate firms to take sustainable action in the absence of any inherent necessity to do so (Okereke, 2007).

Many recent studies detail and explore these motivating aspects that lead to the "greening" of the tourist industry. Personal beliefs, knowledge, and attitudes around the notion of sustainability are regarded as the drivers of ethical motivation. Extrinsic motivation is fueled by things like improving one's public image, gaining a competitive edge, or saving money via the more frugal and effective use of resources like energy and water (Dodds et al., 2022).

There are also other factors in the environment that push tourism businesses to be more environmentally friendly. These include responding to the needs of visitors and the community, the influence of the media, institutional pressure from groups like associations and business groups, and following the rules (Williams & Ponsford, 2009).

Álvarez et al, (2001) report that a lot of the research in this area has only come up with lists of drivers, which can be seen as too simple. They stress how important it is to do more research that looks at the process of "greening" instead of just listing the causes. Mair and Jago (2010) came up with a conceptual model of the corporate greening process in the organizational context of business events in the tourism sector in response to this conclusion. Based on the research of (Bansal & Roth, 2005), they came up with this model. The model not only talks about the above-mentioned drivers, but it also talks about the problems that tourism businesses face when they try to become more green.

Organizational context refers to the type, size, and sector of a business. These factors have a big impact on how businesses think about, plan, and put into action sustainable business practices and certification. Most of Queensland's tourism businesses are small or medium-sized. Many are run by their owners (Tourism & Events Queensland, 2014). Small tourism business owners have a hard time making decisions about environmental engagement and sustainability (Sampaio, 2012; Tzschentke et al.,

2008) and face a lot of different challenges than their larger counterparts (Thomas, 2015).

Also, the way a tourism business is run has an effect on whether or not it chooses to use more environmentally friendly practices and how it is encouraged to do so. In the literature, it is also said that government grants, tax breaks, and subsidies can help sustainability leaders and encourage laggards to adopt sustainable practices and seek certification as a way to prove they are doing the right thing (Graci & Dodds, 2015).

4.6. BARRIERS TO SUSTAINABLE TOURISM CERTIFICATION

Businesses can also face internal or external barriers when they try to use sustainable business practices and get certified. Barriers that a business has to deal with can change and limit its motivation to get certified. In the model by Mair & Jago (2010) and other research on the corporate sustainability of small and medium-sized businesses, barriers to motivational drive toward certification are listed as being internal to the tourism business. These barriers include: small businesses' lack of time because they have to focus on day-to-day management; owner-operators' lack of knowledge about the environmental and social effects of their operations; and owner-operators' perception that they don't care about the environment. Small businesses also have trouble implementing sustainable practices because they don't have enough information or advice, and they don't have enough money to invest in making their business more sustainable (Revell & Blackburn, 2007).

The external context of a tourism business is made up of things that aren't under the direct control of the tourism business but still have an effect on the business. They include things like the state of the industry's and the world's economies, the political and institutional leadership, rules, and governance, the lack of consumer demand, and the tools and technology that are available (Mair & Jago, 2010). These outside factors can either make business owners want to get certified or stop them from doing so. In their case study of the benefits and challenges of sustainable tourism certification in the west of England, Jarvis et al, (2010) found that external factors like lack of supportive funding, such as grants and subsidies, lack of consumer knowledge, lack of marketing support, the effects of the global financial crisis on the economy, and the rigidity of the certification programs all acted as barriers (Jarvis et al, 2010).

According to the research, outside institutional factors also affect how businesses decide to be sustainable. These include the policies and leadership of the government, the priorities of the destination, and the recognition of the industry. It is known that there isn't much known about how institutional factors affect people's decision to get a certification (Jarvis et al., 2010; Tzschentke et al., 2008).

In his review of seven recent case studies of sustainable tourism certification, Buckley (2012) talks about how institutions see certification programs. He found that most private tourism businesses and industry groups want "cheap and easy certification" and see it as a small part of their marketing plans. He also says that most government tourism agencies are mostly concerned with marketing, so they want certification programs that are "weak technically but strong politically" to bring in more international tourists and give them access to protected areas. He found that only businesses that do a good job of taking care of the environment or have a personal interest in doing a better job are interested in good certification programs, so they can stand out from their competitors.

Consumer demand for tourism products that have been certified as sustainable is another external context factor that affects operators' reasons for getting certified and can act as a barrier. There are different pieces of evidence about "whether consumers care enough about sustainable tourism and hospitality products to change how they shop." (Jarvis et al., 2010). For example, it has been said that the number and complexity of certification programs, the lack of information about certification, the fact that consumers don't know about it, and the price of the product, which is usually thought to be higher than the price of other services that aren't certified, all work against consumer demand. But Burns and Bibbings (2009) say that society has changed recently, and as a result, consumers are more aware of the social and environmental responsibilities of businesses and expect them to do more to improve their sustainability.

The fact that certification is voluntary also makes it harder for operators to choose to take part in certification. Self-regulation of sustainable activity is important to the tourism industry. This means that informal strategies are used to get people to follow the rules. These strategies depend on people's commitment to the rules and on subtle social sanctions that are enforced through formal and informal means. The motivation of tourism operators to get certified is affected by how real these enforcement methods are.

When it comes to certifying tourism businesses, one of the most important things to consider is the legitimacy of the compliance mechanisms and informal rules that go along with it. Changes in politics and the lack of consistency in policy, management, and promotion of certification have made it harder for operators to understand and support certification (Bernstein & Cashore, 2004).

Small tourism businesses are also less likely to get certified if the cost of certification is too high compared to the benefits they see. (Blackman et al., 2012) say that because certification is optional, participation in the industry will stay low unless it can be shown that it will bring in more money than it costs to get certified. Recent research by Esparon, (Stoeck & Gyuris, 2013) found that the fact that operators and customers can't "prove" the tangible results of certification makes them less likely to take part in these programs or buy certified products.

4.7 AN OVERVIEW OF ERBIL

Erbil, also known as hawlir (Kurdish, Hewlir, Arabic:, romanized: erbil; Syriac:, romanized: Arbel is the Governorate in the north of Iraq as well as the most populous city in that region. Hawlir is another name for Erbil. According to Danilovich and Alex's (2018) research, it is located in the Erbil Governorate. According to this website, there are around 1,600,000 people living there.

Erbil functions as the administrative center of the Region in Iraq, Erbil is located in the northern part of Iraq, with Turkey to the north and Iran to the east as its neighboring countries. It is also bordered by the Province of Mosul to the southwest and the Province of Kirkuk to the southeast. It has a total land area of 13165 km², and it is surrounded by Turkey to the north and Iran to the east. The Erbil governorate is divided into five districts, each of which consists of eleven subdistricts. In addition, there are two subdistricts that are administratively connected to the city itself (Kopanias & MacGinnis, 2015).

There is evidence that humans have been living in the Erbil area as far back as the fifth millennium BC (Novice & Karel, 2008). The historic Citadel of Erbil and the Mudhafaria Minaret may be found right in the middle of the city. The city of Urbilum was first recorded in written history during the Third Dynasty of Ur of Sumer, at which

time King Shulgi of Ur of Sumer made reference to the place. The Assyrians were ultimately successful in their conquest of the city (Hamblin & William, 2006).

Erbil was a powerful sovereign state in its region in the third millennium B.C. The Gutian people were able to temporarily take control of it. It wasn't until the late 2nd century BC that the Assyrians took control of the region. Afterwards, it became a part of the geopolitical region of Assyria under various empires, including the Median Empire, the Achaemenid Empire (specifically Achaemenid Assyria), Macedonian Empire, Seleucid Empire, Armenian Empire, Parthian Empire, Roman Assyria, and Sasanian Empire. Additionally, it served as the capital of the tributary state of Adiabene from the mid-second century BC to the early second century AD. Ishtar of Arbela was considered to be the city's guardian deity throughout ancient times (Porter & Barbara Nevling, 2004).

The archaeological museum in Erbil is home to a sizable collection of pre-Islamic relics, mainly works of art from Mesopotamia, and serves as a hub for archaeological excavations taking place in the surrounding region (Centre, UNESCO World Heritage, 2022). The Arab Council of Tourism has bestowed upon the city the title of Arab Tourism Capital for the year 2014. Inscription as a World Heritage Site took place for the Citadel of Erbil in July of 2014 (Centre & UNESCO World Heritage, 2022).

4.7.1 Sustainable Development In Erbil

Erbil is located at the heart in the Northern Iraq. In this part of the world freedom for people historically was an ultimate priority therefore, the notion of developing sustainable tourism is a new term and in a very early stage. In fact, the region has all potential products such as manmade and given nature that increasingly attract tourism nationally and internationally. According to many observer in tourism, the region is in need to be helped with a strategic plan to enhance tourism industry including academic material, staff performance, national and international investment to upgrade these tourism products in the region (Darbandi, 2017).

The World Tourism Organisation (WTO) emphasises the need of sustainable tourism development, which satisfies the requirements of both the current visitors and

the host areas, while also preserving and expanding the potential for tourism in the years to come. It is anticipated that it will result in the management of all resources in such a way that it will be feasible to achieve economic, social, and aesthetic objectives while safeguarding cultural authenticity, essential ecological processes, biodiversity, and life support systems (Darbandi, 2017).

As per a 1999 report by the World Tourism Organisation (WTO), around 80% of all tourist activity can be attributed to domestic tourism. Despite this fact, many nations have a tendency to place a higher emphasis on international tourism. This is due to the fact that, while domestic tourism primarily entails International tourism has emerged as the primary means of generating foreign exchange receipts, surpassing other sources, due to a redistribution of national income on a regional scale. Based on the latest data compiled by the World Tourism Organisation (WTO), the foreign exchange earnings from international tourism peaked at a record-breaking US\$ 476 billion in the year 2000. The aforementioned figure exceeded the export value of petroleum products, motor vehicles, telecommunications equipment, and any other individual category of product or service (wto, 2001).

In spite of the difficulties, there was still strong demand for foreign travel in 2016. According to the most recent UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, the number of international tourists who visited a destination increased by 3.9%, bringing the total number of visitors to 1,235 million. When compared to the previous year, 2016 had an increase of around 46 million foreign tourists (overnight visitors) (Darbandi, 2017).

With Iraq and Erbil destination one can easily notice that tourists visited the region from central and southern Iraq much higher than the international visitors check the table below. To which, this means the expectation of tourism industry to receive high profits from the international currency is not that high (Darbandi, 2017).

Table 1: Tourist Arrival In Erbil region for (2021-2022)

Tourist arrival In Erbil	Domestic Tourists	International Tourists
Tourism Arrival 2021	1,971,522	61,658
Tourism Arrival 2022	2,752,000	83,844

Source: (Tourism commission board, 2022).

Table 1 shows the number of tourist arrivals in the Erbil for the years 2021 and 2022, broken down into domestic tourists and international tourists.

In 2021, there were a total of 1,971,522 tourist arrivals in Erbil, with 1,971,522 domestic tourists and 61,658 international tourists. Domestic tourists are individuals who are residents of the Iraq, while international tourists are individuals who are visiting Erbil from outside the region.

In 2022, there was a significant increase in the total number of tourist arrivals, with a total of 2,752,000 arrivals. Of these, 2,752,000 were domestic tourists and 83,844 were international tourists.

This increase in tourist arrivals from 2021 to 2022 suggests that the Erbil is becoming an increasingly popular destination for both domestic and international tourists.

Lange (2011) might argue that tourism is a global industry worth \$3 billion every day, one that all countries, regardless of their degree of development, have the potential to benefit from. As the tourism industry continues to expand, particularly in developing nations, there is a pressing need to boost the economic advantages for the host communities while simultaneously reducing the negative repercussions. These requirements are reflected in the efforts that are being put into the sustainable development of tourism.

World travel and tourism council (WTTC) stress that safety and security are of maximum priority for tourism, they believe that the safety and security concerns have moved into the spotlight, in 2016 and if these issues will continue it cause difficulties for tourism industry in 2017.

Another factor also influencing the flow of travelers around the world notably the strength of the US dollar relative to other currencies is shifting the price competitiveness of destinations. Undoubtedly new developments will emerge alongside these existing factors. Saveriades (2000), underline the importance of carrying capacity by describing that when tourism perceive the capacity has been exceeded they lose interest and turn to find other destinations.

According to Taleb Rifai General Secretary of UNWTO "Despite the various obstacles that have arisen in recent years, particularly those associated with matters of safety and security, the tourism industry has proven to be robust and adaptable. Despite this, the number of people travelling internationally continues to increase at a rapid rate, which helps to boost the economy and improve the wellbeing of communities in a variety of countries" (unwto, 2017).

Mr. Rifai stated that "In order to establish a stronger connection, it is imperative that we collaborate more closely to establish the correlation between tourism's impact on economic growth, social integration, cultural and environmental conservation, and the promotion of mutual understanding. In light of the United Nations' declaration of 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development, Mr. Rifai emphasized the necessity of enhanced collaboration to establish a stronger connection between tourism and its role in fostering economic growth." As a result of this, private companies and governmental organisations are becoming more interested in the economic consequences that tourism has on a national, state, and local level. Additionally, tourism provides a specified number of employment in a tourism destination, and festivals and special events generate a specific quantity of sales or money in a community. Both of these factors contribute to the local economy. The use of local sources, including local employments in the tourist sector, also produces multiplier effects, which are frequently referenced to capture the secondary benefits of tourism expenditure (Stynes, 1999).

There are 4.5 million people living in the city of Erbil, which is located in the Northern Iraq. Mountains, valleys, ancient landmarks, and historical structures make up the scenery of the Kurdish area, all of which have contributed to the region's status as a popular tourist destination. The Erbil is located in southeastern Turkey. The Government (2012) reports that the mountains of the Iraq have an average height of around 2,400

meters, occasionally climbing to a height of 3,660 meters, which provides great landscape for tourism activities. Erbil has made major investments in recent years to improve its infrastructure, attractions, and hospitality in order to both encourage local tourism and fulfil the demand from international tourists. The development of tourism products and services in Erbil considered is considered as a foundation for market pull factor, improve employment and increase of international tourism arrivals. However, these development in Erbil are of high importance to cover protection of environment, enhance planning and managements and improve social and culture of local people (KRG, 2012).

4.7.2 Erbil 2014 been elected as Arab Tourism Capital

At the meeting held by the council in Cairo, four towns, namely Beirut, Taif, Sharjah, and Erbil, competed with one another for the honour of being named the tourist capital for the year 2014.

According to Tahir Abdulla, Many cultural activities that take place annually, such as celebrating the Holidays (Newroz), the anniversary of Erbil's liberation, an international marathon, and a beauty queen contest, all of these including many other religious and national events were determinant in naming Erbil as the Arab tourism capital. Erbil is the deputy governor of Erbil, and many cultural activities that take place annually. Abdulla stated that additional tourism activities such as horse racing and skydiving were scheduled to take place in the Erbil region. In addition, the historic neighbourhoods and marketplaces located around Erbil's citadel would be renovated to make way for the construction of a large concert hall in the downtown area. All of these things are going to be worked on and planned in order to make Erbil a tourist destination that is appealing (Barzan Muhammad & Rudaw, 2014).

Professionals in the tourism industry acknowledge that the environment and heritage are valuable components of both popular and specialized tourism offerings. They have the ability to greatly contribute to visitor education regarding the significance of our natural and cultural heritage sites, according to the World Tourism Organisation (WTO), which states that people place different values on environment and heritage and that these values vary from person to person.

This election of Erbil as a Arab tourism capital if been exploited strategically and wisely it could give many economic benefits to Iraq in general and people in particular in Erbil. A statistic compiled by the Erbil governorate indicates that the city of Erbil anticipates welcoming three million visitors by the year 2014. While this was going on, Mawlawi Jabar, the director of the tourism commission board, was quoted in Rudow as saying, "The number of visitors coming to Erbil is rising year by year. It is possible that the number may reach 4 million by 2014, which will be beneficial to the economy of Iraq. The Arab tourism capital was a huge project and opportunity to promote the cultural and other tourism attractions to the world in general and especially the Arab world as this market is recognized as having the largest number of potential visitors to Erbil, where representatives of tourism in Erbil could take advantage of the event and represent more of Erbil to a bigger market in terms of culture, environment and nature.

According to Hitchcock et al, (2010) Heritage encompasses physical and material remnants from the past, such as buildings, monuments, artifacts, sites, and constructed landscapes. It also includes cultural expressions manifested through behavior, action, and performance. The products from above mentioned by Hitchcock are the same with historical, natural products available in Iraq and therefore one can argue that the potential for a strong sustainable development and economic progress are immense if tourism commission board and other government bodies in Erbil planning for a strategic marketing and represent Erbil as safe and attractive tourist destination.

Because the supply of tourist services and high-quality products has the potential to provide large direct and indirect economic advantages, governments in many nations whose economies are still in the process of growing are interested in the industry as a potential source of employment opportunities and foreign exchange.

Tourism was regarded to have the potential to be an economic engine that could help traditional rural economies move onto a more contemporary route of growth and development by governments and development organisations who felt that by fostering regional development and providing infrastructure such as airports, roads, and water, tourism could be used to stimulate regional development (Bandara, 2001).

A traditional tourism planning approaches is to meet the developmental goals and objectives for which they were promoted. However, if other measures like having

quality products and services meet visitor's need and answering for their complaints not been taken to action seriously it can give a very negative impact (Timothy, 1998).

Table 2: Number Of Hotels, Apartments And Houses In Tourism Resorts Complexes By Classification, Sector And Governorate In Erbil For 2020.

Governorate	Tourism facility	sector	Total	Fifth class popular	Fourth class 1star	Third class 2star	Second class 3star	First class 4star	Upscale luxury 5star
Erbil	Hotels	Private	371	77	79	80	72	48	15
		Mixed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Total	358	60	88	97	58	46	9
	Apartments	Private	10	0	10	0	0	0	0
		Mixed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Total	10	0	10	0	0	0	0
	Motel	Private	41	20	0	10	0	9	2
		Mixed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Total	41	20	0	10	0	9	2
	Tourist Complex	Private	68	10	19	19	20	0	0
		Mixed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Total	68	10	19	19	20	0	0
	Total	Private	477	90	117	126	78	55	11
		Mixed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Total	477	90	117	126	78	55	11

Suorce: Iraqi Ministry of Planning (2022)

Through the above table, information about different types of tourist facilities in Erbil Governorate, classified according to star rating and type of ownership. The table also includes the total number of each type of facility. Here is a summary of the information in the table:

- There are a total of 358 tourist properties in Erbil. Private hotels make up the majority of the facilities, with 97 3-star properties, 58 4-star properties and 9 5-star facilities.

- Third class (two star) hotels are also popular, with 88 such facilities. There are 60 famous fifth-class hotels.
- There are no facilities in the mixed property category. There are 10 fourth-class hotels (one star) and 10 apartments.
- There are 41 motels. There are 68 tourist complexes, all of which are privately owned. The total number of facilities in each category is as follows:
- 9 upscale hotels (5 stars) 46 first-class (4-star) hotels 58 second-class (3-star) hotels 97 third-class hotels (two stars)
- 88 fourth class hotels (one star) 60 popular fifth-class hotels 10 apartments 41 motel 68 tourist complexes
- All facilities are privately owned, except for 10 4-star (1-star) hotels and 10 non-property-rated apartments.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.1 METHODOLOGY

Since this research aims to identify sustainable tourism activities in Erbil at the present time, the qualitative descriptive methodology was followed. The research title is also a good guide to indicate the type of research and the data collection . Qualitative research is usually based on observation and interview with open-ended questions and the interviewees answer a predetermined list of questions freely, subjectively rather than coercively and objectively.

5.2. THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY AND RESEARCH QUESTION

This research aims to collect data about the current situation of sustainable tourism in Erbil and will explain the identification of sustainable tourism activities through a qualitative descriptive research method, to arrive at some reliable answers to the research questions, and a list of basic interview questions, which are those around the world and will be designed to be used in Interviews managers in the hotel sector, managers in the municipality, the Tourism Authority, the Tourists Syndicate and related sectors.

5.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings and conclusions of this research may be useful to the authorities and persons responsible for sustainable tourism in the public sector or the private sector in Erbil. On the other hand, since education and training in this field require a permanent upgrade of equipment and technology, keeping the workforce involved in this field professionally updated through on-the-job training courses, and understanding and awareness of the negatives. And strengthening with regard to sustainable tourism will be of great help to meet and achieve these goals, all of which will affect the increase of state income. It is very important to know what definitions have been given by researchers in this field and what contributions have been made by international and local organizations in this regard and which can be exploited by interested parties who enjoy the benefits of the tourism industry.

5.4 SAMPLE

20 persons made the study participants as participants. Director of human resources in a hotel, hotel supervisor, director of administration in Erbil municipality, five managers of tourism companies, director of administration in Erbil municipality, sales manager in a hotel, assistant manager of a travel and tourism company, director of a tourist resort in Erbil, and two heads of departments in Erbil municipality. And a restaurant manager, and two hotel managers, and the director of the Tourists Syndicate, and the head of a department in the Tourism Authority, and the director of the department in the office of the Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism, and the director of environment, health and food safety in a hotel.

The interview took place in 2023. Each interview session lasted approximately 60 to 75 minutes. The translated version of the questions and answers can be found in the results and discussion of Chapter Five of this thesis. In order to rely on the validity of the answers, the main points of each interview were studied by the interviewees in another short meeting with them. They all agreed that the content of the interviews was correct.

Table 3: Profile Of The Interviewees

Sector	Organization	Position	Number
Private	• Hotel	• Director of human resources in a hotel	• 1
	• Hotel	• hotel supervisor	• 1
	• Companies	• managers of tourism companies	• 5
	• Hotel	• sales manager in a hotel	• 1
	• company	• assistant manager of a travel and tourism company	• 1
	• tourist resort	• director of a tourist resort in Erbil	• 1
	• restaurant	• restaurant manager	• 1
	• hotel	• the director of environment, health and food safety in a hotel.	• 1
Public	• Municipality	• director of administration in Erbil municipality,	• 1
	• Municipality	• director of administration in Erbil municipality,	• 1
	• Tourists Syndicate	• heads of departments in Erbil municipality	• 2
	• department in the Tourism Authority	• the director of the Tourists Syndicate,	• 2
		• the head of a department in the Tourism Authority	• 1
	• Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism	• the director of the department in the office of the Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism	• 1

5.5 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

To prepare the questions that are the main tool for data collection in this study, the researcher extracted the main issues in the field of sustainable tourism through a comprehensive review of the literature that was addressed in the previous chapters of this research and theory.

It was developed by Heung et al, (2010) these key issues made the basis of the questionnaire based on relevance, rationale, and frequency of use in sustainable tourism research.

The conceptual model of supply and demand developed by Heung et al, (2010) was used for data collection . Two important parts can be seen in this model, logically the requirements for a sustainable tourism system should come first because they indicate needs, for successful sustainable tourism management.

5.6 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

To collect data, the researcher personally met with each participant separately for in-depth interviews, and the data was written in Arabic, which was later transcribed and translated into English by the researcher and the competent translator as an editor. The interviewer conducted, asking questions and writing answers.

Each interview session lasted approximately 60 to 75 minutes. The translated version of the questions and answers can be seen in the results and discussion of Chapter 5 of this thesis. In order to rely on the validity of the responses, the main points of each interview were examined by the interviewees in another short meeting with them. They all agreed that the content of the interviews was correct.

For data analysis, manually transcribed interviews were first transcribed and prepared for content analysis. The transcript was read carefully and notes taken during the interviews were reviewed to identify key words, phrases and concepts used in the responses. The results are based on an analysis of the responses of the interviewees.

5.6.1 Transcribed Interviews.

Profession as a human resources manager in a hotel.

Question 1: *Can you tell us a little bit about yourself? (age, occupation, working experience and workplace duties).*

Answer 1: *Profession as a human resources manager in a hotel. Age 30 . Work experience 4 years. Work duties Finding creative and experienced employees for greater productivity.*

Question2 : *What are the most serious problems facing tourism industry for the moment? Can you specify some?*

Answer 2: *COVID-19 Pandemic The COVID-19 pandemic has had a severe impact on the tourism industry around the world, and Erbil is no exception. The pandemic has led to travel restrictions, border closures, and quarantine measures, leading to a significant drop in the number of tourists visiting the city. Many hotels and restaurants reported low occupancy rates and revenue as some businesses were forced to close due to lack of demand. The pandemic has also created uncertainty for businesses in the tourism industry, making it difficult for them to plan ahead.*

Question3: *How would you describe sustainability? Also, how would you describe sustainability for your profession or business?*

Answer 3: *Sustainability The ability to meet the needs of the current generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. In other words, it implies the responsible use and management of natural resources, socioeconomic considerations, and the guarantee of long-term environmental health.*

As a hotel HR manager, sustainability can be explained in a number of ways. This may include ensuring that the hotel operates in an environmentally friendly manner by reducing waste, reducing energy consumption and using green products. In addition, it may include promoting socially responsible practices, such as fair labor practices, supporting local communities, and providing opportunities for employee growth and development.

Sustainability can also involve creating a workplace culture that values and prioritizes sustainable practices, including reducing paper use, recycling, and encouraging employees to use public transportation or use eco-friendly vehicles. Sustainability in the

context of a hotel HR manager implies a holistic approach to hotel operations, taking into account not only the bottom line but also the social and environmental impacts of your business practices.

Question 4:*What is the meaning of sustainable tourism for you? Please tell about dimensions of sustainable tourism/ economic, social and environmental)*

Answer 4:*Sustainable tourism is a form of tourism that prioritizes the long-term health of the planet, its ecosystems and communities, minimizing negative impacts and maximizing positive impacts.*

Economic Dimension Sustainable tourism aims to generate long-term economic benefits for the local community through responsible tourism practices that create jobs, support local businesses and promote economic growth.

Social dimension Sustainable tourism aims to promote social and cultural diversity and protect the heritage and traditions of the local community by respecting local culture, providing opportunities for local people to participate in tourism activities and local social and cultural initiatives are supported.

Environmental dimension Sustainable tourism aims to reduce the negative impact of tourism on the environment by reducing pollution and waste, conserving natural resources, protecting biodiversity and ecosystems and promoting the use of natural sources of renewable energy.

Question5: *What can be done for sustainable tourism in erbil (applications/activities/decisions/certifications?) What should be done?*

Answer 5:*One way to promote sustainable tourism in Erbil is to implement certification programs such as Green Globe or Earth Check. These programs assess and certify tourism businesses based on their sustainability practices, such as energy and water conservation, waste management, and community involvement. By encouraging tourism businesses to adopt sustainable practices, Erbil can reduce their environmental impact and promote the growth of sustainable tourism. Certifications and standards can play an important role in promoting sustainable tourism in Erbil. Implementing certification programs such as the Global Sustainable Tourism Council or the Earth Check program can help ensure that tourism businesses follow sustainable tourism practices. By*

achieving these certifications, companies can demonstrate their commitment to sustainability and attract tourists interested in supporting sustainable tourism.

Question 6 : *Is there any kind of governmental program that directly attracts foreign tourists and promotes the country as a tourist destination?*

Answer 6: *One of the main programs is the Iraq Government Department of Tourism, which was established in 2007 with the aim of promoting the region's tourism industry. The Iraq has implemented various promotional activities and campaigns locally and internationally to publicize the region's tourist attractions and increase the number of foreign visitors.*

Question 7: *Can you tell me more about governmental policies for Sustainable Tourism in Erbil ? What do you think? Please tell about it by giving requisites and examples.*

Answer 7: *One of the main government policies for sustainable tourism in Erbil is to promote eco-friendly practices in the hospitality industry. This includes encouraging hotels and other accommodation providers to reduce their energy and water consumption, implementing recycling programs, and using locally sourced organic produce.*

Developing Eco-Friendly Infrastructure The Erbil government invests in the development of environmentally friendly infrastructure, such as green buildings and sustainable transportation systems. This initiative addresses environmental sustainability requirements.

Example: The new terminal building at Erbil International Airport is designed with eco-friendly features such as natural lighting, ventilation, solar energy, and rainwater harvesting systems.

Question 8: *What do you think the pros and cons of sustainability in Iraq tourism? Negative and positive dimensions*

Answer 8: *Conserving Cultural and Natural Resources Iraq is home to many cultural and natural resources, including historic sites, museums, national parks, and wildlife reserves. Sustainable tourism can help conserve these resources by promoting responsible travel practices, encouraging environmental conservation, and reducing the negative impact of tourism on these fragile ecosystems.*

Limited tourism development Sustainable tourism can limit the development of tourism infrastructure and services, which can hamper the growth of Iraq's tourism industry. This can be particularly challenging for small businesses and entrepreneurs who rely on tourism revenue to sustain their livelihood.

Question 9: *According to your experience, what kind of environmental problems can be distinguished when it comes to tourism? Is there any organization that will work on standardization issues in industry? What do you think about licensing activities, eco labeling certification, environmental legislation Environmental sustainability.*

Answer 9: *CO2 emissions Tourism mainly contributes to CO2 emissions through transport, accommodation and activities. Traffic is one of the main contributors, accounting for around 75% of tourism-related emissions. These include emissions from air travel, which are particularly problematic due to the high emissions per passenger per mile. Accommodation also contributes to emissions, particularly through energy use for heating, cooling and lighting. Activities such as tours and excursions also contribute to emissions, especially when it comes to motorized transport or other high-emission activities.*

The World Sustainable Tourism Council (WSTC) is one of the leading organizations dealing with standardization issues in the tourism industry. Promote sustainable tourism practices and set standards for the tourism industry. The GSTC has developed a set of sustainable tourism standards, known as GSTC Standards, which are used to assess the sustainability of businesses and destinations. The standards cover four main areas: sustainable management, socio-economic impacts, cultural impacts and environmental impacts. By promoting these standards and encouraging businesses and destinations to adopt them, GSTC helps promote sustainable tourism practices and reduce negative environmental impacts.

Licensing and certification activities for eco-labels and environmental legislation can be powerful tools to promote environmental sustainability in the tourism industry. These tools can provide a legal framework, independent assessments and standards that can guide tourism businesses towards more sustainable practices. It can also help consumers make more informed choices and promote sustainable tourism practices.

Question 10: *In what terms could tourism be considered as a threat to local culture and traditions? Why do you think so? Can you give us some practical examples?*

Answer 10: *Cultural Commodification Tourists' desire to try something new and different leads to the commodification of local culture and traditions, packaging aspects of the culture and selling them for profit. This can lead to a loss of authenticity and reduce cultural practices to a form of entertainment.*

Cultural Commodification Tourists may purchase cultural artifacts and souvenirs without due respect or understanding of their cultural significance, thereby contributing to the commodification of local culture and traditions.

Question 11: *Can you give us an example when locals cannot access local amenities and natural resources anymore because of tourism?*

Answer 11: *In coastal towns, locals may be valued on their own beaches due to the development of large resorts and infrastructure. This may be because the development of tourism often leads to higher property prices, making it harder for locals to make a living in the area. In addition, the development of tourism often leads to the privatization of beaches, where resorts and hotels take over former public lands. This could lead to the displacement of local communities that have traditionally lived off the beach and may now be forced to find alternative sources of income.*

Question 12: *As an expert, what would you change in the governmental policy regarding tourism, to make it more sustainable (economic – (income), social, environmental)? What concrete steps should be made at the macro and micro levels?*

Answer 12: *Tourism can make a major contribution to economic development, job creation and cultural exchange. However, it can also have negative impacts on the environment and local communities, such as overuse of natural resources, pollution and cultural homogeneity. To address these challenges, government policies can be implemented to promote sustainable tourism practices that balance economic, social and environmental considerations.*

College through the development of national tourism strategies Developing a national tourism strategy is a crucial first step for governments to promote sustainable tourism practices. This strategy can identify key tourism products and services, define the principles of sustainable tourism and provide guidance for the development of the tourism sector.

Partly by adopting sustainable practices Individual travel companies can adopt sustainable practices such as reducing waste, saving water and energy, and using environmentally friendly products and services. This can help reduce the environmental impact of tourism.

Question 13: *What do you know about certification programs for guesthouses/small hotels, according to which each service deliverer is ranked according to approved standards and has to define its prices according to this certificate?*

Answer 13: *Certification programs for guesthouses and small hotels are designed to help businesses meet a set of established standards. These standards generally cover factors such as accommodation quality, cleanliness, security, and the service provided to guests. By meeting established standards and becoming certified, companies can demonstrate to guests that they are committed to providing a high level of service and accommodations.*

The profession is a manager of a tourism company.

Question 1: *Can you tell us a little bit about yourself? (age, occupation, working experience and workplace duties).*

Answer 1: *The profession is a manager of a tourism company. Age 31 . Work experience 6 years. Work duties Coordination, organization and management of the company's staff*

Question 2: *What are the most serious problems facing tourism industry for the moment? Can you specify some?*

Answer 2: *Reduced travel demand The COVID-19 pandemic has also led to a decline in travel demand, particularly among international visitors. Many people chose to avoid travel due to concerns about their health and safety, which had a significant impact on Erbil's tourism industry. Lower demand has led to a decline in corporate revenues in the hospitality sector, creating financial difficulties for many that have led to the closure of some hotels.*

Question 3: *How would you describe sustainability? Also, how would you describe sustainability for your profession or business?*

Answer 3: *Sustainability is the practice of meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*

Achieving economic, social and environmental balances in decision-making and taking a long-term perspective to ensure the use of resources.

As a director of a tourism company, sustainability is one of the important things in this city to achieve long-term well-being by working to reduce energy use to preserve the environment Use environmentally friendly materials and engage with the local community Provide job opportunities for local people Economic development Manage the company's finances more sustainably Partnership in disbursements Reduce them Provide job opportunities at smooth prices.

Question 4: *What is the meaning of sustainable tourism for you? Please tell about dimensions of sustainable tourism/ economic, social and environmental)*

Answer 4: *Sustainable tourism is about balancing the needs of tourists, local communities and the environment, to ensure tourism continues to deliver benefits to everyone for years to come.*

Economic dimension Sustainable tourism involves investing in local infrastructure and supporting local businesses, industries and services to promote economic development and create long-term economic benefits for the local community.

Social dimension Sustainable tourism encourages tourists to engage with local communities and learn about local customs and traditions to promote intercultural understanding and respect.

Environmental dimension Sustainable tourism supports conservation efforts and protects natural and cultural heritage sites by minimizing the negative impacts of tourism on the environment and promoting responsible tourism practices.

Question 5: *What can be done for sustainable tourism in Erbil (applications/activities/decisions/certifications?) What should be done?*

Answer 5: *Waste management. With the increasing number of tourists, the amount of waste generated in Erbil is also increasing. Encouraging hotels, restaurants, and other tour operators to adopt sustainable waste management practices, such as recycling and reducing plastic use, can help reduce waste and pollution in the city. Moreover, promoting sustainable waste management practices can also help improve the quality of life for local people. to implement certifications and standards for sustainable tourism in Erbil, the government can work with tourism businesses to provide training*

and support for certification programs. The government can also create incentives for tourism businesses to achieve certification, such as tax breaks or marketing support. Furthermore, the government can promote certification programs to tourists and encourage them to choose certified tourism businesses during their stay in Erbil.

Question 6: *Is there any kind of governmental program that directly attracts foreign tourists and promotes the country as a tourist destination?*

Answer 6: *The Government has established partnerships with international travel agencies, airlines and tourism industry stakeholders to promote the region as a tourist destination. In addition, the Iraq has hosted several international events and festivals showcasing the region's culture and heritage, including the annual Erbil International Marathon and the Erbil Culture and Tourism Festival.*

Question 7: *Can you tell me more about governmental policies for Sustainable Tourism in Erbil? What do you think? Please tell about it by giving requisites and examples.*

Answer 7: *important policy is the preservation and promotion of the city's cultural heritage. Erbil has a rich history and diverse cultural heritage that includes historical sites, museums and traditional crafts. The local government is working to protect and preserve these assets while also promoting them as tourist attractions. In addition, the Erbil government is investing in infrastructure and transportation to support sustainable tourism. This includes the development of public transport systems, bicycle paths and pedestrian walkways, as well as improving waste management and sanitation services.*

To preserve cultural heritage The Government of Erbil is working to promote the preservation of cultural heritage sites and traditions to ensure the long-term sustainability of the tourism industry. This initiative addresses the requirements of cultural sustainability.

Example The government has put in place regulations to protect historical and cultural heritage sites from damage and ensure that they are properly maintained.

Question 8: *What do you think the pros and cons of sustainability in Iraq tourism? Negative and positive dimensions*

Answer 8: *Economic benefits Sustainable tourism can deliver significant economic benefits to local communities by creating jobs and generating income through the promotion of local goods and services. By promoting responsible and sustainable*

tourism practices, Iraq can ensure that tourism revenues are fairly distributed and contribute to local development.

Lower income for businesses Companies that rely on high-volume, low-cost tourism may experience a reduction in income as a result of a focus on sustainability and responsible tourism practices. This could be particularly challenging for companies already struggling to make ends meet due to economic hardship and political instability in Iraq.

Question 9: *According to your experience, what kind of environmental problems can be distinguished when it comes to tourism? Is there any organization that will work on standardization issues in industry? What do you think about licensing activities, eco labeling certification, environmental legislation Environmental sustainability.*

Answer 9: *Tourism activities can consume large amounts of water, especially in areas where water resources are limited. This can lead to water scarcity, which can have negative impacts on the environment and local communities. For example, water scarcity can lead to reduced agricultural productivity, loss of biodiversity, and increased competition for water resources among different users. In addition, the use of water in tourist activities can lead to water pollution, especially if wastewater is not treated properly or if chemicals from activities such as swimming and diving enter the water.*

An organization working on standardization issues in the tourism industry, the International Organization for Standardization is a global organization that develops and disseminates international standards for a wide range of industries, including tourism. ISO has developed several standards related to tourism, which provide guidelines for sustainable tourism , which provide guidance for the management of tourism projects. By providing guidelines for sustainable tourism practices and tourism project management, ISO helps to enhance consistency and quality in the tourism industry, while also reducing negative environmental impacts.

The effectiveness of these tools depends on their implementation and enforcement. In some cases, licensing, environmental certification, and environmental legislation activities may encounter resistance or lack of political support, which may limit their impact. It is therefore important to ensure that these tools are well designed, implemented effectively and supported by other complementary approaches, such as education and awareness-raising initiatives.

Question 10: *In what terms could tourism be considered as a threat to local culture and traditions? Why do you think so? Can you give us some practical examples?*

Answer 10: *Loss of authenticity The need to meet the needs of tourists leads to changes in local culture and traditions, as locals may change their practices to meet the expectations of tourists. This can lead to a loss of authenticity and can lead to distortion or dilution of cultural practices.*

Loss of authenticity In order to meet the needs of tourists, local culture and traditions may be modified or adapted to suit the expectations of tourists, resulting in a loss of authenticity.

Question 11: *Can you give us an example when locals cannot access local amenities and natural resources anymore because of tourism?*

Answer 11: *In mountainous areas, local communities may find it difficult to access the natural resources on which they depend for their livelihoods due to the development of large-scale tourism infrastructure. For example, ski resorts may occupy large areas of land that were previously used for grazing, fishing or farming. This can lead to the displacement of communities and the loss of their traditional way of life. In addition, the construction of ski lifts, hotels and other infrastructure can affect local ecosystems and wildlife, further disrupting the balance of the local environment.*

Question 12: *As an expert, what would you change in the governmental policy regarding tourism, to make it more sustainable (economic – (income), social, environmental)? What concrete steps should be made at the macro and micro levels?*

Answer 12: *One of the most important steps that can be taken is to develop a comprehensive national tourism strategy that integrates sustainability into policy and planning. This strategy can serve as a blueprint for sustainable tourism development, identifying specific actions that can be taken at the national, regional and local levels. The strategy should include measures to reduce the environmental impact of tourism, support local communities and promote sustainable economic development.*

College By setting regulations, governments can create laws and regulations that require tourism companies to meet environmental and social standards. These regulations can help ensure that companies adopt sustainable practices, reduce negative environmental impacts and promote social responsibility.

Partial By promoting sustainable tourism products, companies can promote sustainable tourism products, such as eco-tours, that emphasize environmental conservation, culture conservation and community participation.

Question 13: *What do you know about certification programs for guesthouses/small hotels, according to which each service deliverer is ranked according to approved standards and has to define its prices according to this certificate?*

Answer 13: *Certificate programs can be run by various organizations, such as government agencies, tourism boards, or industry associations. These programs can help provide credibility and create a competitive advantage for companies that meet the required standards, design accreditation programs for guesthouses and small hotels to ensure these companies meet specific standards of service, cleanliness, and amenities. These standards are set by the organization that runs the certification program, and companies must meet these standards in order to obtain certification.*

Profession hotel supervisor

Question 1: *Can you tell us a little bit about yourself? (age, occupation, working experience and workplace duties).*

Answer 1: *Profession as a hotel supervisor. Age 30 . Work experience 6 years. Work duties are only to supervise the performance of employees .*

Question 2: *What are the most serious problems facing tourism industry for the moment? Can you specify some?*

Answer 2: *Economic recession The economic recession caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has led to a decrease in consumer spending, which further affected Erbil's tourism industry. With less money available for travel and tourism-related activities, the number of tourists visiting the city has decreased. The recession has also made it difficult for companies in the tourism industry to access finance and investment, limiting their ability to invest in new infrastructure and services.*

Question 3: *How would you describe sustainability? Also, how would you describe sustainability for your profession or business?*

Answer 3: *Sustainability can be defined as the practice of using resources in a way that preserves their availability for future generations. It involves considering the economic,*

social and environmental impacts of our business and making sustainable choices in the long term.

As a hotel supervisor, sustainability will be an important consideration in ensuring that the hotel operates in an environmentally, socially and economically responsible manner. Environmental sustainability by implementing policies and practices that reduce the hotel's impact on the environment, such as reducing water and energy use, reducing waste and encouraging recycling, and using eco-friendly and socially organic products. This will include promoting practices that contribute positively to the local community, such as sourcing products from local suppliers, supporting local events and initiatives, and providing opportunities for employee development and growth to deliver better performance. In terms Managing hotel resources in a financially sustainable way, such as reducing operating costs by conserving energy and water, and supporting local economic development by partnering with local businesses.

Question 4: *What is the meaning of sustainable tourism for you? Please tell about dimensions of sustainable tourism/ economic, social and environmental)*

Answer 4: *Sustainable tourism is a tourism approach that emphasizes responsible and ethical practices, such as reducing waste, reducing energy consumption, and promoting local culture and customs.*

Economic dimension Sustainable tourism supports the local economy by promoting responsible and sustainable tourism practices, such as using local suppliers and companies, and investing in local infrastructure and facilities.

Social dimension Sustainable tourism promotes the empowerment of local communities by providing them with opportunities to participate in tourism activities, benefit from tourism revenues, and participate in the decision-making process.

Environmental dimension Sustainable tourism reduces the carbon footprint of tourism by promoting sustainable transport options, reducing waste and pollution, and supporting the use of renewable energy sources.

Question 5: *What can be done for sustainable tourism in erbil (applications/activities/decisions/certifications?) What should be done?*

Answer 5: *Community participation is another critical factor in sustainable tourism. Engaging the local community in tourism activities and providing them with economic*

benefits can help promote sustainable tourism in Erbil. This can include promoting locally owned and operated businesses, supporting local cultural events and festivals, and involving local people in tourism development and planning. Ecotourism is another aspect of sustainable tourism that can benefit Erbil. Promoting ecotourism initiatives such as hiking trails, bird watching tours, and wildlife conservation efforts can help promote sustainable tourism while preserving the natural environment. By promoting ecotourism, Erbil can attract visitors interested in nature and wildlife, while promoting the growth of sustainable tourism.

Question 6: *Is there any kind of governmental program that directly attracts foreign tourists and promotes the country as a tourist destination?*

Answer 6: *The Government has implemented policies and initiatives to improve tourism infrastructure in the region, such as developing new hotels, improving road networks, and investing in airport development. The Government has also taken measures to streamline the visa process for foreign visitors and simplify travel requirements. Government programs and initiatives demonstrate a strong commitment to developing the region's tourism industry and promoting Erbil as a tourist destination.*

Question 7: *Can you tell me more about governmental policies for Sustainable Tourism in Erbil ? What do you think? Please tell about it by giving requisites and examples.*

Answer 7: *Local government also encourages community participation in tourism development, enhancing the participation of local people in decision-making processes and sharing economic benefits. In general, the government of Erbil is committed to promoting sustainable tourism that benefits the environment, the local community and the tourism industry in the long term.*

Such as the creation of green areas and public parks. These areas provide green spaces for both locals and tourists, and also help mitigate the impact of urbanization on the environment.

Question 8: *What do you think the pros and cons of sustainability in Iraq tourism? Negative and positive dimensions*

Answer 8: *Improving infrastructure Sustainable tourism can lead to the development of better infrastructure, including transportation, accommodation, and tourist facilities.*

This can enhance the visitor experience and increase the attractiveness of Iraq as a tourist destination, leading to increased tourism revenues in the long run.

Lack of infrastructure development Sustainable tourism initiatives may struggle to gain momentum without adequate infrastructure development, including the construction of new hotels, transport systems and tourism facilities.

Question 9: *According to your experience, what kind of environmental problems can be distinguished when it comes to tourism? Is there any organization that will work on standardization issues in industry? What do you think about licensing activities, eco labeling certification, environmental legislation Environmental sustainability.*

Answer 9: *Waste generation Tourism activities generate large amounts of waste, including plastic waste, food waste and hazardous waste. This waste can have negative impacts on the environment and local communities, especially in areas with limited waste management infrastructure. For example, plastic waste can harm wildlife and damage ecosystems, while food waste can attract pests and contribute to water pollution. Hazardous waste from activities such as scuba diving can have negative effects on the environment and public health if not disposed of properly.*

Industry-specific organizations working on standardization issues in the tourism industry, such as the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) and the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). These organizations collaborate with companies, governments and other stakeholders in the tourism industry to develop and promote sustainable tourism practices and standards. By working with industry stakeholders, these organizations can help ensure that tourism is conducted in a responsible and sustainable manner, while also promoting economic and social benefits.

Licensing, eco-labelling certification, environmental legislation, and environmental sustainability are interrelated and complementary aspects of promoting sustainability in the tourism industry. By adopting a holistic approach that integrates these tools, the tourism industry can achieve a more sustainable and responsible future.

Question 10: *In what terms could tourism be considered as a threat to local culture and traditions? Why do you think so? Can you give us some practical examples?*

Answer 10: *Disrespectful behavior Tourists may engage in disrespectful behavior, such as taking pictures of locals without permission, ignoring local customs and dress codes,*

or engaging in activities deemed disrespectful in the local culture. This can lead to tension between locals and tourists, and can cause resentment towards the tourism industry.

Disrespectful behavior Tourists may engage in disrespectful behavior, such as throwing garbage or ignoring cultural norms, which can contribute to a loss of respect for local culture and traditions.

Question 11: *Can you give us an example when locals cannot access local amenities and natural resources anymore because of tourism?*

Answer 11: *In some cases, tourism development can lead to the destruction or degradation of natural resources such as forests, rivers or coral reefs, which may have traditionally been used by local communities for subsistence or other purposes. For example, the development of large-scale tourist resorts in coastal areas could destroy mangroves, which provide important ecological services such as protection against coastal erosion and the provision of habitats for marine life. This can affect livelihoods. Communities that may have relied on these forests for fishing or other forms of subsistence.*

Question 12: *As an expert, what would you change in the governmental policy regarding tourism, to make it more sustainable (economic – (income), social, environmental)? What concrete steps should be made at the macro and micro levels?*

Answer 12: *To encourage the adoption of sustainable tourism practices, governments can offer incentives and subsidies to companies that implement environmentally friendly measures. This can include funding renewable energy systems, waste management facilities, and water conservation programs. Governments can also regulate tourism activities to ensure compliance with sustainability standards and guidelines. For example, regulations could be put in place to limit the number of tourists in fragile or environmentally sensitive areas, implement waste management systems, and promote sustainable transportation options.*

By providing incentives, governments can offer incentives and subsidies to tourism companies that implement environmentally friendly measures. These measures can include the use of renewable energy or the implementation of waste reduction initiatives.

Partial By engaging with local communities, companies can engage with local communities to promote sustainable tourism practices, such as hiring local workers, supporting local businesses, and respecting local customs and traditions.

Question 13: *What do you know about certification programs for guesthouses/small hotels, according to which each service deliverer is ranked according to approved standards and has to define its prices according to this certificate?*

Answer 13: *Some certification programs require companies to undergo regular inspections or evaluations to maintain or arrange their certifications. This helps ensure that the company continues to meet established standards over time, certification programs can help build trust with guests by providing a third-party assessment of a business's facilities and services. This can help guests feel confident that they are booking accommodations that meet a certain level of quality and safety.*

Profession Hotel Manager.

Question 1: *Can you tell us a little bit about yourself? (age, occupation, working experience and workplace duties).*

Answer 1: *Profession Hotel Manager. Age 50. Work experience 18 years. Work duties Doing administrative matters and organizing relations .*

Question 2: *What are the most serious problems facing tourism industry for the moment? Can you specify some?*

Answer 2: *Border closures Border closures have had a significant impact on tourism in Erbil, particularly in terms of international visitors. With many countries closing their borders to foreign visitors, the number of tourists visiting Erbil has dropped dramatically. This has had a significant impact on the city's hospitality sector, with many businesses reporting lower revenues and occupancy rates.*

Question 3: *How would you describe sustainability? Also, how would you describe sustainability for your profession or business?*

Answer 3: *Sustainability can be defined as the practice of using resources in a way that meets the needs of the current generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It involves balancing economic, social and environmental considerations in decision-making and taking a long-term perspective to ensure that resources are used responsibly.*

As a hotel administrator, I would like to develop sustainability to ensure that the hotel operates in a sustainable manner through environmental sustainability and the implementation of policies and practices that reduce the hotel's impact on the environment, such as reducing energy and water use, reducing waste, and promoting recycling and composting. and social sustainability by promoting practices that contribute positively to the local community, such as sourcing products from local suppliers, supporting local events and initiatives, and providing opportunities for employee development. and economic sustainability by managing hotel resources in a financially sustainable way, such as reducing operating costs by conserving energy and water, and supporting local economic development by partnering with local businesses.

Question 4: *What is the meaning of sustainable tourism for you? Please tell about dimensions of sustainable tourism/ economic, social and environmental)*

Answer 4: *Sustainable tourism is a way to promote economic development while also preserving natural and cultural heritage, by investing in sustainable infrastructure and promoting responsible tourism practices.*

Economic dimension Sustainable tourism creates new jobs, supports the growth of local industries, provides economic benefits to the local community and promotes sustainable economic development.

Social dimension Sustainable tourism promotes social equity and justice through respect for human rights, fair and equitable employment opportunities, and the promotion of gender equality and diversity.

Environmental dimension Sustainable tourism supports the conservation of natural resources and biodiversity by promoting responsible tourism practices, such as reducing waste and pollution and protecting wildlife habitats.

Question 5: *What can be done for sustainable tourism in Erbil (applications/activities/decisions/certifications?) What should be done?*

Answer 5: *Preserving Erbil's rich cultural heritage and history is also essential for sustainable tourism. Encouraging tourists to respect and appreciate Erbil's cultural heritage can help preserve it for future generations. This can include promoting responsible tourism practices such as respecting local customs and traditions and encouraging visitors to learn about the local culture. In addition, sustainable tourism in*

Erbil can also support biodiversity conservation efforts. Erbil is home to many important natural areas, such as the Zagros mountain range, a biodiversity hotspot. By promoting ecotourism and responsible tourism practices, Erbil can enhance efforts to preserve the environment and protect its natural resources.

Question 6: *Is there any kind of governmental program that directly attracts foreign tourists and promotes the country as a tourist destination?*

Answer 6: *In the Iraq Government, there are also other programs and initiatives aimed at promoting Erbil as a tourist destination and attracting foreign visitors. One such program is the "Visit Erbil" campaign, launched by the Iraq Government in 2017 in collaboration with local stakeholders in the tourism industry. There are challenges facing the tourism industry in Erbil, there is also great potential for growth and development. programs and initiatives, along with infrastructure investment and addressing safety concerns, can help unlock this potential and create a sustainable tourism industry in Erbil.*

Question 7: *Can you tell me more about governmental policies for Sustainable Tourism in Erbil ? What do you think? Please tell about it by giving requisites and examples.*

Answer 7: *The government is actively promoting cultural events and festivals that showcase the city's history and traditions, such as the Erbil Citadel Festival and Kurdish New Year (Nowruz) celebrations. These events not only attract tourists, but also contribute to the preservation and promotion of local culture.*

Sustainable Tourism Marketing The Government of Erbil is promoting sustainable tourism practices and responsible tourism behavior through marketing and communication campaigns. This initiative addresses environmental and social sustainability requirements.

Example The government has launched a tourism campaign that encourages visitors to respect local culture and traditions, reduce waste and energy consumption, and support local businesses.

Question 8: *What do you think the pros and cons of sustainability in iraq tourism? Negative and positive dimensions*

Answer 8: *Improved visitor experience Sustainable tourism can provide unique and authentic cultural and environmental experiences to visitors, which can help promote Iraq as a major tourist destination. By promoting sustainable tourism practices, Iraq can create memorable and meaningful experiences for visitors while ensuring that these experiences are respectful and responsible.*

Lack of infrastructure and services Iraq's tourism industry currently lacks the infrastructure and services needed to support sustainable tourism practices. This can make it difficult to implement responsible tourism initiatives, such as waste reduction, environmental conservation, and ecotourism programs.

Question 9: *According to your experience, what kind of environmental problems can be distinguished when it comes to tourism? Is there any organization that will work on standardization issues in industry? What do you think about licensing activities, eco labeling certification, environmental legislation Environmental sustainability.*

Answer 9: *Biodiversity loss Tourism activities can lead to habitat destruction, fragmentation and degradation, which can have negative impacts on biodiversity. This can lead to the loss of important ecosystem services, such as water purification, carbon sequestration, and nutrient cycle. For example, tourism development can lead to deforestation, which can reduce wildlife habitats and contribute to climate change through carbon emissions. Tourism activities such as off-road driving and construction can directly damage ecosystems and harm wildlife.*

Standardization is critical to promote sustainable tourism practices and reduce negative environmental impacts in the tourism industry. By working with organizations and the UNWTO, the industry can develop and promote standards that help ensure responsible and sustainable tourism practices, while promoting economic and social benefits to local communities and businesses.

To achieve environmental sustainability in the tourism industry, licensing activities can be used to regulate the establishment and operation of tourism companies. Governments can require tourism companies to obtain licenses to operate, which can include requirements for environmental sustainability practices. For example, a tour operator may be required to prove that it has implemented waste reduction measures, energy-saving practices, or water conservation strategies.

Question 10: *In what terms could tourism be considered as a threat to local culture and traditions? Why do you think so? Can you give us some practical examples?*

Answer 10: *Environmental impact Tourism can also have an environmental impact, as increased tourism can lead to the destruction of natural and cultural resources. This can lead to loss of biodiversity, destruction of historic sites, and degradation of the environment.*

Negative environmental impacts With increased tourism, there is also the potential for negative environmental impacts, such as increased pollution or damage to natural habitats.

Question 11: *Can you give us an example when locals cannot access local amenities and natural resources anymore because of tourism?*

Answer 11: *The development of large-scale tourism infrastructure, such as airports, roads, and hotels, can disrupt local communities and affect their access to resources such as water, land, and food. For example, building an airport in a formerly rural area can lead to the loss of farmland and the displacement of local farmers. In addition, the influx of tourists may increase the demand for resources such as water, which can put pressure on local supplies and lead to shortages Locals.*

Question 12: *As an expert, what would you change in the governmental policy regarding tourism, to make it more sustainable (economic – (income), social, environmental)? What concrete steps should be made at the macro and micro levels?*

Answer 12: *Community participation is crucial for sustainable tourism development. Governments can encourage community participation in tourism development to ensure that local populations benefit from tourism activities. This could include measures such as promoting locally owned businesses, providing employment and training opportunities for local people, and consulting with local communities on tourism development plans. By involving local communities in tourism development, governments can ensure that tourism is a positive force for economic, social and environmental sustainability.*

Governments can invest in sustainable tourism infrastructure, such as renewable energy systems, waste management facilities, and water conservation programs. This can help support sustainable tourism practices and reduce negative environmental impacts.

Partial by supporting conservation efforts Tourism companies can support conservation efforts, such as wildlife conservation, marine conservation, and cultural heritage preservation, through donations and volunteer work.

Question 13: *What do you know about certification programs for guesthouses/small hotels, according to which each service deliverer is ranked according to approved standards and has to define its prices according to this certificate?*

Answer 13: *Certification programs provide training and support to help companies improve their processes and meet required standards. This can be especially valuable for small businesses that may not have access to other resources, certification programs may include a rating system that assigns a certain level of certification or classification to companies based on how well they meet applicable standards. Companies that meet higher standards may be awarded a higher level of certification or ranking.*

The profession is the director of the administration in the municipality of Erbil.

Question 1: *Can you tell us a little bit about yourself? (age, occupation, working experience and workplace duties).*

Answer 1: *The profession is the director of the administration in the municipality of Erbil. Age 41. Work experience 19 years. Work duties Attention to administrative matters and supervision.*

Question 2: *What are the most serious problems facing tourism industry for the moment? Can you specify some?*

Answer 2: *Political instability Iraq, where Erbil is located, has experienced political instability in recent years. This instability has had a significant impact on the tourism industry, with fewer tourists visiting the city due to safety and security concerns. The instability has also made it difficult for companies in the tourism industry to plan for the future, as they cannot be sure of the political situation.*

Question 3: *How would you describe sustainability? Also, how would you describe sustainability for your profession or business?*

Answer 3: *Sustainability is a concept that emphasizes the responsible use and management of resources, ensuring that they are used in a way that meets the needs of*

the current generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This involves considering economic, social and environmental factors in decision-making processes and taking a long-term perspective.

As the director of the administration in the municipality of Erbil, sustainability will be a critical aspect of my role. This involves ensuring that the city is managed in a way that is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable. Specifically, some of the ways in which sustainability can be applied to Erbil Municipality in several ways include environmental sustainability This will include implementing policies and programs that promote environmental protection and preservation, including reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving waste management practices, and encouraging the use of renewable energy sources. This will include ensuring that the needs of all members of society are met, including promoting access to affordable housing, health care and education, as well as promoting social cohesion and community participation.

Question 4: *What is the meaning of sustainable tourism for you? Please tell about dimensions of sustainable tourism/ economic, social and environmental)*

Answer 4: *Sustainable tourism is about creating a win-win situation for all stakeholders, by promoting sustainable economic growth, protecting the environment, and ensuring social and cultural benefits for local communities.*

Economic dimension Sustainable tourism promotes innovation and entrepreneurship by supporting the development of sustainable tourism businesses and promoting sustainable tourism practices.

Social dimension Sustainable tourism promotes community participation and empowerment by encouraging local communities to participate in the planning, development and management of tourism activities.

Environmental dimension Sustainable tourism promotes the protection and restoration of ecosystems and the biodiversity it supports by reducing the negative impacts of tourism on the environment.

Question 5: *What can be done for sustainable tourism in erbil (applications/activities/decisions/certifications?) What should be done?*

Answer 5: *Investment in infrastructure development is also essential for sustainable tourism in Erbil. Improving transport and infrastructure, such as boosting public*

transport and investing in sustainable energy sources, can help reduce the environmental impact of tourism in Erbil. This could include investing in renewable energy sources such as solar and wind, and encouraging the use of electric vehicles.

Question 6: *Is there any kind of governmental program that directly attracts foreign tourists and promotes the country as a tourist destination?*

Answer 6: *The Visit Erbil campaign aims to increase the number of foreign visitors to the region by promoting its unique culture, heritage and natural attractions. The campaign includes a range of promotional activities, such as social media campaigns, TV commercials, and billboards, both locally and internationally.*

Question 7: *Can you tell me more about governmental policies for Sustainable Tourism in Erbil ? What do you think? Please tell about it by giving requisites and examples.*

Answer 7: *To ensure the sustainability of tourism development in Erbil, the local government has also developed guidelines and regulations for tourism activities. These include guidelines for the development of new tourist attractions and accommodations, regulations for tour operators and guides, and codes of conduct for tourists.*

Sustainable Tourism Marketing The Government of Erbil is promoting sustainable tourism marketing strategies that highlight the unique cultural and natural heritage of the region, while promoting responsible tourism practices. This initiative addresses cultural, environmental and social sustainability requirements.

Example The government has established a sustainable tourism marketing campaign that emphasizes the importance of responsible tourism practices, promotes local cultural and natural heritage, and encourages visitors to support sustainable tourism business.

Question 8: *What do you think the pros and cons of sustainability in Iraq tourism? Negative and positive dimensions*

Answer 8: *Education and awareness Sustainable tourism can raise awareness about the importance of preserving culture and the environment, leading to a greater understanding and appreciation of Iraq's rich cultural and natural heritage. This can help boost conservation efforts and increase public support for sustainable tourism practices.*

Sustainable tourism may commodify cultural heritage and traditions, turning them into tourist attractions rather than respecting them as valuable and sacred aspects of local communities.

Question 9: *According to your experience, what kind of environmental problems can be distinguished when it comes to tourism? Is there any organization that will work on standardization issues in industry? What do you think about licensing activities, eco labeling certification, environmental legislation Environmental sustainability.*

Answer 9: *Land-use change Tourism development can lead to land-use change, such as deforestation and urbanization, which can have negative impacts on the environment and local communities. This can lead to the loss of important cultural and natural resources, as well as negative impacts on wildlife and ecosystem health. For example, the development of hotels and other tourist infrastructure can lead to the displacement of communities and lead to the loss of traditional cultural practices. In addition, land-use change can contribute to soil erosion, water pollution, and other environmental problems.*

Some countries require tourism companies to obtain an environmental license before they can operate. Requirements for an environmental license vary by country, but may include things like wastewater management, waste disposal, and energy efficiency. By requiring companies to meet these standards, environmental licensing can help reduce negative environmental impacts and promote sustainable tourism practices.

Use environmental legislation to promote environmental sustainability in the tourism industry. Governments can pass laws and regulations that require tourism companies to adopt sustainable practices, such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions, reducing water consumption, or promoting biodiversity conservation. These laws and regulations can also provide penalties for non-compliance, which may encourage tourism companies to adopt sustainable practices.

Question 10: *In what terms could tourism be considered as a threat to local culture and traditions? Why do you think so? Can you give us some practical examples?*

Answer 10: *The economic dependency of the tourism industry creates an economic dependence on tourism, leading to the loss of traditional economic practices and*

cultural practices. This can lead to a loss of cultural identity and can contribute to the homogeneity of cultures.

The disruption of local economies The tourism industry disrupts local economies, especially if it leads to dependence on tourism and a loss of diversity in local economic activities.

Question 11: *Can you give us an example when locals cannot access local amenities and natural resources anymore because of tourism?*

Answer 11: *The increase in tourism can lead to the commercialization of cultural practices, eroding local traditions and customs. This can happen when locals feel pressured to modify their practices in order to meet tourists' expectations, or when tourists seek to engage in cultural practices without fully understanding their significance or context. This can commodify local culture, which can lead to a loss of its value and relevance to the local community.*

Question 12: *As an expert, what would you change in the governmental policy regarding tourism, to make it more sustainable (economic – (income), social, environmental)? What concrete steps should be made at the macro and micro levels?*

Answer 12: *Investing in sustainable tourism infrastructure is another key element of sustainable tourism development. Governments can invest in sustainable tourism infrastructure such as renewable energy systems, waste management facilities, and water conservation programs. This can help reduce the environmental impact of tourism activities and promote sustainable economic development.*

Governments can encourage community participation in tourism development by providing employment and training opportunities for local people. This can help ensure that local communities benefit from tourism development and can provide a more authentic and meaningful experience for tourists.

Partial by providing eco-friendly transportation Tourism companies can provide eco-friendly transportation options, such as electric cars, bicycles, and public transport, to reduce the carbon footprint of tourism.

Question 13: *What do you know about certification programs for guesthouses/small hotels, according to which each service deliverer is ranked according to approved standards and has to define its prices according to this certificate?*

Answer 13: *For guests, the certificate provides reassurance that the property meets certain criteria. This can help them make more informed decisions when choosing accommodation, and can help them avoid properties that may not meet their expectations. Companies with a higher level of certification may be allowed to charge higher prices than those with a lower level of certification.*

The profession is a manager of a tourism company.

Question 1: *Can you tell us a little bit about yourself? (age, occupation, working experience and workplace duties).*

Answer 1: *The profession is a manager of a tourism company. Age 35 . Work experience 10 years. Work duties Accepting employees and carrying out administrative tasks .*

Question 2: *What are the most serious problems facing tourism industry for the moment? Can you specify some?*

Answer 2: *Lack of infrastructure Erbil's tourism industry continues to develop, and the city lacks the necessary infrastructure to support a large number of tourists. This includes transportation, accommodation, and tourist attractions. The lack of infrastructure has limited the city's potential for growth in the tourism industry, as many tourists are deterred due to lack of basic facilities and services.*

Question 3: *How would you describe sustainability? Also, how would you describe sustainability for your profession or business?*

Answer 3: *Sustainability refers to the practice of using resources in a way that preserves their availability for future generations. As a director of a tourism company, sustainability will involve balancing economic, social and environmental considerations to ensure that our operations are responsible and contribute to a more sustainable future. In the tourism industry, this will include promoting responsible travel practices, reducing our environmental footprint, and supporting local communities and economies.*

Question 4: *What is the meaning of sustainable tourism for you? Please tell about dimensions of sustainable tourism/ economic, social and environmental)*

Answer 4: *Sustainable tourism involves managing tourism activities in a way that balances economic, social and environmental considerations, while ensuring that tourists have a positive and authentic experience.*

Economic dimension Sustainable tourism supports the diversification of the local economy by promoting a variety of tourism-related activities and products that generate economic benefits for the local community.

Social dimension Sustainable tourism promotes the protection of cultural heritage and traditions by respecting local customs and traditions, and supporting cultural initiatives that preserve and promote local heritage.

Environmental dimension Sustainable tourism encourages the use of sustainable practices, such as reducing water and energy consumption, promoting waste reduction and recycling, and supporting eco-friendly tourism activities.

Question 5: *What can be done for sustainable tourism in Erbil (applications/activities/decisions/certifications?) What should be done?*

Answer 5: *In conclusion, promoting sustainable tourism in Erbil requires a collaborative effort from the government, the tourism industry and the local community. By implementing certification programs, promoting sustainable waste management practices, engaging the local community, preserving cultural heritage, promoting ecotourism, and investing in infrastructure development, Erbil can promote the growth of sustainable tourism while also preserving its environment and cultural heritage.*

Question 6: *Is there any kind of governmental program that directly attracts foreign tourists and promotes the country as a tourist destination?*

Answer 6: *Another program is the "Invest in Erbil" initiative, launched by the Government to encourage investment in the region's tourism industry. The initiative provides incentives to investors, including tax breaks and access to land and facilities, to encourage the development of new tourism infrastructure and services. The Government has implemented policies to support the development of ecotourism in the region. This includes the establishment of protected areas and nature reserves, as well as the promotion of sustainable tourism practices.*

Question 7: *Can you tell me more about governmental policies for Sustainable Tourism in Erbil ? What do you think? Please tell about it by giving requisites and examples.*

Answer 7: *The government is working to raise awareness among locals and tourists about the importance of sustainable tourism. This includes promoting responsible tourism practices, such as waste reduction, conservation of natural resources, and*

respect for local cultures and customs. The Erbil government is working to promote sustainable tourism through marketing and promotion.

This includes developing marketing campaigns highlighting the city's unique natural and cultural assets, as well as promoting sustainable tourism practices and responsible tourism behaviors among visitors.

Question 8: *What do you think the pros and cons of sustainability in Iraq tourism? Negative and positive dimensions*

Answer 8: *Community Empowerment Sustainable tourism can empower local communities by engaging them in the tourism industry and providing them with opportunities to participate in decision-making processes. This can help build stronger relationships between tourists and locals and foster a greater sense of community ownership of tourism initiatives.*

Cultural challenges Sustainable tourism may face cultural challenges in Iraq, where traditional beliefs and practices may not be compatible with sustainable tourism practices. For example, local communities may not see value in conserving cultural and natural resources, or they may prioritize economic development over conservation efforts.

Question 9: *According to your experience, what kind of environmental problems can be distinguished when it comes to tourism? Is there any organization that will work on standardization issues in industry? What do you think about licensing activities, eco labeling certification, environmental legislation Environmental sustainability.*

Answer 9: *The environmental impacts of tourism can vary greatly depending on the specific destination and tourism activities. Therefore, it is important to conduct site-specific environmental assessments and implement site-specific sustainable tourism practices to minimize negative impacts and maximize positive benefits. This can include measures such as renewable energy, water conservation, waste reduction and management, and habitat restoration.*

The issue of standardization in the tourism industry. Standardization is important in any industry because it helps ensure consistency and quality, and makes it easier for consumers to compare products and services. In the tourism industry, standardization

is particularly important to promote sustainable tourism practices and reduce negative environmental impacts.

Eco-labeling certification is another tool that can promote environmental sustainability in the tourism industry. Eco-labels are certificates indicating that a tourism company has met specific environmental sustainability criteria. These certifications can be obtained from outside organizations, which conduct independent assessments and provide feedback to tourism companies on how to improve their environmental sustainability practices.

Question 10: *In what terms could tourism be considered as a threat to local culture and traditions? Why do you think so? Can you give us some practical examples?*

Answer 10: *Westernization In some cases, tourism can lead to the Westernization of local culture and traditions. The desire to attract tourists can lead to the adoption of Western customs and practices, which can lead to the loss of traditional practices and cultural identity.*

Westernization To attract tourists, local businesses and restaurants may adopt Western customs and practices, resulting in the loss of traditional practices and cultural identity.

Question 11: *Can you give us an example when locals cannot access local amenities and natural resources anymore because of tourism?*

Answer 11: *In some cases, tourists may not be sensitive to local customs and values, leading to social tensions and conflicts with the local community. For example, tourists may engage in behaviors that locals consider disrespectful or offensive, or they may fail to understand the cultural norms and expectations of the local community. This can lead to social tensions and conflicts, which can adversely affect the well-being of both tourists and local residents.*

Question 12: *As an expert, what would you change in the governmental policy regarding tourism, to make it more sustainable (economic – (income), social, environmental)? What concrete steps should be made at the macro and micro levels?*

Answer 12: *Governments can promote locally owned businesses to support the local economy and culture. Encouraging the use of locally sourced organic food can support local agriculture and reduce the carbon footprint of food transport. Governments can also educate tourists about sustainable tourism practices and encourage them to make*

responsible choices, such as using public transport or choosing eco-friendly accommodations.

By supporting local businesses, governments can promote locally owned businesses, such as small hotels, restaurants, and tour operators. This can help ensure that the benefits of tourism development are distributed more equitably and sustainably, and that tourism dollars remain within the community.

By encouraging responsible consumption, tourism companies can encourage responsible consumption, such as reducing single-use plastics, encouraging recycling, and using sustainable food and beverage products.

Question 13: *What do you know about certification programs for guesthouses/small hotels, according to which each service deliverer is ranked according to approved standards and has to define its prices according to this certificate?*

Answer 13: *Certificate programs can be a valuable marketing tool for businesses, helping to attract more guests and establish credibility. This is especially important for small businesses that may not have established brand recognition , certification programs may require companies to undergo periodic evaluations to ensure they continue to meet established standards. This can help ensure that businesses maintain a consistent level of quality over time.*

The profession is a manager of a tourism company,

Question 1: *Can you tell us a little bit about yourself? (age, occupation, working experience and workplace duties).*

Answer 1: *The profession is a manager of a tourism company, age 30. Work experience 4 years, work duties, carrying out administrative tasks and human resources.*

Question 2: *What are the most serious problems facing tourism industry for the moment? Can you specify some?*

Answer 2: *Lack of tourism promotion Erbil has not been widely promoted as a tourist destination, limiting the number of tourists visiting the city. Many people are unaware of the city's cultural and historical attractions, which has limited the growth potential*

of the tourism industry. The lack of tourism promotion has also made it difficult for companies in the tourism industry to market their services effectively.

Question 3: *How would you describe sustainability? Also, how would you describe sustainability for your profession or business?*

Answer 3: *Sustainability involves making responsible and ethical choices, taking into account the long-term impact of our actions. This will include implementing sustainable tourism practices that benefit both the environment and local communities. Sustainability is about creating a livable and prosperous world for current and future generations. As a director of a tourism company, this will include promoting sustainable tourism practices that reduce our impact on the environment, support local communities, and contribute to a more economically and socially sustainable future.*

Question 4: *What is the meaning of sustainable tourism for you? Please tell about dimensions of sustainable tourism/ economic, social and environmental)*

Answer 4: *Sustainable tourism is about respecting and preserving the natural and cultural heritage of a destination, while promoting economic development and social well-being.*

Economic dimension Sustainable tourism promotes responsible tourism practices that benefit the local community and support long-term economic growth and stability.

Social dimension Sustainable tourism promotes intercultural understanding and respect by providing opportunities for tourists to learn about and appreciate local cultures, customs and traditions.

The ecological dimension in tourism means reducing negative impacts on the environment and promoting the conservation of natural resources. This includes reducing waste and pollution, preserving biodiversity, protecting natural habitats, and promoting sustainable use of resources.

Question 5: *What can be done for sustainable tourism in Erbil (applications/activities/decisions/certifications?) What should be done?*

Answer 5: *Sustainable tourism in Erbil can also help create jobs and improve the local economy. For example, by supporting locally owned and managed businesses and encouraging community participation in tourism activities, Erbil can create economic benefits for local residents. Moreover, promoting sustainable tourism practices can also*

help reduce the negative impact of tourism on the local economy, such as the displacement of local populations and the destruction of cultural heritage.

Question 6: *Is there any kind of governmental program that directly attracts foreign tourists and promotes the country as a tourist destination?*

Answer 6: *Programs & Initiatives The commitment of the Government to promote Erbil as a tourist destination and develop the tourism industry in the region. However, much work remains to be done to address challenges facing Erbil's tourism industry, such as improving infrastructure, addressing safety concerns, and promoting sustainable tourism practices.*

Question 7: *Can you tell me more about governmental policies for Sustainable Tourism in Erbil ? What do you think? Please tell about it by giving requisites and examples.*

Answer 7: *The Government of Erbil is taking a holistic approach to sustainable tourism development, with a focus on environmental, social and economic sustainability. By promoting eco-friendly practices, preserving cultural heritage, investing in infrastructure, and engaging local communities, Erbil strives to create a tourism industry that benefits everyone and preserves the city's natural and cultural assets for future generations.*

The government is also working to attract responsible and sustainable tourism operators and investors who share their commitment to sustainability. The Government of Erbil has promoted sustainable tourism practices.

Such as the implementation of waste management programs and the creation of protected areas for natural attractions.

Question 8: *What do you think the pros and cons of sustainability in Iraq tourism? Negative and positive dimensions*

Answer 8: *Ecotourism potential Iraq has great potential for ecotourism due to its rich natural heritage, including national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, and protected areas. By promoting sustainable tourism practices, Iraq can tap into this potential and create new opportunities for economic development.*

Lack of funding Sustainable tourism initiatives often require significant investments to succeed, including funding for infrastructure development, community engagement, and

conservation efforts. Without adequate funding, sustainable tourism initiatives may struggle to gain momentum and achieve their goals.

Question 9: According to your experience, what kind of environmental problems can be distinguished when it comes to tourism? Is there any organization that will work on standardization issues in industry? What do you think about licensing activities, eco labeling certification, environmental legislation Environmental sustainability.

Answer 9: Addressing these environmental problems, there are a variety of organizations working to promote sustainable tourism practices and industry standardization. One such organization is the World Sustainable Tourism Council, which sets standards and provides certifications for sustainable tourism practices. GSTC offers a range of criteria for sustainable tourism, which include environmental, social and economic aspects of sustainability. The organization also provides certificates to companies and tourist destinations that meet these criteria.

Licensing activities as a means of promoting environmental sustainability in the tourism industry. Licensing activities are a form of regulation that requires tourism companies to meet certain standards in order to operate. By requiring companies to meet certain environmental standards, licensing activities can help promote environmental sustainability in the tourism industry.

Licensing, certification activities for eco-labelling, environmental legislation, and environmental sustainability are important aspects of promoting sustainability in the tourism industry. By adopting a holistic approach that integrates these tools, the tourism industry can achieve a more sustainable and responsible future.

Question 10: In what terms could tourism be considered as a threat to local culture and traditions? Why do you think so? Can you give us some practical examples?

Answer 10: Improvement Tourism also contributes to improvement, as the influx of tourists and tourism-related development can lead to higher prices, displacing locals and losing traditional communities.

Improvement The tourism industry may lead to the improvement and displacement of the local population, especially if there is an increase in real estate development and rental prices.

Question 11: *Can you give us an example when locals cannot access local amenities and natural resources anymore because of tourism?*

Answer 11: *The development of tourism can lead to the loss of sovereignty of local communities, especially in areas where tourism development is controlled by external entities such as multinational corporations or foreign governments. This can lead to a loss of control over local resources and decision-making processes, leading to feelings of powerlessness and disempowerment among the local population.*

Question 12: *As an expert, what would you change in the governmental policy regarding tourism, to make it more sustainable (economic – (income), social, environmental)? What concrete steps should be made at the macro and micro levels?*

Answer 12: *Investment in sustainable tourism infrastructure is another key element of sustainable tourism development. Governments can invest in sustainable tourism infrastructure such as renewable energy systems, waste management facilities, and water conservation programs. This can help reduce the environmental impact of tourism activities and promote sustainable economic development.*

By supporting sustainable tourism certifications, governments can support the development and promotion of sustainable tourism certification programs that recognize tourism companies that have adopted sustainable practices. This can help encourage more companies to adopt sustainable practices and provide consumers with more options for sustainable tourism.

Partial by promoting sustainable tourism events Tourism companies can promote sustainable tourism events, such as eco-friendly festivals, cultural exhibitions and community celebrations, that emphasize environmental conservation, culture conservation and community participation.

Question 13: *What do you know about certification programs for guesthouses/small hotels, according to which each service deliverer is ranked according to approved standards and has to define its prices according to this certificate?*

Answer 13: *Certification programs can help encourage businesses to improve their operations and provide better service to guests. By setting a set of standards, certification programs help create a level playing field for companies of all sizes, certification programs can provide a way for companies to stay up-to-date with industry*

standards and best practices. By participating in a certification program, companies can stay informed of changes in the industry and adapt their practices accordingly.

The profession is an assistant manager of a travel and tourism company.

Question 1: *Can you tell us a little bit about yourself? (age, occupation, working experience and workplace duties).*

Answer 1: *The profession is an assistant manager of a travel and tourism company. Age 27 . Scientific experience 2 years. Work duties Organizing meetings supervises the management of the agenda of his boss .*

Question 2: *What are the most serious problems facing tourism industry for the moment? Can you specify some?*

Answer 2: *Many small businesses in Erbil's tourism industry are struggling to access finance, limiting their ability to invest in new infrastructure and services. This is particularly true for businesses in rural areas or those run by women and other marginalized groups, who may face additional barriers in accessing finance.*

Question 3: *How would you describe sustainability? Also, how would you describe sustainability for your profession or business?*

Answer 3: *Sustainability is the practice of using resources in a way that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. In the tourism sector, this will include promoting responsible travel practices, supporting sustainable tourism initiatives, and reducing our carbon footprint. As a director of a tourism company, this will include implementing sustainable tourism practices that benefit the environment, local communities and our business. Sustainability is about creating a sustainable and equitable world for all. This will include promoting responsible travel practices, supporting sustainable tourism initiatives, and reducing our impact on the environment. The travel company can also work with local organizations and nonprofits to support sustainability in the communities it serves. This could include funding environmental conservation programmes, promoting sustainable development projects, and supporting community-based tourism initiatives.*

Question 4: *What is the meaning of sustainable tourism for you? Please tell about dimensions of sustainable tourism/ economic, social and environmental)*

Answer 4: Sustainable tourism involves the development of tourism products and services designed to minimize negative impacts on the environment, promote social and cultural sustainability, and support local economic development.

Economic dimension Sustainable tourism supports the development of sustainable tourism infrastructure, such as eco-lodges, renewable energy systems and sustainable transport options, which create long-term economic benefits for the local community.

Social dimension Sustainable tourism promotes community participation in tourism activities, such as providing opportunities for locals to work in the tourism industry, participate in cultural events, and provide authentic local experiences for tourists.

Environmental dimension Sustainable tourism supports the conservation of natural resources and the protection of the environment by minimizing the negative impacts of tourism on natural ecosystems and wildlife habitats.

Question 5: What can be done for sustainable tourism in Erbil (applications/activities/decisions/certifications?) What should be done?

Answer 5: Another important factor in sustainable tourism is the responsible use of natural resources. Erbil has a rich natural environment, including mountains, valleys, and rivers. To ensure that tourism growth does not have a negative impact on these natural resources, it is necessary to promote responsible tourism practices such as reducing the use of water, energy and other natural resources. By encouraging tourists to adopt sustainable practices, such as turning off lights and air conditioners when leaving their hotel rooms or using refillable water bottles instead of plastic, Erbil can reduce its environmental impact while promoting the growth of sustainable tourism.

Question 6: Is there any kind of governmental program that directly attracts foreign tourists and promotes the country as a tourist destination?

Answer 6: In addition, the lack of awareness of Erbil as a tourist destination is another challenge facing the tourism industry. Many potential visitors are not familiar with the area's unique cultural heritage and natural attractions, and more promotion and marketing is needed to raise awareness of the area as a tourist destination. The Government has taken steps to promote sustainable tourism practices, such as promoting ecotourism and responsible travel, but more education and awareness are still needed on these issues.

Question 7: *Can you tell me more about governmental policies for Sustainable Tourism in Erbil ? What do you think? Please tell about it by giving requisites and examples.*

Answer 7: *The Erbil government is also focusing on community participation in sustainable tourism development. The government works to involve local communities in the planning and development of tourism projects and to ensure that they have a say in how tourism affects their lives. This includes working with local communities to develop community tourism projects, such as homestays, cultural tours and handicraft workshops, that allow visitors to experience local life and support local businesses. The local government in Erbil is taking steps to ensure that tourism development is inclusive and benefits all members of society, including marginalized groups. This includes promoting the participation of women, youth and persons with disabilities in the tourism industry, and ensuring that they have equal access to economic opportunities and training programmes. The Government has taken steps to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities, Such as installing stairs and elevators in tourist attractions and accommodations.*

Question 8: *What do you think the pros and cons of sustainability in iraq tourism? Negative and positive dimensions*

Answer 8: *Increased cultural exchange for sustainable tourism fosters more cultural exchange between tourists and locals, leading to greater understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures and traditions. This helps break down barriers and promote greater tolerance and understanding.*

Safety concerns, including crime, terrorism and civil unrest, pose significant challenges to Iraq's tourism industry, leading to low visitor numbers and a lack of investment in sustainable tourism initiatives.

Question 9: *According to your experience, what kind of environmental problems can be distinguished when it comes to tourism? Is there any organization that will work on standardization issues in industry? What do you think about licensing activities, eco labeling certification, environmental legislation Environmental sustainability.*

Answer 9: *An organization working to promote sustainable tourism practices is the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). UNWTO promotes sustainable tourism through a variety of initiatives, including the Global Code of Tourism Ethics*

and the Sustainable Tourism Observatory. FAO also promotes sustainable tourism policies at the national and international levels.

Promoting environmental sustainability in the tourism industry is not only important for the environment, but also has economic and social benefits. Adopting sustainable practices can attract eco-conscious travelers, who are willing to pay a premium for sustainable tourism experiences. This can lead to increased revenues and job creation in the tourism industry.

Certification for eco-labelling as another way to promote environmental sustainability in the tourism industry. Eco-labeling certification is a voluntary certification system that allows tourism companies to demonstrate their commitment to sustainability. By meeting certain sustainability criteria and obtaining eco-labeling certification, tourism companies can signal to consumers that they are committed to environmental sustainability.

Question 10: *In what terms could tourism be considered as a threat to local culture and traditions? Why do you think so? Can you give us some practical examples?*

Answer 10: *Cultural appropriation Tourism can also contribute to cultural appropriation, where aspects of culture are taken without proper respect or recognition. This can lead to the loss of cultural identity and can contribute to the erasure of traditional practices and customs.*

The tourism industry may impose Western norms and rules on local communities, resulting in a loss of cultural diversity and identity.

Question 11: *Can you give us an example when locals cannot access local amenities and natural resources anymore because of tourism?*

Answer 11: *The development of tourism can lead to the displacement of local communities, particularly in areas classified as protected natural areas. This can happen when local communities are forcibly removed from their lands in order to make way for tourism development, or when the expansion of tourism leads to the loss of grazing areas or traditional agriculture. This can lead to the loss of traditional livelihoods and the erosion of local culture and traditions.*

Question 12: *As an expert, what would you change in the governmental policy regarding tourism, to make it more sustainable (economic – (income), social, environmental)? What concrete steps should be made at the macro and micro levels?*

Answer 12: *Making tourism more sustainable requires a collaborative effort between governments, tourism companies and local communities. By implementing policies that promote sustainable tourism practices, governments can ensure that tourism is a positive force for economic, social and environmental sustainability.*

Governments can educate tourists about sustainable tourism practices through visitor centers, brochures, or websites that provide information about sustainable tourism practices and encourage tourists to make responsible choices. They can also use social media and other digital channels to promote sustainable tourism and highlight the benefits of responsible tourism practices.

By implementing sustainable building practices, tourism companies can implement sustainable building practices, such as the use of renewable energy, sustainable materials and green building designs, to reduce the environmental impact of their buildings.

Question 13: *What do you know about certification programs for guesthouses/small hotels, according to which each service deliverer is ranked according to approved standards and has to define its prices according to this certificate?*

Answer 13: *Certificate programs can help promote tourism in a particular region or destination. By setting standards for accommodations and services, certificate programs help ensure that visitors have a positive experience, which can encourage them to return and recommend the destination to others, certificate programs can provide a marketing advantage for companies, accredited companies can use their certificate status to market themselves to potential guests and stand out from non-accredited competitors.*

Profession Sales manager in a hotel.

Question 1: *Can you tell us a little bit about yourself? (age, occupation, working experience and workplace duties).*

Answer 1: *Profession Sales manager in a hotel. Age 33. Work experience 4 years. Work duties Develop plans to accommodate all rooms during the year. Coordination and organization of corporate meetings.*

Question 2: *What are the most serious problems facing tourism industry for the moment? Can you specify some?*

Answer 2: *Limited domestic demand Erbil's tourism industry relies heavily on international visitors, as there is limited domestic demand for tourism-related services. This makes the city particularly vulnerable to changes in the global economy and international travel. Limited domestic demand also makes it difficult for companies in the tourism industry to survive periods of low demand.*

Question 3: *How would you describe sustainability? Also, how would you describe sustainability for your profession or business?*

Answer 3: *Definition of sustainability Meet the needs of the current generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. That is, we must preserve resources and rationalize their use.*

As a sales manager at the Sustainability Hotel, one of the important considerations in ensuring the environmental, social and economic sustainability of the hotel's operations is important. Through environmental sustainability this will include promoting eco-friendly practices for guests, such as encouraging them to reuse towels and linens, providing recycling bins, and reducing the use of single-use plastics. Social sustainability is such as promoting practices that contribute positively to the local community, such as offering locally sourced products, supporting local businesses, and engaging with the local community. Economic sustainability such as managing hotel resources in a financially sustainable way, such as reducing operating costs by conserving energy and water, and supporting local economic development by partnering with local businesses. and in the social and environmental impacts of our sales practices and ensuring that our sales strategies are aligned with the hotel's sustainability goals. By prioritizing sustainability in our sales operations, we can attract customers who are concerned about the environment and society, while also contributing to a more sustainable future.

Question 4: *What is the meaning of sustainable tourism for you? Please tell about dimensions of sustainable tourism/ (economic, social and environmental)*

Answer 4: Sustainable tourism is a holistic approach to tourism development that takes into account the economic, social and environmental impacts of tourism, seeking to maximize the benefits and minimize negative impacts.

Economic dimension Sustainable tourism encourages the creation of new markets and products that support local businesses and entrepreneurs, such as sustainable food and beverage products, cultural experiences and eco-friendly tourism activities.

Social dimension Sustainable tourism promotes the development of responsible tourism practices that respect and protect the human rights of local communities, workers and tourists.

Environmental dimension Sustainable tourism encourages the use of sustainable practices in the management of tourism activities, such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions, conserving water and energy, and promoting biodiversity conservation.

Question 5: What can be done for sustainable tourism in Erbil (applications/activities/decisions/certifications?) What should be done?

Answer 5: Education and awareness initiatives can play a crucial role in promoting sustainable tourism in Erbil. Educating tourists about the importance of sustainable tourism practices and promoting responsible tourism behavior can help reduce the negative impact of tourism on the environment and local communities. Similarly, promoting sustainable tourism practices among local populations can help create a culture of sustainability and environmental responsibility.

Question 6: Is there any kind of governmental program that directly attracts foreign tourists and promotes the country as a tourist destination?

Answer 6: While there are challenges facing Erbil's tourism industry, there is also significant potential for growth and development. Government programs and initiatives to promote the region as a tourist destination, along with investment in infrastructure and addressing safety concerns, can help unleash this potential and create a sustainable tourism industry in Erbil.

Question 7: Can you tell me more about governmental policies for Sustainable Tourism in Erbil? What do you think? Please tell about it by giving requisites and examples.

Answer 7: The government is promoting community-based tourism initiatives that enable local communities to own their tourism assets and benefit from tourism in a

sustainable manner. This approach involves working closely with local communities to identify their needs and priorities and develop tourism products and services in line with their values and traditions.

Community Engagement and Empowerment The Government of Erbil works to engage local communities and enable them to participate in and benefit from tourism development. This initiative addresses the requirements of economic and social sustainability.

Example The government has worked with local communities to develop home and community tourism programs that provide visitors with a real cultural experience while bringing economic benefits to the local community.

Question 8: *What do you think the pros and cons of sustainability in Iraq tourism? Negative and positive dimensions*

Answer 8: *Wildlife conservation for sustainable tourism to play a critical role in wildlife conservation in Iraq by promoting responsible travel practices and supporting conservation initiatives. This helps protect endangered species and their habitats, ensuring that these valuable resources are preserved for future generations.*

Political instability and conflict in Iraq pose significant challenges to the tourism industry, making it difficult to promote sustainable tourism practices and maintain safe and welcoming environments for tourists.

Question 9: *According to your experience, what kind of environmental problems can be distinguished when it comes to tourism? Is there any organization that will work on standardization issues in industry? What do you think about licensing activities, eco labeling certification, environmental legislation Environmental sustainability.*

Answer 9: *Environmental sustainability is an important aspect of the tourism industry. While tourism can have negative impacts on the environment, it can also provide opportunities for conservation and sustainable development. It is important for the industry to promote sustainable tourism practices and for travelers to be mindful of their environmental impacts when traveling. This can help ensure that tourism continues to deliver benefits to both travellers and local communities while minimizing negative impacts on the environment.*

The tourism industry is highly dependent on the environment and natural resources, and the negative impacts of tourism can have far-reaching consequences for ecosystems, local communities and future generations. Therefore, it is crucial to prioritize sustainable tourism practices to ensure that the industry continues to thrive without compromising the environment and social welfare.

It is important to raise awareness among travelers, encourage responsible behavior, and promote a cultural shift towards more sustainable and responsible tourism practices. This requires collaboration among all stakeholders, including governments, tourism companies, travellers and local communities.

Question 10: *In what terms could tourism be considered as a threat to local culture and traditions? Why do you think so? Can you give us some practical examples?*

Answer 10: *Tourism can create inequality between locals and tourists, as locals may have to meet the needs of tourists at the expense of their needs and well-being. This can also lead to income disparities and the exploitation of local labour.*

Inequality Tourists may have more purchasing power than locals, leading to income disparities and local labor exploitation.

Question 11: *Can you give us an example when locals cannot access local amenities and natural resources anymore because of tourism?*

Answer 11: *The increase in tourism can lead to higher property prices, making it difficult for locals to afford housing and other basic amenities. This can happen when tourists buy property in an area, driving up prices and making living there something locals cannot live in. In addition, the development of tourism infrastructure may result in the loss of affordable housing or other basic facilities such as schools or hospitals, as these spaces are often reused for tourism-related businesses.*

Question 12: *As an expert, what would you change in the governmental policy regarding tourism, to make it more sustainable (economic – (income), social, environmental)? What concrete steps should be made at the macro and micro levels?*

Answer 12: *Tourism is a major contributor to economic development, job creation and cultural exchange. However, they can also have negative effects on the environment and local communities, such as overuse of natural resources, pollution and cultural homogeneity. To address these challenges, government policies can be implemented to*

promote sustainable tourism practices that balance economic, social and environmental considerations.

Governments must monitor and evaluate the impact of tourism on the environment, society and the economy, and use the results to improve policies and practices. This can help ensure the sustainability of tourism development and minimize negative impacts.

By engaging in sustainable supply chain management, tourism companies can engage in sustainable supply chain management practices, such as sourcing locally produced products and ethically, to reduce the environmental and social impact of their operations.

Question 13: *What do you know about certification programs for guesthouses/small hotels, according to which each service deliverer is ranked according to approved standards and has to define its prices according to this certificate?*

Answer 13: *Certificate programs can help create a sense of community among companies in a particular destination. By working together to meet established standards, companies can help promote the destination as a whole and create a more welcoming environment for visitors. This can help ensure that businesses have the knowledge and skills to deliver quality service and accommodation.*

The profession is a manager of a tourist resort in Erbil.

Question 1: *Can you tell us a little bit about yourself? (age, occupation, working experience and workplace duties).*

Answer 1: *The profession is a manager of a tourist resort in Erbil. Age 30. Work experience 4 years. Work duties appoint employees and supervise their performance and training.*

Question 2: *What are the most serious problems facing tourism industry for the moment? Can you specify some?*

Answer 2: *Language barriers Many visitors to Erbil do not speak Kurdish or Arabic, which can make it difficult to navigate the city and communicate with locals. This can be a barrier to tourism, especially for those who prefer to travel independently rather than travel as part of a tour group. The lack of English language skills among locals in Erbil can also be a challenge, as it limits communication with tourists and can lead to misunderstandings.*

Question 3: *How would you describe sustainability? Also, how would you describe sustainability for your profession or business?*

Answer 3: *Sustainability as the practice of meeting the needs of the current generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. It involves balancing economic, social and environmental considerations in decision-making and taking a long-term perspective to ensure that resources are used responsibly.*

As a manager of a tourist resort in Erbil, sustainability will be an important consideration in ensuring the environmental, social, and economic sustainability of the resort's operations through the resort's impact on the environment through measures such as water and energy conservation, waste reduction, and sustainable sources of materials. In addition, the resort can participate in environmental education and awareness programs to promote sustainable behavior among guests and staff. Contribute positively to the local community through measures such as recruiting and training local staff, supporting local businesses, participating in community development projects and managing resort resources, such as reducing operating costs by conserving energy and water, and increasing revenues through responsible marketing strategies. Prioritizing sustainability in our operations, we can attract customers who are concerned about the environment and society, while also contributing to a more sustainable future for the local community and planet.

Question 4: *What is the meaning of sustainable tourism for you? Please tell about dimensions of sustainable tourism/ economic, social and environmental)*

Answer 4: *Sustainable tourism is about creating an economically and environmentally sustainable tourism industry, by promoting responsible and ethical practices, and investing in sustainable infrastructure.*

Economic dimension Sustainable tourism supports the growth of local economies by creating jobs and supporting the development of industries related to sustainable tourism, such as sustainable agriculture and ecotourism.

Social dimension Sustainable tourism promotes equitable and accessible tourism opportunities for all, regardless of age, gender or ability, and supports the development of accessible tourism infrastructure and services.

Environmental dimension Sustainable tourism encourages the use of sustainable transport options, such as public transport, cycling and walking, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reduce the negative impacts of tourism on the environment.

Question 5: *What can be done for sustainable tourism in Erbil (applications/activities/decisions/certifications?) What should be done?*

Answer 5: *Promoting sustainable tourism in Erbil requires a holistic approach involving multiple stakeholders, including the government, the tourism industry, the local community and tourists. By implementing sustainable tourism practices such as certification programs, waste management initiatives, community engagement, culture preservation, ecotourism, infrastructure development, responsible use of natural resources, and education and awareness initiatives, Erbil can promote sustainable tourism growth while preserving its environment, culture, and economy for future generations.*

Question 6: *Is there any kind of governmental program that directly attracts foreign tourists and promotes the country as a tourist destination?*

Answer 6: *Another challenge facing Erbil's tourism industry is the impact of political and economic instability in the region. The region has experienced political turmoil and conflicts in the past, affecting the tourism industry. In addition, economic challenges such as inflation and currency depreciation can also affect the tourism industry by making travel and accommodation more expensive.*

Question 7: *Can you tell me more about governmental policies for Sustainable Tourism in Erbil ? What do you think? Please tell about it by giving requisites and examples.*

Answer 7: *To support sustainable tourism development in Erbil, the government is also collaborating with international organizations, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), to access technical expertise and financial resources. UNDP has supported several sustainable tourism initiatives in Erbil, including the development of a sustainable tourism strategy and the establishment of a tourism training centre.*

Partnerships and collaborations: The Government of Erbil collaborates with other stakeholders, including private sector companies and international organizations, to promote sustainable tourism development. This initiative addresses environmental, economic and social sustainability requirements.

Example The government has partnered with the United Nations Development Programme to implement sustainable tourism projects and promote responsible tourism practices in the region. The government of Erbil has also cooperated with international organizations to promote tourism development in the region, such as the United Nations Development Programme and the World Tourism Organization .

Question 8: *What do you think the pros and cons of sustainability in Iraq tourism? Negative and positive dimensions*

Answer 8: *Preserving sustainable tourism heritage promotes the preservation of Iraq's rich cultural heritage by encouraging visitors to respect and value historical sites and monuments. This can help protect these valuable resources from damage or destruction due to neglect or lack of care.*

Over tourism Unsustainable tourism practices can lead to over tourism, as an excessive number of visitors strains local resources and infrastructure, causing damage to natural and cultural resources and creating negative impacts on local communities.

Question 9: *According to your experience, what kind of environmental problems can be distinguished when it comes to tourism? Is there any organization that will work on standardization issues in industry? What do you think about licensing activities, eco labeling certification, environmental legislation Environmental sustainability.*

Answer 9: *It is important for industry stakeholders to collaborate and share best practices. This can include sharing information about sustainable tourism initiatives, environmental certifications and other tools to promote sustainability in the industry. Collaboration can also help ensure that sustainable tourism practices are consistently implemented across different destinations and tourism companies.*

Promoting environmental sustainability in the tourism industry is a crucial issue that requires cooperation and proactive efforts from various stakeholders. Standardization organizations, regulators, tourism companies, and tourists play a role in promoting sustainable tourism practices, reducing negative environmental impacts, and ensuring the industry's long-term sustainability.

Promoting environmental sustainability in the tourism industry is critical to the long-term sustainability of the industry itself, as well as to the environment and local communities. This requires cooperation between tourism companies, governments and

other stakeholders to develop and implement sustainable practices, and to ensure that they are effectively enforced and monitored. By prioritizing environmental sustainability, the tourism industry can contribute to a more sustainable and responsible future for all.

Question 10: *In what terms could tourism be considered as a threat to local culture and traditions? Why do you think so? Can you give us some practical examples?*

Answer 10: *Encourages a superficial understanding of culture Tourism can also encourage a superficial understanding of culture , with tourists experiencing only superficial aspects of culture without a real understanding of the deeper meanings and values behind cultural practices and traditions. This can lead to underestimation of culture and can perpetuate stereotypes and misunderstandings.*

The commodification of cultural practices The tourism industry also contributes to the commodification of local cultural practices, such as traditional dances or ceremonies, which can only be performed for tourist entertainment and lose their original meaning and significance.

Question 11: *Can you give us an example when locals cannot access local amenities and natural resources anymore because of tourism?*

Answer 11: *An influx of tourists can overcrowd local communities and put pressure on local infrastructure and resources. This can lead to a decrease in the quality of life for local residents, as they may face an increase in traffic, noise pollution and competition for resources such as water or food. In addition, pressure on local infrastructure may lead to the deterioration of basic services such as healthcare or sanitation, which may negatively affect the health and well-being of local communities.*

Question 12: *As an expert, what would you change in the governmental policy regarding tourism, to make it more sustainable (economic – (income), social, environmental)? What concrete steps should be made at the macro and micro levels?*

Answer 12: *One of the steps that can be taken is to develop a comprehensive national tourism strategy that integrates sustainability into policy and planning. This strategy can serve as a blueprint for sustainable tourism development, identifying specific actions that can be taken at the national, regional and local levels. The strategy should*

include measures to reduce the environmental impact of tourism, support local communities and promote sustainable economic development.

Governments can promote ecotourism, a sustainable form of tourism that focuses on preserving and preserving the environment. This can include developing ecotourism sites, promoting eco-friendly accommodations, and providing opportunities for visitors to learn about the natural environment.

Partial by supporting local culture Tourism companies can support local culture by promoting traditional arts, handicrafts, music and dance, and educating visitors about local customs and traditions.

Question 13: *What do you know about certification programs for guesthouses/small hotels, according to which each service deliverer is ranked according to approved standards and has to define its prices according to this certificate?*

Answer 13: *Certification programs can help encourage sustainability and responsible tourism practices. Many certification programs include standards related to environmental sustainability, social responsibility and culture preservation, certification programs may require companies to implement specific policies or procedures in order to meet established standards. For example, companies may be required to have a certain number of employees or implement specific cleaning or safety protocols.*

Profession Head of department in Erbil Municipality.

Question 1: *Can you tell us a little bit about yourself? (age, occupation, working experience and workplace duties).*

Answer 1: *Profession Head of department in Erbil Municipality. Age 44 . Experience19 years. Work duties, planning and follow-up.*

Question 2: *What are the most serious problems facing tourism industry for the moment? Can you specify some?*

Answer 2: *Lack of trained staff The tourism industry in Erbil requires trained staff to provide quality services to visitors. However, there is a shortage of trained staff in the hospitality sector, particularly in rural areas. This can lead to inconsistencies in service quality and limit the growth potential of the tourism industry.*

Question 3: *How would you describe sustainability? Also, how would you describe sustainability for your profession or business?*

Answer 3: *Sustainability can be defined as the practice of meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*

As Head of Department in Erbil Municipality, sustainability will be an important consideration in ensuring the environmental, social and economic sustainability of the city's operations by promoting sustainable practices such as reducing carbon emissions, increasing the use of renewable energy, and managing waste and water resources in a sustainable manner. In addition, the city can participate in environmental education and awareness programs to promote sustainable behavior among residents. Promote practices that contribute positively to the community, such as providing access to education, health care and other basic services, and promoting social inclusion and equity. Managing the city's resources in a financially sustainable way, such as investing in infrastructure is what we currently see, promoting socially and environmentally responsible economic development, considering the social and environmental impacts of our policies and ensuring that our strategies are aligned with the city's sustainability goals. By prioritizing sustainability in our policies, we can promote a high quality of life for residents, attract businesses and investors who value sustainability, and contribute to a more sustainable future for the planet.

Question 4: *What is the meaning of sustainable tourism for you? Please tell about dimensions of sustainable tourism/ economic, social and environmental)*

Answer 4: *Sustainable tourism is an approach to tourism that recognizes the interdependence of economic, social and environmental issues, and seeks solutions that benefit all stakeholders.*

Economic dimension: Sustainable tourism supports the development of sustainable tourism policies and practices that encourage responsible and sustainable tourism practices, such as certification programs, industry standards, and environmental and social impact assessments.

Social dimension: Sustainable tourism promotes cultural diversity, respect for local traditions and customs, and the preservation of cultural heritage by engaging local

communities in tourism activities and promoting authentic cultural experiences for tourists.

Environmental dimension: Sustainable tourism encourages the use of renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support the transition to a low-carbon economy.

Question 5: *What can be done for sustainable tourism in Erbil (applications/activities/decisions/certifications?) What should be done?*

Answer 5: *Sustainable tourism in Erbil can also promote cultural exchange and understanding between tourists and locals. Encouraging tourists to learn about the local culture and participate in cultural activities can help promote respect and understanding for different cultures and traditions. It can also help promote the preservation of cultural heritage by creating awareness and appreciation of local customs and traditions.*

Question 6: *Is there any kind of governmental program that directly attracts foreign tourists and promotes the country as a tourist destination?*

Answer 6: *The lack of standards and regulations for the tourism industry can also be a challenge. This can lead to problems such as poor quality accommodation, unregulated tour operators, and environmental damage due to unsustainable tourism practices. The Government has taken steps to address this by introducing regulations and standards for the tourism industry, but more work is needed in this area.*

Question 7: *Can you tell me more about governmental policies for Sustainable Tourism in Erbil ? What do you think? Please tell about it by giving requisites and examples.*

Answer 7: *The Government of Erbil recognizes the importance of sustainable tourism development as a means to promote economic growth, protect the environment and preserve cultural heritage. In addition to the above policies, the local government in Erbil has also taken steps to ensure that tourism development is aligned with broader sustainable development goals, such as reducing poverty, promoting gender equality, and addressing climate change.*

Tourism Impact Assessments: The Government of Erbil conducts tourism impact assessments to assess the potential impacts of tourism development on the environment,

local communities and cultural heritage sites. This initiative addresses environmental, economic and social sustainability requirements.

Example The government conducted tourism impact assessments of major tourism development projects, such as the expansion of Erbil International Airport, to identify potential impacts and develop mitigation strategies.

Question 8: *What do you think the pros and cons of sustainability in Iraq tourism? Negative and positive dimensions*

Answer 8: *Positive social impact Sustainable tourism can have positive social impacts by promoting intercultural understanding, strengthening community ties, and reducing poverty through economic development.*

Land use disputes may arise between tourism developers and local people over the use of land and natural resources, which can lead to the displacement of local communities or damage to the environment.

Question 9: *According to your experience, what kind of environmental problems can be distinguished when it comes to tourism? Is there any organization that will work on standardization issues in industry? What do you think about licensing activities, eco labeling certification, environmental legislation Environmental sustainability.*

Answer 9: *It is worth noting that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the tourism industry and the environment. The pandemic has reduced tourism activity, which has had some positive environmental impacts, such as reduced carbon emissions and improved air and water quality. However, it has also had negative effects on the environment, such as increased waste from personal protective equipment (PPE) and increased single-use plastics.*

In conclusion, promoting environmental sustainability in the tourism industry requires a coordinated effort from various stakeholders, including standardization organizations, regulatory bodies, tourism companies, tourists and local communities. Education and awareness initiatives are also important to build awareness and empower stakeholders to effectively adopt sustainable tourism practices.

Licensing and certification activities for eco-labelling and environmental legislation can provide incentives and regulations for tourism companies to adopt these practices. In addition, tourists and tourism companies themselves can take proactive steps to

promote sustainability, which can help reduce negative environmental impacts and promote the overall sustainability of the tourism industry.

Question 10: *In what terms could tourism be considered as a threat to local culture and traditions? Why do you think so? Can you give us some practical examples?*

Answer 10: *Language loss The influx of tourists may also contribute to the loss of local languages, as the need to communicate with tourists in a common language can lead to the adoption of a dominant language at the expense of local languages. This can contribute to the erosion of cultural identity and can lead to the loss of traditional knowledge and practices.*

Loss of cultural transmission Increased tourism also leads to loss of intergenerational cultural transmission, as younger generations may prioritize catering to tourists over preserving their traditional cultural practices and heritage.

Question 11: *Can you give us an example when locals cannot access local amenities and natural resources anymore because of tourism?*

Answer 11: *The development of tourism can lead to the homogeneity of local cultures and the loss of diversity. This can happen when local cultures are modified or adapted to meet the expectations of tourists, resulting in the loss of the unique characteristics that make them distinct. In addition, the rise of global tourism can lead to the imposition of Western cultural norms and values, which can lead to the erasure of local traditions and practices.*

Question 12: *As an expert, what would you change in the governmental policy regarding tourism, to make it more sustainable (economic – (income), social, environmental)? What concrete steps should be made at the macro and micro levels?*

Answer 12: *To encourage the adoption of sustainable tourism practices, governments can offer incentives and subsidies to companies that implement environmentally friendly measures. This can include funding renewable energy systems, waste management facilities, and water conservation programs. Governments can also regulate tourism activities to ensure compliance with sustainability standards and guidelines. For example, regulations could be put in place to limit the number of tourists in fragile or environmentally sensitive areas, implement waste management systems, and promote sustainable transportation options.*

College by promoting sustainable transportation: Governments can promote sustainable transportation options for tourists, such as public transport, walking, and cycling. This can help reduce carbon emissions and promote healthy lifestyles.

Partial by promoting sustainable tourism through marketing Tourism companies can promote sustainable tourism practices through marketing campaigns, such as social media, websites and brochures

Question 13: *What do you know about certification programs for guesthouses/small hotels, according to which each service deliverer is ranked according to approved standards and has to define its prices according to this certificate?*

Answer 13: *Certification programs companies to remain competitive by establishing a set of standards that all companies must meet. This helps ensure that companies offer a consistent level of quality and service, which can be important for attracting and retaining customers. Certification programs may require companies to comply with local, state, or federal regulations related to health, safety, or other areas. Among the certificates we work with is the ISO 9001-2015 certificate.*

The profession is the head of one of the departments in the municipality of Erbil.

Question 1: *Can you tell us a little bit about yourself? (age, occupation, working experience and workplace duties).*

Answer 1: *The profession is the head of one of the departments in the municipality of Erbil. Age 52. Work experience 18 years. Work duties Sending and organizing committees for inspection, environmental control and sanitary landfill.*

Question 2: *What are the most serious problems facing tourism industry for the moment? Can you specify some?*

Answer 2: *Environmental concerns The tourism industry can have negative environmental impacts, including increased waste, pollution and pressure on natural resources. In Erbil, there is a need to balance the economic benefits of tourism with the preservation of the city's natural and cultural heritage. This requires investment in sustainable tourism practices and environmental management strategies.*

Question 3: *How would you describe sustainability? Also, how would you describe sustainability for your profession or business?*

Answer 3: *Sustainability means meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It's about finding a balance between economic growth, social justice and environmental protection. At its core, sustainability is about living within our means – using resources responsibly and ensuring a healthy and prosperous planet is left for future generations.*

As the head of one of the departments in Erbil Municipality, promoting sustainability means considering the long-term effects of our policies and actions on the city's economy, community and environment. This will include investing in sustainable infrastructure, promoting green technology, encouraging sustainable behavior among residents, and collaborating with businesses, nonprofits, and other stakeholders to achieve sustainability goals. By prioritizing sustainability in the development of our city, we can ensure that Erbil continues to thrive while also contributing to a more sustainable and equitable world.

Question 4: *What is the meaning of sustainable tourism for you? Please tell about dimensions of sustainable tourism/ economic, social and environmental)*

Answer 4: *Sustainable tourism is all about creating tourism experiences that respect local cultures, reduce environmental impact, and contribute to local economic development.*

Economic dimension Sustainable tourism supports the development of sustainable tourism supply chains, such as local sources of food and beverage products, to reduce transport emissions and support local businesses.

Social dimension Sustainable tourism promotes the development of tourism activities that support community-based tourism initiatives, such as homestays, community tours, and cultural exchange programs.

Environmental dimension Sustainable tourism promotes the conservation of biodiversity and natural ecosystems by supporting wildlife conservation programs, promoting sustainable land use practices, and reducing pollution and waste.

Question 5: *What can be done for sustainable tourism in erbil (applications/activities/decisions/certifications?) What should be done?*

Answer 5: *In terms of specific applications and activities that can promote sustainable tourism in Erbil, several initiatives can be considered. For example, promoting sustainable tourism packages that include eco-friendly accommodation, transportation, and activities can help encourage sustainable tourism practices. In addition, the implementation of green building standards for new tourism infrastructure, such as hotels and restaurants, can promote sustainability and energy efficiency. Moreover, the creation of public green spaces and parks can help improve the quality of life for locals while promoting sustainable tourism.*

Question 6: *Is there any kind of governmental program that directly attracts foreign tourists and promotes the country as a tourist destination?*

Answer 6: *Another challenge facing Erbil's tourism industry is the lack of diversity in the types of attractions and activities available to visitors. While the area has many cultural and historical attractions, further development of adventure activities and nature-based tourism is needed to attract a wide range of visitors.*

Question 7: *Can you tell me more about governmental policies for Sustainable Tourism in Erbil? What do you think? Please tell about it by giving requisites and examples.*

Answer 7: *The government has launched initiatives to promote sustainable agriculture and rural tourism in surrounding areas, which can help reduce poverty and create economic opportunities for local communities. This approach also supports the conservation of natural resources and traditional land-use practices. The government of Erbil recognizes the urgent need to address climate change and its impact on tourism and the wider community. To mitigate the impact of tourism on the environment, the government has launched initiatives to promote sustainable transport, energy efficiency and waste reduction in the tourism industry.*

Climate Change Adaptation *The Erbil government is strengthening climate change adaptation measures to prepare for the potential impacts of climate change on the tourism industry and ecosystems in the region. This initiative addresses environmental sustainability requirements.*

Example *The government has established a climate change adaptation strategy that includes measures such as water conservation, disaster risk reduction, and sustainable land use planning.*

Question 8: *What do you think the pros and cons of sustainability in Iraq tourism?
Negative and positive dimensions*

Answer 8: *Increasing revenues for sustainable tourism will generate significant revenues for the Iraqi economy, including through tourist taxes and increased spending by visitors.*

Lack of government support The success of sustainable tourism initiatives in Iraq depends heavily on government support and investment. Without adequate government support, sustainable tourism initiatives may struggle to gain momentum, limiting their effectiveness in promoting cultural and environmental preservation.

Question 9: *According to your experience, what kind of environmental problems can be distinguished when it comes to tourism? Is there any organization that will work on standardization issues in industry? What do you think about licensing activities, eco labeling certification, environmental legislation Environmental sustainability.*

Answer 9: *Environmental issues related to tourism, there are many measures that can be taken. This includes the adoption of sustainable tourism practices, collaboration between industry stakeholders, engagement with local communities, and responsible travel behaviour. Organizations such as GSTC and UNWTO, along with environmental certifications, eco-labeling schemes and environmental legislation, can also help promote sustainable tourism practices and reduce the environmental impacts of tourism.*

The tourism industry is complex and multifaceted, and promoting environmental sustainability within the industry requires a coordinated effort from various stakeholders. Standardization organizations, such as ISO, can play a crucial role in establishing and promoting sustainable tourism practices, while environmental regulatory bodies and legislation can provide incentives and regulations for tourism companies to adopt these practices.

Environmental legislation can play an important role in promoting environmental sustainability in the tourism industry. Governments can establish regulations and guidelines for tourism companies to follow, and enforce these regulations through inspections and penalties for non-compliance.

Question 10: *In what terms could tourism be considered as a threat to local culture and traditions? Why do you think so? Can you give us some practical examples?*

Answer 10: *Homogeneity In some cases, tourism can contribute to the homogeneity of cultures, as local cultures and traditions are reduced to a general and commercial form that meets the tastes and expectations of tourists. This can lead to a loss of cultural diversity and can contribute to an increasingly unified global culture.*

Homogeneity Local cultures and traditions may be reduced to a general and commercial form that meets the tastes and expectations of tourists, resulting in a loss of cultural diversity.

Question 11: *Can you give us an example when locals cannot access local amenities and natural resources anymore because of tourism?*

Answer 11: *For example, an increase in tourism can lead to a rise in crime and other forms of social unrest, as tourists may be targeted by criminal elements or may engage in illegal or reprehensible behaviors by the local community. This can negatively affect the safety and security of local residents, who may feel threatened or in danger due to the presence of tourists in their community.*

Question 12: *As an expert, what would you change in the governmental policy regarding tourism, to make it more sustainable (economic – (income), social, environmental)? What concrete steps should be made at the macro and micro levels?*

Answer 12: *Community participation is crucial for sustainable tourism development. Governments can encourage community participation in tourism development to ensure that local populations benefit from tourism activities. This could include measures such as promoting locally owned businesses, providing employment and training opportunities for local people, and consulting with local communities on tourism development plans. By involving local communities in tourism development, governments can ensure that tourism is a positive force for economic, social and environmental sustainability.*

By promoting responsible wildlife tourism, governments can promote responsible wildlife tourism by establishing regulations and standards for animal welfare and treatment in tourism activities.

Partial by protecting natural resources Tourism companies can protect natural resources, such as beaches, forests and parks, by implementing sustainable tourism practices, such as reducing visitor numbers and promoting responsible behavior.

Question 13: *What do you know about certification programs for guesthouses/small hotels, according to which each service deliverer is ranked according to approved standards and has to define its prices according to this certificate?*

Answer 13: *Certification programs companies identify areas where they can improve their operations and provide better service to guests. By providing feedback and recommendations, certification programs can help companies stay on track and continue to improve over time. By participating in a certification program, companies can compare their performance with other companies in the industry and identify areas where they can improve. One of the certification programs that we work with is the ISO 9001-2015 certificate to increase the quality of performance*

Profession as a hotel manager

Question 1: *Can you tell us a little bit about yourself? (age, occupation, working experience and workplace duties).*

Answer 1: *Profession as a hotel manager. Age 40 . Scientific experience 7 years. Work duties, administrative tasks and coordination with diplomatic bodies.*

Question 2: *What are the most serious problems facing tourism industry for the moment? Can you specify some?*

Answer 2: *Safety concerns Safety concerns can be a major barrier to tourism in Erbil. Visitors may be deterred by concerns about terrorism, crime, or political instability. Ensuring the safety of visitors is essential to the growth of the tourism industry, and requires investment in effective security and law enforcement infrastructure.*

Question 3: *How would you describe sustainability? Also, how would you describe sustainability for your profession or business?*

Answer 3: *Sustainability can be defined as the practice of meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. In the context of the hotel, sustainability is about working in a way that minimizes negative impacts on the environment, promotes social justice and inclusivity, and is financially viable in the long run.*

As a hotel manager, promoting sustainability will include considering the environmental and social impacts of the hotel's operations and taking steps to reduce its environmental footprint while contributing to the local community such as energy and water conservation measures to reduce the hotel's carbon footprint and reduce operating costs. Implement waste reduction and recycling programs to reduce hotel waste and reduce environmental pollution. Provide guests with information and resources to encourage sustainable behavior, such as water bottles and reusable towels. Supporting local social and environmental initiatives through donations and partnerships can promote sustainability can lead to lower operating costs and increased efficiency, which may improve the hotel's long-term profitability. In general, sustainability should be a fundamental consideration in the management of any hotel, and can be achieved through a combination of innovative practices, staff and guest education, and partnerships with like-minded organizations.

Question 4: *What is the meaning of sustainable tourism for you? Please tell about dimensions of sustainable tourism/ economic, social and environmental)*

Answer 4: *Sustainable tourism is an approach to tourism that seeks to promote long-term sustainability, by balancing economic development with environmental protection and social welfare.*

Economic dimension Sustainable tourism supports the development of sustainable tourism destinations that provide economic benefits to local communities, such as jobs, income and investment opportunities.

Social dimension Sustainable tourism promotes the development of education and training programs in sustainable tourism that equip local communities and tourists with the knowledge and skills to participate in sustainable tourism practices.

Environmental dimension Sustainable tourism encourages the use of sustainable tourism practices in the management of protected areas, such as national parks and wildlife reserves, to ensure the long-term conservation of these areas.

Question 5: *What can be done for sustainable tourism in Erbil (applications/activities/decisions/certifications?) What should be done?*

Answer 5: *Sustainable tourism in Erbil can have a positive impact on the local economy, environment and culture. By implementing sustainable tourism practices and promoting*

responsible tourism behavior, Erbil can attract tourists interested in experiencing the local culture and natural environment while promoting sustainability. Moreover, by engaging the local community and promoting community-based tourism initiatives, Erbil can create economic benefits for the local population while preserving its cultural heritage and natural resources.

Question 6: *Is there any kind of governmental program that directly attracts foreign tourists and promotes the country as a tourist destination?*

Answer 6: *The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the tourism industry globally, including in Erbil. Travel restrictions and health concerns led to a decline in tourism activity, and the industry had to adapt to new health and safety protocols. However, with the rollout of vaccines and the easing of travel restrictions, there is hope that the tourism industry in Erbil and the world will recover.*

Question 7: *Can you tell me more about governmental policies for Sustainable Tourism in Erbil ? What do you think? Please tell about it by giving requisites and examples.*

Answer 7: *The government is also committed to promoting gender equality in the tourism industry, recognizing that women often face barriers to economic opportunity and leadership roles. To address this, the government has developed training programmes and financial incentives to promote women's entrepreneurship and leadership in tourism. Education and awareness*

The Government has invested in education and awareness programs to promote sustainable tourism practices among tourism industry professionals and visitors. For example, the Government has organized training workshops for tourism industry professionals on sustainable tourism practices.

Question 8: *What do you think the pros and cons of sustainability in Iraq tourism? Negative and positive dimensions*

Answer 8: *Promoting local products for sustainable tourism promotes the use of locally produced goods, leading to increased economic opportunities for local businesses and encouraging the preservation of traditional industries and crafts.*

Economic leakage A large portion of tourism revenues may leak from the local economy, as tourism companies and suppliers may not be locally owned or operated.

Question 9: *According to your experience, what kind of environmental problems can be distinguished when it comes to tourism? Is there any organization that will work on standardization issues in industry? What do you think about licensing activities, eco labeling certification, environmental legislation Environmental sustainability.*

Answer 9: *COVID-19 pandemic, it is important to take into account lessons learned and continue to prioritize environmental sustainability in tourism practices. This may include implementing new technologies and procedures to reduce environmental impacts, promoting alternative forms of tourism, and engaging with local communities to ensure that both travellers and locals benefit from tourism. By working together and promoting sustainable tourism practices, we can ensure that tourism continues to deliver benefits while minimizing negative impacts on the environment.*

Tourism companies can also take proactive steps to promote sustainability, such as implementing sustainable practices in their operations and participating in sustainable tourism marketing. By adopting sustainable practices, tourism companies can reduce their environmental impact and enhance their reputation among consumers who value sustainability.

There are a variety of measures that can be taken to promote environmental sustainability in the tourism industry, including environmental certification, environmental legislation, and collaborative efforts among stakeholders. By embracing sustainable tourism practices, tourism companies can contribute to a more sustainable and responsible future for industry, the environment and local communities.

Question 10: *In what terms could tourism be considered as a threat to local culture and traditions? Why do you think so? Can you give us some practical examples?*

Answer 10: *Negative impacts on traditional livelihoods Tourism can also have negative impacts on traditional livelihoods, particularly those based on subsistence farming or natural resource extraction. Tourist flows and tourism-related development can lead to the displacement of local communities and the loss of traditional livelihoods, which can have long-term economic and social impacts.*

Negative impacts on traditional livelihoods The tourism industry may contribute to the loss of traditional livelihoods, particularly those based on subsistence farming or extraction of natural resources.

Question 11: *Can you give us an example when locals cannot access local amenities and natural resources anymore because of tourism?*

Answer 11: *The development of large-scale tourism infrastructure can lead to the destruction of natural habitats and the displacement of wildlife. This can happen when natural areas are cleared to make way for resorts or other tourism-related infrastructure, or when the influx of tourists leads to increased pollution and habitat destruction. This can affect the ecosystem services provided by these habitats, which may have traditionally been used by local people for subsistence or other purposes.*

Question 12: *As an expert, what would you change in the governmental policy regarding tourism, to make it more sustainable (economic – (income), social, environmental)? What concrete steps should be made at the macro and micro levels?*

Answer 12: *Investment in sustainable tourism infrastructure is another key element of sustainable tourism development. Governments can invest in sustainable tourism infrastructure such as renewable energy systems, waste management facilities, and water conservation programs. This can help reduce the environmental impact of tourism activities and promote sustainable economic development.*

By developing sustainable tourism standards, governments can develop and implement sustainable tourism standards to guide tourism companies in adopting sustainable practices. These standards can cover areas such as waste management, energy efficiency, and community engagement.

Partial by supporting responsible tourism behavior Tourism companies can support responsible tourism behavior, such as respecting local customs and traditions, and promoting sustainable resource management practices, through educational and promotional activities.

Question 13: *What do you know about certification programs for guesthouses/small hotels, according to which each service deliverer is ranked according to approved standards and has to define its prices according to this certificate?*

Answer 13: *Certification programs in providing a framework for resolving conflicts between guests and companies. By setting a set of standards for accommodations and services, certification programs can help ensure guests have a positive experience and address any issues that arise in a timely and efficient manner. Certification programs*

can provide a way for companies to receive feedback on their performance from industry experts. Residents who evaluate companies for certification can provide feedback on areas where the business is doing well and areas where it can be improved.

The profession is a restaurant manager

Question 1: *Can you tell us a little bit about yourself? (age, occupation, working experience and workplace duties).*

Answer 1: *The profession is a restaurant manager. Age 43 . Work experience 15 years. Work duties Administrative tasks and attention to the customer and maintaining quality .*

Question 2: *What are the most serious problems facing tourism industry for the moment? Can you specify some?*

Answer 2: *Cultural barriers Erbil has a rich cultural heritage, with many historical and cultural attractions. However, cultural barriers can limit the number of tourists visiting the city. Cultural differences may deter visitors, such as dress codes or social norms. Addressing cultural barriers requires investing in training cultural awareness for tourism industry employees and developing cultural sensitivity campaigns to promote Erbil as an inclusive and welcoming destination.*

Question 3: *How would you describe sustainability? Also, how would you describe sustainability for your profession or business?*

Answer 3: *Sustainability can be defined as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. In a restaurant, sustainability is about working in a way that minimizes negative impacts on the environment, promotes social justice and inclusivity, and is financially viable in the long run.*

As a restaurant manager, promoting sustainability will include considering the environmental and social impacts of restaurant operations through access to local and sustainable food to support the local community and promote sustainable agriculture. Reduce food waste by implementing food waste prevention programs, donating excess food to food banks, or composting. And implement energy-saving measures, such as the use of lighting and energy-saving equipment, to reduce energy consumption and reduce operating costs. Offering vegetarian and vegan options to reduce the environmental

impact of meat production and meet customer needs with dietary restrictions. Support local social and environmental initiatives through donations and partnerships.

Question 4: *What is the meaning of sustainable tourism for you? Please tell about dimensions of sustainable tourism/ economic, social and environmental)*

Answer 4: *Sustainable tourism is about creating tourism products and services designed to meet the needs of tourists while supporting the development and well-being of local communities and the environment.*

Economic dimension Sustainable tourism supports the development of sustainable tourism financing mechanisms, such as green bonds and impact investment funds, to support the growth of sustainable tourism initiatives and businesses.

Social dimension Sustainable tourism promotes the development of sustainable tourism activities that provide opportunities for social interaction and exchange between local communities and tourists, such as cultural events, festivals and community tourism activities.

Environmental dimension Sustainable tourism promotes the protection of natural resources, such as water, air and soil, by promoting sustainable tourism practices that reduce pollution and waste.

Question 5: *What can be done for sustainable tourism in erbil (applications/activities/decisions/certifications?) What should be done?*

Answer 5: *Certifications and standards can also play an important role in promoting sustainable tourism in Erbil. For example, implementing certification programs such as the World Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) or Earth Check can help ensure tourism companies follow sustainable tourism practices. By obtaining these certifications, companies can demonstrate their commitment to sustainability and attract tourists interested in supporting sustainable tourism.*

Question 6: *Is there any kind of governmental program that directly attracts foreign tourists and promotes the country as a tourist destination?*

Answer 6: *Another challenge facing Erbil's tourism industry is the lack of trained and skilled tourism professionals. This can affect the quality of service and visitor experiences, which can negatively affect the reputation of the region as a tourist destination. The Government has recognized this challenge and taken steps to address*

it by investing in training and education programs for professionals in the tourism industry.

Question 7: *Can you tell me more about governmental policies for Sustainable Tourism in Erbil ? What do you think? Please tell about it by giving requisites and examples.*

Answer 7: *Involve the private sector. The government works closely with tourism companies to promote sustainable tourism practices and support the development of sustainable tourism products and services. The government is also encouraging the private sector to invest in sustainable tourism infrastructure, such as eco-friendly hotels and residences, renewable energy systems, and sustainable transportation solutions.*

Sustainable Transportation The Erbil government is promoting sustainable transportation options, such as public transport and cycling, to reduce the environmental impact of tourism activities. This initiative addresses environmental sustainability requirements.

Example The government has invested in public transport infrastructure, including a new bus rapid transit system, to provide visitors with sustainable transportation options and reduce congestion and pollution in the city.

Question 8: *What do you think the pros and cons of sustainability in Iraq tourism? Negative and positive dimensions*

Answer 8: *Cultural exchange for sustainable tourism promotes cultural exchange between tourists and locals, leading to a greater understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures and traditions. This can help break down barriers and promote greater tolerance and understanding.*

Negative cultural impact Unsustainable tourism practices have negative effects on local cultures, including the commodification of cultural heritage, cultural appropriation, and the deterioration of traditional practices.

Question 9: *According to your experience, what kind of environmental problems can be distinguished when it comes to tourism? Is there any organization that will work on standardization issues in industry? What do you think about licensing activities, eco labeling certification, environmental legislation Environmental sustainability.*

Answer 9: *There are several strategies that can be implemented to promote sustainable tourism practices and reduce the environmental impacts of tourism. For example,*

sustainable tourism development plans can be developed and implemented at local, regional and national levels. These plans can help guide the development and management of tourism activities, with the aim of minimizing negative environmental impacts while maximizing economic and social benefits.

Environmental legislation as a means of promoting environmental sustainability in the tourism industry. Environmental legislation refers to laws and regulations designed to protect the environment and promote sustainability. These laws and regulations can cover a wide range of areas, such as waste management, energy efficiency and water conservation.

There are also eco-labeling schemes, such as the Blue Flag Program, which certifies beaches and marinas that meet certain environmental and sustainability standards. Ecotourism certifications, such as the Rainforest Alliance certification, aim to promote sustainable tourism practices by accrediting tourism companies that meet certain environmental and social standards.

Question 10: *In what terms could tourism be considered as a threat to local culture and traditions? Why do you think so? Can you give us some practical examples?*

Answer 10: *Promotes an imbalance of power The tourism industry can reinforce existing power imbalances, particularly those based on race, class, and gender. Tourists from wealthy countries and backgrounds may have greater power and agency than locals, leading to a dynamic of exploitation and marginalization.*

Enhancing power dynamics The tourism industry may enhance power dynamics between tourists and locals, as tourists may have more economic and social capital, leading to the exploitation and marginalization of local communities.

Question 11: *Can you give us an example when locals cannot access local amenities and natural resources anymore because of tourism?*

Answer 11: *For example, an increase in tourism can lead to the exploitation of local labor, especially in areas where labor laws and protections may be weak or non-existent. This can happen when locals are forced to work in low-paying or insecure jobs in order to meet the demands of tourists, or when foreign workers are brought in to fill jobs that locals are not qualified or willing to do. This can lead to the loss of workers.*

for their dignity and independence, and may contribute to the perpetuation of poverty and inequality in the community.

Question 12: *As an expert, what would you change in the governmental policy regarding tourism, to make it more sustainable (economic – (income), social, environmental)? What concrete steps should be made at the macro and micro levels?*

Answer 12: *Governments can promote locally owned businesses to support the local economy and culture. Encouraging the use of locally sourced organic food can support local agriculture and reduce the carbon footprint of food transport. Governments can also educate tourists about sustainable tourism practices and encourage them to make responsible choices, such as using public transport or choosing eco-friendly accommodations.*

By supporting the preservation of cultural heritage, governments have enabled governments to support the preservation of cultural heritage sites and promote cultural tourism as a sustainable tourism product. This can help ensure that cultural heritage is preserved for future generations and that local communities benefit from tourism development.

By providing sustainable tourism information, tourism companies can provide information about sustainable tourism practices, such as local conservation efforts, responsible tourism behavior, and sustainable transportation options, to educate visitors and promote sustainable tourism practices.

Question 13: *What do you know about certification programs for guesthouses/small hotels, according to which each service deliverer is ranked according to approved standards and has to define its prices according to this certificate?*

Answer 13: *Certification programs in building trust between businesses and guests. By providing third-party assessment and certification, certification programs help establish credibility and reassure guests that they are making a good choice when booking accommodations. Certification programs can help ensure that companies offer a consistent level of service and accommodations across different locations. This can be especially important for companies that have multiple locations or franchises.*

The profession is the director of the Tourism Syndicate.

Question 1: *Can you tell us a little bit about yourself? (age, occupation, working experience and workplace duties).*

Answer 1: *The profession is the director of the Tourism Syndicate. Age 47. Work experience 18 years. Work duties Participation in various committees and supervision.*

Question 2: *What are the most serious problems facing tourism industry for the moment? Can you specify some?*

Answer 2: *Lack of cooperation The tourism industry in Erbil requires collaboration between companies, government agencies and other stakeholders to ensure its sustainable growth. However, there is often a lack of collaboration between these groups, which can limit the effectiveness of tourism-related policies and initiatives.*

Question 3: *How would you describe sustainability? Also, how would you describe sustainability for your profession or business?*

Answer 3: *Sustainability can be defined as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. At the Tourist Guild, sustainability is about promoting responsible and sustainable tourism that respects the environment, culture and local communities.*

As an Director of the Tourism Syndicate, promoting sustainability involves encouraging and promoting sustainable tourism practices among tourists and tourism operators such as promoting sustainable tourism practices such as responsible waste management, energy conservation and sustainable transport. Encourage tourists to support local businesses and communities by promoting local products, services and cultural experiences. Educating tourists and tourism operators about the importance of preserving the environment and culture, and encouraging them to adopt responsible practices. Partnering with local communities and organizations to support sustainable tourism initiatives and promote local economic development. Promote sustainable tourism certifications and standards, such as eco-labels and sustainable tourism awards. And to enhance the reputation of the tourism sector as a responsible and ethical industry. Overall, sustainability should be a fundamental consideration in the management of any tourism organization, and can be achieved through a combination of innovative practices, education and partnerships with like-minded organizations.

Question 4: *What is the meaning of sustainable tourism for you? Please tell about dimensions of sustainable tourism/ economic, social and environmental)*

Answer 4: *Sustainable tourism is an approach to tourism that recognizes the importance of preserving natural and cultural heritage, while promoting economic development and social well-being.*

Economic dimension Sustainable tourism supports the development of sustainable tourism infrastructure, such as renewable energy systems and waste management facilities, that create economic opportunities for local communities and reduce the impact of tourism on the environment.

Social dimension Sustainable tourism promotes the development of sustainable tourism policies and regulations that protect workers' rights and ensure that tourism activities are conducted in a fair and responsible manner.

Environmental dimension Sustainable tourism encourages the use of sustainable tourism practices in the management of natural and cultural heritage sites, such as archaeological sites and cultural monuments, to ensure their long-term preservation.

Question 5: *What can be done for sustainable tourism in Erbil (applications/activities/decisions/certifications?) What should be done?*

Answer 5: *Promoting sustainable tourism in Erbil is waste management. With the increase in tourism activities, there is also an increase in waste generation, which can have negative effects on the environment and local communities. Implementing waste management initiatives such as recycling programs, waste reduction campaigns and composting can help reduce the environmental impact of tourism activities while promoting sustainability.*

Question 6: *Is there any kind of governmental program that directly attracts foreign tourists and promotes the country as a tourist destination?*

Answer 6: *One of the challenges facing Erbil's tourism industry is the lack of adequate infrastructure. While the Government has made efforts to improve tourism infrastructure in the region, such as developing new hotels and investing in airport development, more investment in roads, transportation, and other facilities is still needed to support tourism*

Question 7: *Can you tell me more about governmental policies for Sustainable Tourism in Erbil ? What do you think? Please tell about it by giving requisites and examples.*

Answer 7: *The Government of Erbil is taking a proactive and holistic approach to sustainable tourism development. The government recognizes that tourism can be a powerful tool for economic growth and development, but it also recognizes the importance of protecting the environment and preserving cultural heritage. Through its initiatives and policies, the Government of Erbil is working to create a tourism industry that benefits the local community, preserves the environment and supports the broader Sustainable Development Goals.*

Sustainable Food and Beverage: The Erbil government is promoting sustainable food and beverage options, such as local and organic foods, to reduce the environmental impact of tourism activities and support local agriculture. This initiative addresses the requirements of environmental and economic sustainability.

Example The government has put in place regulations to encourage the use of local and organic food in hotels and restaurants, and to reduce food waste through composting and recycling, the government of Erbil has invested in developing infrastructure to support tourism, such as expanding Erbil International Airport and constructing new roads and highways.

Question 8: *What do you think the pros and cons of sustainability in Iraq tourism? Negative and positive dimensions*

Answer 8: *Improving public perception Sustainable tourism can improve the public perception of Iraq as a tourist destination, promote positive cultural and environmental values and encourage greater respect for local communities and natural resources.*

Iraq's remote location and limited accessibility pose significant challenges for the tourism industry, making it difficult for tourists to travel to and from the country and limiting the likelihood of sustainable tourism initiatives succeeding.

Question 9: *According to your experience, what kind of environmental problems can be distinguished when it comes to tourism? Is there any organization that will work on standardization issues in industry? What do you think about licensing activities, eco labeling certification, environmental legislation Environmental sustainability.*

Answer 9: *A strategy in promoting ecotourism, which involves visiting natural areas and participating in activities that have little impact on the environment while supporting conservation efforts and providing economic benefits to local communities.*

Ecotourism can be a valuable tool to promote sustainable tourism practices and raise awareness of environmental issues among tourists.

There are many different approaches that can be taken to promote environmental sustainability in the tourism industry. Standardization organizations such as GSTC and ISO can help establish and promote sustainable tourism practices, while licensing and environmental certification activities and environmental legislation can provide incentives and regulations for tourism companies to adopt these practices. By taking a holistic approach to promoting environmental sustainability, the tourism industry can help ensure tourism is conducted in a responsible and sustainable manner, while promoting economic and social benefits to local communities and businesses.

There are many initiatives and organizations that promote environmental sustainability in the tourism industry. For example, the World Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) is a global organization that promotes sustainable tourism practices through accreditation and accreditation programs. GSTC provides standards and guidance for sustainable tourism, and works with governments, businesses and other stakeholders to promote sustainable tourism practices.

Question 10: *In what terms could tourism be considered as a threat to local culture and traditions? Why do you think so? Can you give us some practical examples?*

Answer 10: *The influx of tourists creates pressure on locals to conform to the expectations and preferences of tourists, which can lead to a loss of identity and cultural traditions. This can lead to the erasure of unique cultural practices and values, which can ultimately have a negative impact on the cultural landscape.*

Pressure to comply Some tourists expect locals to comply with their expectations and preferences, resulting in a loss of identity and cultural traditions.

Question 11: *Can you give us an example when locals cannot access local amenities and natural resources anymore because of tourism?*

Answer 11: *The development of tourism can lead to the commodification of local art, handicrafts and other cultural products. This can happen when tourists order souvenirs and other products that represent the local culture, resulting in the production of mass-produced and non-original products that may erode the value and importance of local crafts and traditions. In addition, focusing on marketable cultural products may result in a loss of focus on other important cultural practices and traditions.*

Question 12: *As an expert, what would you change in the governmental policy regarding tourism, to make it more sustainable (economic – (income), social, environmental)? What concrete steps should be made at the macro and micro levels?*

Answer 12: *Making tourism more sustainable requires a collaborative effort between governments, tourism companies and local communities. By implementing policies that promote sustainable tourism practices, governments can ensure that tourism is a positive force for economic, social and environmental sustainability. Such policies must be specific to the unique challenges and opportunities of each region.*

By fostering sustainable tourism partnerships, governments can foster partnerships between tourism companies, local communities and environmental organizations to promote sustainable tourism practices.

Partial by participating in community development by supporting local schools, health clinics and infrastructure projects, to promote sustainable tourism and improve the quality of life for local communities.

Question 13: *What do you know about certification programs for guesthouses/small hotels, according to which each service deliverer is ranked according to approved standards and has to define its prices according to this certificate?*

Answer 13: *Corporate accreditation programs to identify and address potential safety and security risks. Many certification programs include standards related to fire safety, security, and emergency preparedness, certification programs can provide a way for companies to receive recognition for their commitment to quality and safety. Certificate programs often provide companies with a certificate or other form of recognition that they can offer to guests.*

Head of Department at the Tourism Authority.

Question 1: *Can you tell us a little bit about yourself? (age, occupation, working experience and workplace duties).*

Answer 1: *Head of Department at the Tourism Authority. Age 50. Work experience 20 years. Work duties, administrative duties, implementation of decisions issued by the Ministry and work on them.*

Question 2: *What are the most serious problems facing tourism industry for the moment? Can you specify some?*

Answer 2: *Seasonality The tourism industry in Erbil is very seasonal, with the majority of visitors coming during the summer months. This can lead to increased capacity during peak periods and reduced resource use during low season. Addressing seasonality requires investment in tourism-related infrastructure and services that can attract visitors all year round.*

Question 3: *How would you describe sustainability? Also, how would you describe sustainability for your profession or business?*

Answer 3: *Sustainability is defined as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. At the Tourism Authority, sustainability is about promoting sustainable tourism practices that balance economic, social and environmental factors, and support the long-term growth and development of the tourism industry.*

As Head of Department at the Tourism Authority, promoting sustainability will include the development and implementation of policies and programs that encourage sustainable tourism practices among tourism operators, visitors and local communities. Some examples include the development and promotion of sustainable tourism certifications and standards that recognize and reward responsible tourism practices. Encourage the adoption of sustainable practices such as energy efficiency, waste reduction and water conservation by tourism operators. Work with local communities to ensure that tourism development is compatible with local needs and values, and that the benefits of tourism are shared equitably. Promote the use of sustainable transport options, such as public transport, cycling or electric vehicles, to reduce the environmental impact of tourism. Educate visitors about the importance of responsible

and sustainable tourism practices and encourage them to support local businesses and communities.

Question 4: *What is the meaning of sustainable tourism for you? Please tell about dimensions of sustainable tourism/ economic, social and environmental)*

Answer 4: *Sustainable tourism is about creating a responsible, ethical and sustainable tourism industry, by investing in sustainable infrastructure, promoting responsible tourism practices, and supporting local economic development.*

Economic dimension Sustainable tourism supports the development of sustainable tourism marketing strategies that promote responsible and sustainable tourism practices, such as environmental certificates, eco-labels and sustainable tourism awards.

Social dimension Sustainable tourism promotes the development of sustainable tourism partnerships and collaboration between local communities, governments and tourism stakeholders, to ensure that tourism benefits are shared equitably and that tourism practices are sustainable and responsible.

Environmental dimension Sustainable tourism encourages the use of green infrastructure, such as green buildings and sustainable urban planning, to reduce the impact of tourism on the environment and improve the quality of life for local people.

Question 5: *What can be done for sustainable tourism in Erbil (applications/activities/decisions/certifications?) What should be done?*

Answer 5: *Finally, enhancing community participation in tourism activities can also contribute to sustainable tourism in Erbil. By involving local communities in tourism planning and development, Erbil can establish tourism activities tailored to the needs and interests of the local population. It can also help create economic opportunities for local people and promote cultural exchange and understanding.*

Question 6: *Is there any kind of governmental program that directly attracts foreign tourists and promotes the country as a tourist destination?*

Answer 6: *Another challenge facing Erbil's tourism industry is safety concerns, which have been a major issue in the region due to political instability and the threat of terrorism. While the security situation has improved in recent years, there is still a perception among many potential visitors that the area is not safe. The Government has*

taken steps to address this issue by improving security measures and working to change the perception of the region as a dangerous destination.

Question 7: *Can you tell me more about governmental policies for Sustainable Tourism in Erbil ? What do you think? Please tell about it by giving requisites and examples.*

Answer 7: *The government of Erbil is measuring the impact of tourism on the local economy, environment and society. This includes conducting research and collecting data on the economic, environmental and social impacts of tourism in Erbil. This information will be used to inform future tourism development initiatives and to ensure that tourism development in Erbil is sustainable and responsible.*

Research and development in sustainable tourism The Government of Erbil is promoting research and development in the field of sustainable tourism to identify and implement new sustainable tourism practices and innovations. This initiative addresses environmental, economic and social sustainability requirements.

Example The government has established a sustainable tourism R&D centre that collaborates with universities, tourism companies and local communities to develop and promote sustainable tourism practices.

Question 8: *What do you think the pros and cons of sustainability in Iraq tourism? Negative and positive dimensions*

Answer 8: *Sustainable tourism can help diversify Iraq's economy by creating new opportunities for economic development and reducing the country's dependence on oil exports.*

Limited resources and infrastructure Iraq's tourism industry currently lacks the resources and infrastructure to support sustainable tourism practices. For example, access to clean water and sanitation facilities may be limited, which can make it difficult to promote responsible tourism practices that reduce waste and conserve resources.

Question 9: *According to your experience, what kind of environmental problems can be distinguished when it comes to tourism? Is there any organization that will work on standardization issues in industry? What do you think about licensing activities, eco labeling certification, environmental legislation Environmental sustainability.*

Answer 9: *The issue of over tourism, which occurs when too many tourists visit a destination, leading to overcrowding, resource depletion and other negative*

environmental and social impacts. To address over tourism, policies such as limiting the number of tourists and implementing measures to manage tourist flows could be put in place.

Environmental legislation plays an important role in promoting environmental sustainability in the tourism industry. For example, some countries have implemented laws and regulations that require tourism companies to reduce their environmental impact by implementing sustainable practices. Other countries have imposed taxes and fees on environmentally harmful activities, such as air travel, in order to promote more sustainable alternatives.

Licensing activities, certification for eco-labeling, environmental legislation, and promoting environmental sustainability in the tourism industry are all important measures that can help mitigate the negative environmental impacts of tourism. These measures can encourage tourism companies to adopt sustainable practices, educate travelers about sustainable tourism practices, and ensure the enforcement of environmental regulations.

Question 10: *In what terms could tourism be considered as a threat to local culture and traditions? Why do you think so? Can you give us some practical examples?*

Answer 10: *Tourism can encourage stereotypes, as tourists may have preconceptions about a culture or destination that may not be accurate or reflect local reality. This can lead to misunderstanding and perpetuation of negative stereotypes that can have long-lasting effects on local culture.*

Tourism stereotypes encourage stereotypes, as tourists may have preconceptions about the local culture and may not fully understand or appreciate the local reality.

Question 11: *Can you give us an example when locals cannot access local amenities and natural resources anymore because of tourism?*

Answer 11: *For example, the rise of tourism can lead to the loss of local knowledge and expertise, especially in areas where traditional practices and skills can be replaced by modern practices suitable for tourists. This can happen when communities abandon traditional practices in favour of those that meet the needs of tourists, leading to the loss of traditional knowledge and experience that may have been passed down through*

generations. In addition, the focus on tourism-related skills may lead to devaluation of other important forms of knowledge and experience.

Question 12: *As an expert, what would you change in the governmental policy regarding tourism, to make it more sustainable (economic – (income), social, environmental)? What concrete steps should be made at the macro and micro levels?*

Answer 12: *Sustainable tourism is a crucial aspect of global tourism that ensures that the economic, social and environmental impacts of tourism are balanced and positive. Governments have an important role to play in promoting sustainable tourism practices to ensure that all those involved benefit tourism while minimizing its negative impacts.*

By developing sustainable tourism partnerships with neighboring regions, governments can develop partnerships with neighboring regions to promote sustainable tourism practices and encourage more visitors to travel sustainably. This can include joint marketing initiatives, sharing best practices, and coordinating transportation options.

By encouraging ecotourism activities, tourism companies can encourage ecotourism activities, such as bird watching, hiking and wildlife watching, which promote environmental conservation and culture preservation.

Question 13: *What do you know about certification programs for guesthouses/small hotels, according to which each service deliverer is ranked according to approved standards and has to define its prices according to this certificate?*

Answer 13: *Certificate programs in creating a field level playing field for companies of all sizes. By providing a set of standards that all companies must meet, certification programs help ensure that small businesses can compete with large companies on an equal footing. By setting and enforcing specific standards, certification programs can encourage companies to improve their facilities and services, which can benefit guests and the industry as a whole. One of the certification programs that we work with is the ISO 9001-2015 certificate to increase the quality of performance*

Profession Director of Administration at the Office of the Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism.

Question 1: *Can you tell us a little bit about yourself? (age, occupation, working experience and workplace duties).*

Answer 1: *Profession Director of Administration at the Office of the Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism. Age 49. Work experience 20 years. Work duties, administrative duties, employee organization, relationship management and services.*

Question 2: *What are the most serious problems facing tourism industry for the moment? Can you specify some?*

Answer 2: *Accessibility The tourism industry in Erbil is not accessible to all visitors, especially those with disabilities. The lack of accessible infrastructure and services can limit the growth potential of the tourism industry and exclude visitors who may be interested in visiting the city.*

Question 3: *How would you describe sustainability? Also, how would you describe sustainability for your profession or business?*

Answer 3: *Sustainability is an important aspect of organizing and managing an event that takes into account the long-term impacts of its activities on the environment, society and economy. Sustainability initiatives at an international exhibition in Erbil can help reduce the event's carbon footprint, promote efficient use of resources, and reduce waste generation. These initiatives could include the use of energy-efficient lighting and equipment, the promotion of alternative transportation routes, and the implementation of recycling and composting programs.*

As an Director of Administration at the Office of the Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism, sustainability is an important aspect of organizing and managing an event that takes into account the long-term impacts of its activities on the environment, society, and economy. Sustainability initiatives at an international exhibition in Erbil can help reduce the carbon footprint of the event, promote efficient use of resources, and reduce waste generation. These initiatives could include the use of energy-efficient lighting and equipment, the promotion of alternative transportation routes, and the implementation of recycling and composting programs.

Question 4: *What is the meaning of sustainable tourism for you? Please tell about dimensions of sustainable tourism/ economic, social and environmental)*

Answer 4: *Sustainable tourism is an approach to tourism that seeks to create positive economic, social and environmental impacts, by promoting responsible and ethical practices, and investing in sustainable infrastructure.*

Economic dimension Sustainable tourism supports the development of sustainable tourism businesses that provide economic opportunities for women and marginalized groups, such as indigenous communities and persons with disabilities.

Social dimension Sustainable tourism encourages the development of sustainable tourism activities that respect and protect the rights, traditional knowledge and practices of indigenous communities.

Environmental dimension Sustainable tourism promotes the protection and restoration of natural habitats, such as wetlands and forests, by supporting sustainable tourism practices that reduce their impact on the environment and enhance their environmental value.

Question 5: *What can be done for sustainable tourism in Erbil (applications/activities/decisions/certifications?) What should be done?*

Answer 5: *In conclusion, promoting sustainable tourism in Erbil requires a multifaceted approach involving multiple stakeholders, including the government, the tourism industry, the local community and tourists. By implementing sustainable tourism practices such as certification programs, waste management initiatives, community engagement, culture preservation, ecotourism, infrastructure development, responsible use of natural resources, and education and awareness initiatives, Erbil can promote sustainable tourism growth while preserving its environment, culture, and economy for future generations.*

Question 6: *Is there any kind of governmental program that directly attracts foreign tourists and promotes the country as a tourist destination?*

Answer 6: *Lack of accessibility for persons with disabilities is another challenge facing Erbil's tourism industry. Many tourist attractions and accommodations are not designed to be accessible to people with disabilities, which may limit their ability to fully participate in tourism activities. The Government has acknowledged this problem and taken steps to improve accessibility in the area, but more work needs to be done in this area.*

Question 7: *Can you tell me more about governmental policies for Sustainable Tourism in Erbil ? What do you think? Please tell about it by giving requisites and examples.*

Answer 7: The government is also working to promote sustainable tourism through destination management organizations (DMOs). DMOs are organizations responsible for promoting and managing tourism in a particular destination. The government is working to establish the Destination Management Office in Erbil, which will be responsible for promoting sustainable tourism practices and coordinating tourism development initiatives across the city.

Sustainable Tourism Certificate The Government of Erbil has established an accreditation scheme for sustainable tourism operators in the region. This initiative addresses the requirements of economic sustainability.

Example A certification scheme evaluates a tourism business based on its sustainability practices, including waste reduction, energy efficiency, and community engagement.

Question 8: What do you think the pros and cons of sustainability in Iraq tourism?
Negative and positive dimensions

Answer 8: Job opportunities for sustainable tourism that create new jobs for local communities, including in tourism-related industries such as hospitality, transport and tourism services.

Exploitation of workers Without proper regulation and enforcement, tourism companies may exploit local labor by paying low wages, providing poor working conditions, or engaging in other forms of labor abuse.

Question 9: According to your experience, what kind of environmental problems can be distinguished when it comes to tourism? Is there any organization that will work on standardization issues in industry? What do you think about licensing activities, eco labeling certification, environmental legislation Environmental sustainability.

Answer 9: The issue of climate change, which is one of the most important environmental challenges facing the tourism industry. To mitigate the impact of climate change, the tourism industry can adopt sustainable tourism practices such as reducing carbon emissions through the use of renewable energy sources, promoting sustainable transport, and reducing waste production.

Promoting environmental sustainability can also have social benefits, such as improving the living standards of local communities and preserving cultural heritage. Sustainable

tourism practices can provide economic opportunities for local communities, who can benefit from tourism revenues and participate in sustainable tourism initiatives.

There are many environmental certification schemes in the tourism industry, such as Green Globe, Earth Check and Rainforest Alliance. These schemes have different certification standards and standards, but generally cover areas such as environmental management, waste management, energy efficiency and water conservation. By providing a well-known symbol of sustainability, eco-labeling certification can help promote sustainable tourism practices and reduce negative environmental impacts.

Question 10: *In what terms could tourism be considered as a threat to local culture and traditions? Why do you think so? Can you give us some practical examples?*

Answer 10: *Exploitation of cultural resources Tourism can lead to the exploitation of cultural resources, such as traditional knowledge, arts and artifacts, without adequate compensation or recognition. This can contribute to the loss of cultural heritage and can perpetuate the imbalance of power between tourists and locals.*

Exploitation of cultural resources The tourism industry exploits local cultural resources, such as traditional knowledge, arts and artifacts, without adequate compensation or recognition, contributing to the loss of cultural heritage and perpetuating the imbalance of power between tourists and local populations.

Question 11: *Can you give us an example when locals cannot access local amenities and natural resources anymore because of tourism?*

Answer 11: *The development of tourism can lead to a decrease in local food security, as local farmland may be diverted for tourism-related development, and the influx of tourists may increase the demand for food products that may not be locally sourced. This can affect the well-being of communities that may have traditionally relied on locally sourced food, and may lead to the loss of traditional food cultures and practices.*

Question 12: *As an expert, what would you change in the governmental policy regarding tourism, to make it more sustainable (economic – (income), social, environmental)? What concrete steps should be made at the macro and micro levels?*

Answer 12: *Government policies should focus on several key areas. First, governments can promote sustainable tourism by developing national tourism strategies that integrate sustainability principles into policy and planning. This strategy should identify*

specific actions that can be taken at the national, regional and local levels to reduce the environmental impact of tourism, support local communities and promote sustainable economic development.

Governments can tackle climate change by promoting renewable energy, reducing carbon emissions, and developing strategies to adapt to the tourism sector.

Partial by providing sustainable tourism training Tourism companies can provide sustainable tourism training to employees, such as training in sustainable resource management, environmental stewardship, and community engagement.

Question 13: *What do you know about certification programs for guesthouses/small hotels, according to which each service deliverer is ranked according to approved standards and has to define its prices according to this certificate?*

Answer 13: *Certification programs help companies build their reputation and brand. By obtaining a certificate or rating, companies can establish themselves as a reliable and reliable provider of accommodation and services, certificate programs can provide a way for companies to stay competitive in a crowded market. By meeting standards and earning certifications, companies can differentiate themselves from competitors and attract guests looking for a higher level of service and accommodation. One of the certification programs that we work with is the ISO 9001-2015 certificate to increase the quality of performance and Continuous development through courses and seminars*

The profession is the manager of a travel and tourism company.

Question 1: *Can you tell us a little bit about yourself? (age, occupation, working experience and workplace duties).*

Answer 1: *The profession is the manager of a travel and tourism company. Age 32. Work experience 5 years. It is the duty of work to manage and follow up on employees.*

Question 2: *What are the most serious problems facing tourism industry for the moment? Can you specify some?*

Answer 2: *Lack of differentiation The tourism industry in Erbil relies heavily on its cultural and historical attractions. However, the city lacks differentiation from other*

cultural and historical destinations, which can limit its attractiveness to potential visitors. Developing unique and distinct tourism products can help attract new visitors and increase the competitiveness of the city's tourism industry.

Question 3: *How would you describe sustainability? Also, how would you describe sustainability for your profession or business?*

Answer 3: *Sustainability is an important consideration to ensure that a company's activities and operations do not adversely affect the environment, society and the economy.*

A travel company's sustainability initiatives can include reducing travel's carbon footprint by promoting eco-friendly transportation options such as public transport, electric vehicles, and cycling tours. In addition, the company can partner with hotels and resorts that implement sustainable practices such as using renewable energy sources, reducing waste and conserving water. The company can also promote responsible tourism practices such as respecting local cultures and traditions, conserving natural resources and wildlife, and supporting local communities. By integrating sustainability into its operations, a travel company can make a positive impact on the environment, society and economy, while enhancing its reputation as a responsible and ethical company. In addition, implementing sustainable practices can lead to cost savings, increased efficiency and improved relationships with stakeholders, which can benefit the company in the long run.

Question 4: *What is the meaning of sustainable tourism for you? Please tell about dimensions of sustainable tourism/ economic, social and environmental)*

Answer 4: *Sustainable tourism is all about creating enjoyable tourism experiences for tourists and respecting local cultures and the environment, while also supporting local economic development.*

Economic dimension Sustainable tourism supports the development of sustainable tourism infrastructure that provides access to basic services, such as healthcare and education, to local communities.

Environmental dimension Sustainable tourism promotes the conservation of marine ecosystems by supporting sustainable tourism practices that reduce the impact of tourism activities on marine life and habitats.

Social dimension Sustainable tourism promotes the development of sustainable tourism activities that provide opportunities for intercultural exchange and dialogue between tourists and local communities.

Question 5: *What can be done for sustainable tourism in Iraq (applications/activities/decisions/certifications?) What should be done?*

Answer 5: *To ensure the success of sustainable tourism in Erbil, it is important to involve all stakeholders in the planning and implementation process. This includes the government, the tourism industry, the local community and tourists. By engaging these stakeholders, Erbil can create a shared vision for sustainable tourism that reflects the needs and interests of all parties. Monitoring and evaluation are essential to ensure that sustainable tourism practices are effectively implemented. Regular monitoring and evaluation of tourism activities can help identify areas where improvements can be made and ensure that tourism activities are in line with sustainable tourism principles.*

Question 6: *Is there any kind of governmental program that directly attracts foreign tourists and promotes the country as a tourist destination?*

Answer 6: *Facing the tourism industry in Erbil is the lack of coordination and cooperation among stakeholders in the tourism industry. This can lead to fragmentation in the industry and a lack of a unified vision for tourism development. The Government has recognized this challenge and has taken steps to enhance cooperation and coordination among stakeholders in the tourism industry through initiatives such as the Tourism Advisory Council.*

Question 7: *Can you tell me more about governmental policies for Sustainable Tourism in Erbil ? What do you think? Please tell about it by giving requisites and examples.*

Answer 7: *The government is also working to promote sustainable tourism in rural areas and among indigenous communities. This includes promoting community-based tourism projects that allow visitors to experience local life and support local businesses, as well as supporting indigenous communities in developing sustainable tourism initiatives.*

Biodiversity Conservation *The Government of Erbil is working to promote biodiversity conservation and management to protect the region's natural ecosystems and wildlife. This initiative addresses environmental sustainability requirements.*

Example The government has established protected areas and wildlife reserves to conserve biodiversity and promote ecotourism activities, such as bird watching and wildlife safaris.

Question 8: *What do you think the pros and cons of sustainability in Iraq tourism? Negative and positive dimensions*

Answer 8: *Preserving traditional practices: Sustainable tourism can help preserve traditional practices and cultural heritage by providing opportunities for locals to share their traditions with visitors, thereby promoting respect for their customs and creating a sense of pride in their cultural identity.*

Cultural homogeneity Unsustainable tourism practices can lead to the homogeneity of local cultures and traditions, as locals may change their cultural practices to attract tourists and generate greater revenue.

Question 9: *According to your experience, what kind of environmental problems can be distinguished when it comes to tourism? Is there any organization that will work on standardization issues in industry? What do you think about licensing activities, eco labeling certification, environmental legislation Environmental sustainability.*

Answer 9: *Tourism has a range of negative environmental impacts, and these effects can vary depending on factors such as the type of tourist activity, location and number of visitors. Overuse of resources, habitat destruction, pollution and climate change are major environmental problems associated with tourism. Overuse of resources can lead to resource depletion, while habitat destruction can lead to biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation. Pollution can have negative impacts on wildlife and ecosystems, and climate change can exacerbate natural disasters such as storms, floods, and droughts.*

Many organizations are working on standardization issues in the tourism industry, and their focus is on promoting sustainable tourism practices. The World Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) is one such organization, and provides a set of standards for sustainable tourism covering four key areas: sustainable management, social and economic benefits, cultural heritage, and environmental sustainability. The International Standards Organization (ISO) also provides guidance for sustainable tourism and has developed standards for sustainable tourism management systems. The

role of these organizations is to promote best practices and ensure that tourism operators adhere to certain standards and guidelines.

Licensing activities, eco-label certification, and environmental legislation are all tools that can be used to promote environmental sustainability in the tourism industry. Licensing activities involve requiring tourism operators to meet certain environmental standards before they can operate. Eco-label certification provides a way for consumers to identify eco-friendly tourism products and services. Labels such as the EU Ecolabel and the Green Key label are examples of eco-certification labels for the tourism industry. Environmental legislation can set minimum standards for environmental performance and provide penalties for non-compliance. For example, many countries have laws and regulations that require tourism operators to minimize their environmental impact and implement measures to protect the environment.

Question 10: *In what terms could tourism be considered as a threat to local culture and traditions? Why do you think so? Can you give us some practical examples?*

Answer 10: *Disrupting social structures: The influx of tourism can disrupt local social structures, particularly those based on traditional systems of governance and community organization. This can lead to a loss of social cohesion and can contribute to social tensions and conflicts.*

Introducing non-local values to the tourism industry *Introducing non-local values and practices that are not in line with local customs and traditions, which may contribute to the loss of cultural identity and the shift towards a more homogeneous culture.*

Question 11: *Can you give us an example when locals cannot access local amenities and natural resources anymore because of tourism?*

Answer 11: *For example, an increase in tourism can lead to a loss of social cohesion and community spirit, particularly in areas where tourism development has led to an influx of outsiders who may not have a vested interest in the community. This can erode traditional social structures and values, leading to a loss of social cohesion and community spirit. In addition, the rise of tourism-related businesses may lead to a move away from community projects, leading to a loss of local economic control and empowerment.*

Question 12: *As an expert, what would you change in the governmental policy regarding tourism, to make it more sustainable (economic – (income), social, environmental)? What concrete steps should be made at the macro and micro levels?*

Answer 12: *Provide incentives and subsidies to tourism companies that implement environmentally friendly measures. This can include funding renewable energy systems, waste management facilities, and water conservation programs. Governments can also regulate tourism activities to ensure compliance with sustainability standards and guidelines. Regulations can be put in place to limit the number of tourists in fragile or environmentally sensitive areas, implement waste management systems, and promote sustainable transportation options.*

By supporting sustainable tourism research, governments can support research on sustainable tourism practices and their impact on the environment, society and economy. This can help guide policies and practices and promote sustainable tourism development.

Through the development of sustainable tourism partnerships, tourism companies can develop partnerships with other tourism companies, NGOs and local communities to promote sustainable tourism practices and share best practices.

Question 13: *What do you know about certification programs for guesthouses/small hotels, according to which each service deliverer is ranked according to approved standards and has to define its prices according to this certificate?*

Answer 13: *Certification programs help companies differentiate themselves from competitors. By meeting the required criteria and obtaining certification or ranking, companies can differentiate themselves from other companies that may not have undergone the same evaluation process. By participating in the certification program and undergoing assessments, companies can receive feedback on areas where they do not meet established standards and take steps to improve.*

Profession Director of Environment, Health and Food Safety in a hotel.

Question 1: *Can you tell us a little bit about yourself? (age, occupation, working experience and workplace duties).*

Answer 1: *Profession Director of Environment, Health and Food Safety in a hotel. Age 28. Work experience 5 years. Responsible work duties to preserve the environment, reduce the waste of environmental resources and ensure food safety in hotel.*

Question 2: *What are the most serious problems facing tourism industry for the moment? Can you specify some?*

Answer 2: *Lack of innovation The tourism industry in Erbil needs to innovate to stay competitive and meet the changing needs and expectations of visitors. This requires investment in research and development, as well as the adoption of new technologies and business models in order to promote tourism awareness in the province and bring in experts and benefit from expertise and studies.*

Question 3: *How would you describe sustainability? Also, how would you describe sustainability for your profession or business?*

Answer 3: *Sustainability is one of the most important guarantees that the hotel's operations and activities do not negatively affect the environment, society and the economy, while enhancing employee well-being and participation.*

Sustainability initiatives in the hotel's human resource management can include promoting environmental awareness and sustainability practices among employees, such as reducing energy and water consumption, reducing waste generation, and promoting recycling and composting programs. The hotel can also implement employee training programs that focus on sustainability practices, rewarding and recognizing employees who demonstrate a commitment to sustainability. The hotel can enhance employee well-being by implementing policies that support work-life balance, employee health and safety, employee development and advancement opportunities. Reduce energy consumption by using energy-efficient lighting and equipment, by implementing energy conservation practices such as turning off lights and equipment when not in use and obtaining environmentally responsible materials and supplies, working with suppliers who share our commitment to sustainability, we can help reduce our impact on the environment, improve the well-being of our employees and the local community, and enhance our reputation as an environmentally responsible organization. In addition, the implementation of sustainable practices can lead to cost savings, increased efficiency and improved stakeholder relationships.

Question 4: *What is the meaning of sustainable tourism for you? Please tell about dimensions of sustainable tourism/ economic, social and environmental)*

Answer 4: *Sustainable tourism is an approach to tourism that recognizes the importance of balancing economic development with social and environmental responsibility, to ensure long-term sustainability.*

Environmental dimension Sustainable tourism encourages the use of sustainable modes of transport, such as electric cars and bicycles, to reduce the carbon footprint of tourism activities.

Economic dimension Sustainable tourism supports the development of sustainable tourism initiatives that create job opportunities for young people and enhance their active participation in the tourism industry.

Social dimension Sustainable tourism promotes the development of sustainable tourism activities that empower women and promote gender equality in the tourism industry.

Question 5: *What can be done for sustainable tourism in Erbil (applications/activities/decisions/certifications?) What should be done?*

Answer 5: *Promoting sustainable tourism in Erbil can also benefit from public-private partnerships. The government can work with private sector tourism companies to promote sustainable tourism practices and create economic opportunities for local people. By collaborating with private sector companies, the government can leverage its expertise and resources to implement sustainable tourism practices more effectively.*

Question 6: *Is there any kind of governmental program that directly attracts foreign tourists and promotes the country as a tourist destination?*

Answer 6: *Climate change and its impact on the environment is another challenge facing Erbil's tourism industry. The region's natural attractions, such as its mountains and rivers, are vulnerable to the effects of climate change, such as droughts and floods. This can adversely affect tourism by reducing the availability and quality of natural attractions. The Government has recognized the importance of tackling climate change and has taken steps to promote sustainable tourism practices that reduce the industry's impact on the environment.*

Question 7: *Can you tell me more about governmental policies for Sustainable Tourism in Erbil ? What do you think? Please tell about it by giving requisites and examples.*

Answer 7: In 2019, the Government launched a tourism campaign titled "Visit Erbil " to promote the region as a tourist destination. The campaign included advertising in international media, participation in international tourism exhibitions, and the development of a new tourism website. has also established a Tourism Advisory Council, which includes representatives from the public and private sectors to coordinate and cooperate on tourism development initiatives. The government of Erbil has established protected areas to preserve natural and cultural resources and promote sustainable tourism. For example, the Government has established the Gali Ali Beg Waterfall Reserve Area, as well as the Erbil Zoo Reserve which is a popular tourist destination that is managed in a sustainable manner.

Question 8: What do you think the pros and cons of sustainability in Iraq tourism?
Negative and positive dimensions

Answer 8: Increasing environmental awareness for sustainable tourism is to raise environmental awareness among tourists and locals, which promotes a sense of responsibility for the conservation of natural resources and encourages more environmentally friendly behavior.

Environmental degradation Unsustainable tourism practices lead to environmental degradation, including damage to natural habitats, pollution and waste disposal issues.

Question 9: According to your experience, what kind of environmental problems can be distinguished when it comes to tourism? Is there any organization that will work on standardization issues in industry? What do you think about licensing activities, eco labeling certification, environmental legislation Environmental sustainability.

Answer 9: Overuse of resources is a common environmental problem in the tourism industry, particularly in areas where infrastructure is not designed to accommodate large numbers of visitors. Tourism can put pressure on local resources such as water and energy, which can lead to resource depletion and increase the risk of water and energy shortages for local communities. To address this problem, tourism operators can implement measures to reduce their resource consumption, such as the use of energy-efficient devices and installations, the installation of solar panels, and the implementation of water conservation measures.

Many organizations working on standardization issues in the tourism industry. The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) has developed a set of guidelines and standards for sustainable tourism for environmental management and for social responsibility. The World Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) also provides standards and standards for sustainable tourism, including certification programs for tourism operators that meet certain sustainability criteria. These organizations play an important role in promoting sustainable tourism practices and providing a framework for tourism operators to improve their environmental and social performance.

Licensing activities involve issuing licenses to tourism operators that meet certain sustainability criteria, while eco-label certification involves the use of labels to indicate that a product or service has met certain environmental standards. These tools can help consumers make informed decisions about their travel choices and can motivate tourism operators to improve their sustainability performance.

Question 10: *In what terms could tourism be considered as a threat to local culture and traditions? Why do you think so? Can you give us some practical examples?*

Answer 10: *Loss of privacy It is possible that increased tourism also contributes to the loss of privacy for locals, as tourists may invade private spaces and engage in disrespectful behavior. This can contribute to a loss of autonomy and can lead to a feeling of being exposed to the object or disrespect by tourists.*

Loss of privacy Increased tourism contributes to the loss of privacy for locals, as tourists may invade private spaces and engage in disrespectful behavior.

Question 11: *Can you give us an example when locals cannot access local amenities and natural resources anymore because of tourism?*

Answer 11: *For example, tourism development can also lead to indigenous communities losing access to traditional land and resources. This can happen when natural areas are transformed for tourism-related development, or when indigenous communities are evicted from their traditional lands to make way for tourism infrastructure. This can affect the cultural and spiritual well-being of indigenous communities, who may have strong links to these traditional lands and resources.*

Question 12: *As an expert, what would you change in the governmental policy regarding tourism, to make it more sustainable (economic – (income), social, environmental)? What concrete steps should be made at the macro and micro levels?*

Answer 12: *Community participation is crucial for sustainable tourism development. Governments can encourage community participation in tourism development to ensure that local populations benefit from tourism activities. This could include measures such as promoting locally owned businesses, providing employment and training opportunities for local people, and consulting with local communities on tourism development plans. By involving local communities in tourism development, governments can ensure that tourism is a positive force for economic, social and environmental sustainability.*

College by supporting sustainable tourism education: Governments can support education and training programs for tourism professionals on sustainable tourism practices, including sustainable resource management, environmental stewardship, and community engagement.

Tourism companies can invest in renewable energy, such as solar panels and wind turbines, to reduce their carbon footprint and promote sustainable tourism practices.

Question 13: *What do you know about certification programs for guesthouses/small hotels, according to which each service deliverer is ranked according to approved standards and has to define its prices according to this certificate?*

Answer 13: *Certificate programs in promoting innovation and creativity in the guest house and small hotel industry. By establishing a set of standards that all companies must meet, certification programs encourage companies to find new and innovative ways to provide high-quality service and accommodation .*

Profession Director of a tourism company Hotel purchases.

Question 1: *Can you tell us a little bit about yourself? (age, occupation, working experience and workplace duties).*

Answer 1: *Profession Director of a tourism company Hotel purchases. Age 46. Work experience 13 years. Work duties Administrative tasks and supervision of hotel purchases and quality.*

Question 2: *What are the most serious problems facing tourism industry for the moment? Can you specify some?*

Answer 2: *Lack of regulation The tourism industry in Erbil lacks effective regulation, which can lead to problems such as unfair competition, price manipulation, and poor quality of service. Effective regulation is essential to ensure the sustainability of the tourism industry and protect the interests of visitors and stakeholders in the tourism industry.*

Question 3: *How would you describe sustainability? Also, how would you describe sustainability for your profession or business?*

Answer 3: *Sustainability is an important consideration to ensure that a company's activities and operations do not adversely affect the environment, society and the economy.*

A travel company's sustainability initiatives can include reducing travel's carbon footprint by promoting eco-friendly transportation options such as public transport, electric vehicles, and cycling tours. In addition, the company can partner with hotels and resorts that implement sustainable practices such as using renewable energy sources, reducing waste and conserving water. The company can also promote responsible tourism practices such as respecting local cultures and traditions, conserving natural resources and wildlife, and supporting local communities. This can be done by offering tours that promote sustainable tourism practices, and educating travelers about the importance of responsible tourism practices. The travel company can also work with local organizations and nonprofits to support sustainability initiatives in the communities it serves. This could include funding environmental conservation programmes, promoting sustainable development projects, and supporting community-based tourism initiatives.

Question 4: *What is the meaning of sustainable tourism for you? Please tell about dimensions of sustainable tourism/ (economic, social and environmental)*

Answer 4: Sustainable tourism is about creating tourism products and services designed to reduce negative impacts on the environment, promote social and cultural sustainability, and support local economic development

Environmental dimension Sustainable tourism encourages the use of sustainable tourism practices in the management of natural resources, such as forests and water resources, to ensure their long-term sustainability.

Economic dimension Sustainable tourism supports the development of sustainable tourism initiatives that promote local entrepreneurship and innovation, and creates opportunities for SMEs to participate in the tourism industry.

Social dimension Sustainable tourism promotes the development of sustainable tourism activities that respect the human rights of local communities and ensure their active participation in tourism development.

Question 5: What can be done for sustainable tourism in Iraq (applications/activities/decisions/certifications?) What should be done?

Answer 5: Promoting sustainable tourism in Erbil is critical to ensuring the long-term sustainability of the city's tourism industry. By implementing sustainable tourism practices such as certification programs, waste management initiatives, community engagement, culture preservation, ecotourism, infrastructure development, responsible use of natural resources, and education and awareness initiatives, Erbil can promote sustainable tourism growth while preserving its environment, culture, and economy for future generations. By engaging all stakeholders and fostering public-private partnerships, Erbil can create a shared vision for sustainable tourism that reflects the needs and interests of all parties.

Question 6: Is there any kind of governmental program that directly attracts foreign tourists and promotes the country as a tourist destination?

Answer 6: There are challenges facing the tourism industry in Erbil, there is also great potential for growth and development. Government programs and initiatives, along with investment in infrastructure, training, education, accessibility, collaboration, and sustainable tourism practices, can help address these challenges and create a sustainable and thriving tourism industry in Erbil.

Question 7: *Can you tell me more about governmental policies for Sustainable Tourism in Erbil ? What do you think? Please tell about it by giving requisites and examples.*

Answer 7: *Sustainable facilities have encouraged the Government to develop sustainable accommodation that promotes environmental and social sustainability.*

For example, the Divan Erbil Hotel is certified by the World Sustainable Tourism Council for its sustainable practices, including energy and water conservation, waste reduction, and community engagement. Green Energy The Government has promoted the use of renewable energy in the tourism industry to reduce the carbon footprint of the industry. For example, the Government has supported the installation of solar panels in hotels and other tourist facilities.

Question 8: *What do you think the pros and cons of sustainability in Iraq tourism? Negative and positive dimensions*

Answer 8: *Improving the quality of life for sustainable tourism Improving the quality of life for local communities by providing opportunities for economic development, job creation and access to basic services such as healthcare and education.*

Resource depletion for tourism puts significant pressure on natural resources, including water, energy and land use, leading to resource depletion and environmental degradation.

Question 9: *According to your experience, what kind of environmental problems can be distinguished when it comes to tourism? Is there any organization that will work on standardization issues in industry? What do you think about licensing activities, eco labeling certification, environmental legislation Environmental sustainability.*

Answer 9: *Tourism activities can lead to pollution, including air and water pollution, noise pollution, and garbage, which can harm wildlife and ecosystems. Air pollution caused by transportation and energy use can contribute to climate change and harm human health, while water pollution from sewage and waste disposal can pollute water sources and harm aquatic life. To address this problem, tourism operators can implement pollution reduction measures, such as using alternative modes of transportation, implementing waste management systems, and using environmentally friendly cleaning products.*

Education and awareness initiatives take many forms, such as training programs for tourism companies, information campaigns for tourists, and community projects that promote sustainable tourism practices. These initiatives can help build awareness, promote a culture of sustainability, and enable stakeholders to take proactive steps towards sustainable tourism practices.

Environmental legislation is an important tool for regulating the environmental impacts of tourism. Governments can pass laws and regulations to control pollution, protect natural habitats and promote sustainable tourism practices.

Question 10: *In what terms could tourism be considered as a threat to local culture and traditions? Why do you think so? Can you give us some practical examples?*

Answer 10: *Destruction of historical sites Increase tourism, there is a possibility of destruction or damage to historical sites, especially if they are not properly maintained or managed.*

Trespassing on holy places Tourists may inadvertently or intentionally encroach on sacred places or areas of cultural significance, resulting in a loss of respect for local culture and traditions.

Question 11: *Can you give us an example when locals cannot access local amenities and natural resources anymore because of tourism?*

Answer 11: *For example, the rise of tourism can lead to a decline in the quality of public spaces and facilities, especially in areas where local resources are diverted to tourism-related businesses. This can lead to neglect of important public spaces such as parks, community centers, and public libraries, resulting in a reduced quality of life for locals who rely on these spaces for social and cultural activities.*

Question 12: *As an expert, what would you change in the governmental policy regarding tourism, to make it more sustainable (economic – (income), social, environmental)? What concrete steps should be made at the macro and micro levels?*

Answer 12: *Monitor and evaluate the impact of tourism on the environment, society and economy. Governments can conduct regular assessments of tourism activities and their impact, and use the results to improve policies and practices. They can also work with the private sector and civil society to develop monitoring and evaluation tools and frameworks.*

By promoting green infrastructure, governments can encourage the development of green infrastructure in tourist destinations, such as green roofs, green walls and rain gardens, to help reduce tourism's impact on the environment and improve the overall sustainability of tourism.

Partial by offering sustainable tourism packages: Tourism companies can offer sustainable tourism packages that promote responsible tourism behavior, such as reducing waste and conserving natural resources, and supporting local conservation and community development efforts.

Question 13: *What do you know about certification programs for guesthouses/small hotels, according to which each service deliverer is ranked according to approved standards and has to define its prices according to this certificate?*

Answer 13: *Certificate programs help encourage transparency and accountability. By providing third-party assessment and accreditation, certification programs help ensure that companies are held accountable for meeting established standards, which can help build trust with guests and promote a culture of transparency and accountability within the industry. By participating in the certification program, companies can connect with other companies and industry experts who are committed to providing quality service and accommodation.*

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

On this interviews The tourism industry in Erbil is confronted with a wide range of challenges that are complex and varied in nature. The COVID-19 pandemic has indisputably emerged as a significant catalyst, resulting in a decline in the demand for travel, a downturn in the economy, and the implementation of border closures. The challenges are further exacerbated by political instability, inadequate infrastructure, and inadequate promotional efforts. Additional challenges arise from factors such as restricted domestic demand, linguistic obstacles, and a dearth of adequately skilled personnel. Ensuring the well-being of individuals, overcoming cultural obstacles, and promoting cooperation among relevant parties are imperative for the attainment of sustainable development. The current challenges faced by the industry are underscored by factors such as seasonality, accessibility, lack of differentiation, and the imperative for innovation and effective regulation. To surmount these challenges, a comprehensive strategy encompassing collaboration between the public and private sectors, substantial investments in infrastructure, and strategic promotional endeavors are imperative to effectively highlight the distinctive attributes of Erbil.

The aforementioned responses collectively underscore the holistic essence of sustainability, accentuating its tripartite dimensions encompassing economic, social, and environmental factors. The individuals and organizations mentioned in this discourse acknowledge the significance of practicing responsible resource management, mitigating environmental harm, and making positive contributions to local communities. Across various industries such as hospitality, tourism, municipal administration, and event management, the dedication to sustainability entails the adoption of environmentally friendly practices, the endorsement of local initiatives, and the cultivation of a culture centered around accountability. The incorporation of sustainability principles into diverse professional fields signifies an increasing recognition of the interdependence between business practices and the overall welfare of society and the environment.

The responses offer a lucid and all-encompassing comprehension of sustainable tourism, with a particular emphasis on its three dimensions: economic, social, and environmental. The portrayal of the economic dimension consistently emphasizes its role in fostering support for local communities, businesses, and overall economic growth

by means of responsible practices. The social aspect emphasizes the significance of preserving culture, engaging with the community, and empowering local populations. The environmental dimension emphasizes the necessity of practicing responsible resource management, engaging in conservation initiatives, and mitigating the adverse effects on ecosystems. The responses demonstrate a comprehensive viewpoint regarding sustainable tourism, encompassing the intricate equilibrium necessary for achieving favorable, enduring results in economic, social, and environmental dimensions.

The responses collectively offer a comprehensive and insightful examination of approaches aimed at fostering sustainable tourism in Erbil, Iraq. The significance of certifications, waste management, community participation, cultural preservation, and infrastructure development is underscored by the authors. The successful implementation of sustainable tourism initiatives relies heavily on the integration of diverse stakeholders, such as the government, tourism industry, local community, and tourists. Moreover, the acknowledgment of the economic, environmental, and cultural advantages of sustainable tourism exemplifies a comprehensive comprehension of its influence on the overall welfare of Erbil. The recommendations provided are comprehensive and present pragmatic perspectives on promoting sustainability within the tourism industry.

The responses collectively underscore the endeavors undertaken by the Government to foster Erbil's status as a tourist hub. The authors engage in a discussion regarding various programs, including the DOT, Visit Erbil campaign, and Invest in Erbil initiative, which collectively demonstrate a comprehensive strategy aimed at enticing international tourists. The aforementioned challenges, encompassing infrastructure, safety considerations, awareness, and industry norms, exemplify the intricate character of sustainable tourism development. The acknowledgment of the potential for expansion and advancement, in conjunction with governmental endeavors, underscores the dedication to surmounting obstacles and fostering a prosperous tourism sector in Erbil.

The provided responses present a comprehensive range of governmental policies implemented in Erbil with the objective of fostering sustainable tourism. The policies encompass a wide range of areas, including but not limited to environmentally

sustainable practices, the preservation of cultural heritage, community engagement, marketing strategies, regulatory compliance, adaptation to climate change, and promotion of gender equality. Tangible illustrations of these policies in action can be observed through various examples, such as the incorporation of eco-friendly features within the new terminal building of Erbil International Airport, the implementation of regulations aimed at safeguarding historical sites, and the establishment of partnerships with reputable organizations like the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The prioritization of a comprehensive and all-encompassing strategy towards sustainable tourism is in accordance with wider objectives of development, demonstrating Erbil's dedication to achieving a harmonious equilibrium between economic advancement, environmental safeguarding, and cultural conservation. The World Sustainable Tourism Council's certification of establishments such as the Divan Erbil Hotel serves to emphasize the region's commitment to the implementation and acknowledgment of sustainable practices within the tourism sector.

The responses offer a comprehensive analysis of the advantages and disadvantages associated with the integration of sustainability principles within Iraq's tourism sector. The positive aspects encompass various dimensions, such as the potential for conserving cultural and natural resources, generating economic benefits, enhancing infrastructure, and improving visitor experiences. However, the region faces various challenges that complicate the implementation of sustainable tourism practices. These challenges include limited tourism development, inadequate infrastructure, safety concerns, and the potential for negative cultural impacts. These observations emphasize the necessity of adopting a well-rounded approach that takes into account economic, environmental, and socio-cultural aspects in order to guarantee the enduring viability of sustainable tourism endeavors in Iraq.

The provided responses offer a comprehensive examination of the environmental concerns linked to tourism, as well as the strategies and organizations dedicated to promoting sustainability in this sector. The aforementioned statement underscores the notable influence of tourism on various environmental factors, including carbon emissions, water consumption, waste generation, biodiversity loss, and land-use change. The inclusion of entities such as the World Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) signifies the significance of standardization in advancing sustainable practices. The discourse surrounding licensing,

eco-labeling, and environmental legislation underscores the necessity of regulatory frameworks to effectively govern and enforce sustainable practices within the tourism sector. The responses emphasize the necessity of adopting a comprehensive strategy to tackle environmental issues in the tourism industry, as well as the significance of fostering cooperation among various parties involved to ensure enduring sustainability.

The responses offer a comprehensive analysis of the diverse ways in which tourism can potentially jeopardize the preservation of local culture and traditions. The author effectively presents each point with clarity and substantiates them with concrete illustrations, thereby providing a nuanced comprehension of the adverse effects of tourism on cultural heritage. The range of topics addressed in your responses encompasses a wide array of issues, spanning from the commodification of culture to environmental considerations. Moreover, the incorporation of concrete illustrations further improves the lucidity and practicality of the arguments presented. The responses adeptly underscore the intricate interplay between tourism and the preservation of cultural heritage.

The responses provided aptly exemplify situations in which local residents encounter difficulties in accessing nearby facilities and natural resources as a result of the growth and expansion of tourism activities. Each exemplification is characterized by clarity, specificity, and the ability to underscore distinct facets pertaining to the influence of tourism on indigenous communities. The examples provided encompass a variety of situations, including the forced relocation of communities from their ancestral territories, the exclusion of local residents from accessing their own coastal areas due to rising costs, and the alteration or abandonment of traditional customs in favor of developing tourism-related facilities. The comprehensive nature of the responses offers a nuanced comprehension of the multifaceted challenges that local communities may confront when dealing with the development of tourism.

The responses provided demonstrate a thorough comprehension of the intricate aspects of sustainable tourism and the significance of governmental policies in this domain. The significance of national tourism strategies, regulations, incentives, and community engagement is underscored in your argument. In addition, the recommendations encompass a range of dimensions, including sustainable practices, conservation endeavors, cultural preservation, and the involvement of tourism

enterprises in fostering responsible conduct. The integration of macro and micro-level methodologies underscores a comprehensive viewpoint towards attaining sustainability within the tourism sector. Insights offer a comprehensive perspective on the essential measures required for the achievement of efficient and enduring tourism governance.

The responses presented herein offer a comprehensive examination of certification programs specifically designed for guesthouses and small hotels. The discussion has encompassed multiple facets, encompassing the rationale behind certification, the entities responsible for administering these initiatives, the criteria entailed, and the advantages for both enterprises and patrons. The significance of certification in establishing trust, guaranteeing quality, and fostering responsible tourism practices was emphasized. In general, the responses aptly articulate the importance of certification programs in augmenting the overall caliber and credibility of guesthouses and small hotels within the tourism sector.

Sustainable Tourism Practices in Erbil

The sustainable tourism practices implemented in Erbil, a city renowned for its historical and cultural significance within the Iraq, exemplify a dedication to safeguarding its abundant heritage, while simultaneously promoting economic development and environmental preservation. Erbil, renowned for its historic Citadel and vibrant marketplaces, has implemented a range of sustainable tourism strategies centered around conscientious travel, cultural conservation, and environmentally conscious approaches. Erbil places significant emphasis on the preservation of its historical sites, considering it a fundamental aspect of sustainable tourism. The Erbil Citadel, which has been designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, serves as a notable illustration of this particular methodology. The restoration endeavors prioritize the preservation of historical authenticity while concurrently ensuring the site's accessibility and provision of informative resources for tourists. The preservation of the city's heritage not only serves as a means of safeguarding its historical and cultural significance, but also serves as an educational tool for visitors to gain knowledge about the region's past. Furthermore, the promotion of cultural tourism by local authorities and tourism operators is aimed at encouraging tourists to engage in activities such as visiting local markets, participating in traditional workshops, and attending cultural events.

These initiatives provide tourists with an opportunity to immerse themselves in the authentic culture while simultaneously contributing to the growth of the local economy.

The implementation of environmentally conscious practices is a fundamental aspect of Erbil's sustainable tourism framework. Initiatives encompass the establishment and enhancement of environmentally friendly areas, such as parks and gardens, as well as the advocacy for eco-lodges and hotels that conform to ecological criteria. The primary objective of these endeavors is to mitigate the environmental impact of tourism and augment the intrinsic aesthetic qualities of the area. In addition, the municipality promotes the adoption of environmentally friendly modes of transportation, such as cycling and walking tours. These alternatives not only contribute to the mitigation of carbon emissions but also provide visitors with a distinctive and personal means of experiencing the urban environment. The incorporation of community engagement and educational initiatives constitutes fundamental components of Erbil's sustainable tourism strategies. Local communities actively participate in the process of tourism planning and decision-making, thereby ensuring that the development of tourism brings about favorable outcomes for them while also upholding and preserving their unique way of life. Educational initiatives are implemented with the objective of enhancing awareness among both local residents and tourists regarding the significance of conserving Erbil's natural and cultural resources. The adoption of a community-centered approach guarantees that the development of tourism is characterized by inclusivity, responsibility, and sustainability, thereby generating advantages for both the urban area and its tourists.

The city of Erbil incorporates sustainable tourism practices, with a particular emphasis on economic sustainability, recognizing its significance in ensuring the enduring prosperity of its tourism industry. This entails the creation and implementation of a wide array of tourism options that accommodate various preferences and financial capacities, thereby guaranteeing a widespread appeal to an international demographic. Through the strategic implementation of a diversified tourism portfolio, Erbil effectively broadens its appeal to a more diverse array of visitors, thereby engendering an expansion of employment prospects for local inhabitants. This multifaceted approach to tourism not only fosters economic stability but also facilitates regional growth within the area. In addition to the expansion of its tourism offerings, Erbil is actively engaged in investing resources towards enhancing the capacity and skill development of the local

workforce. Training programs are implemented for local guides, hospitality staff, and artisans in order to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver services of exceptional quality to tourists. This not only improves the overall satisfaction of visitors but also contributes to the growth of the local economy by ensuring that tourism revenues are allocated within the community.

One crucial element of Erbil's sustainable tourism practices involves the encouragement and promotion of responsible tourism behaviors among its visitors. This encompasses the promotion of tourists to demonstrate respect towards local customs and traditions, mitigate their ecological footprint, and provide backing to local enterprises. Tourists in Erbil are provided with information campaigns and guidelines aimed at educating them about responsible travel practices. This facilitates the establishment of a symbiotic rapport between tourists and local residents, thereby guaranteeing that tourism exerts a constructive influence on the community and its surroundings. In summary, Erbil is utilizing technological advancements to improve and promote sustainable tourism initiatives. This encompasses the utilization of digital platforms to facilitate the promotion of environmentally sustainable tours, cultural immersion opportunities, and local enterprises. Technology is employed in the administration of tourist sites, such as the Erbil Citadel, for the purpose of monitoring visitor volumes and ensuring that tourism operations do not surpass the site's capacity to accommodate. The implementation of technological interventions serves to optimize the visitor experience and facilitate the efficient management of tourism resources, thereby promoting their long-term sustainability for future generations.

Point Of Weakness And Strongness Of Sustainable Practices In Tourism Business In Erbil

- **Strengths**

1. **Cultural Preservation and Awareness:** One notable aspect of Erbil's sustainable tourism practices lies in its commitment to safeguarding and enhancing its abundant cultural heritage. The conscientious preservation and maintenance of historical sites such as the Erbil Citadel, in conjunction with the promotion of cultural activities and indigenous handicrafts, have a substantial impact on the preservation of the city's historical heritage. In

addition to appealing to cultural tourists, this endeavor serves to educate visitors on the historical and traditional aspects of the region, thereby cultivating a sentiment of reverence and admiration towards the indigenous culture.

2. **Community Involvement and Economic Benefits:** One additional advantage is the active engagement of local communities within the tourism industry. Through the active involvement of local residents in decision-making processes and participation in tourism activities, a direct avenue is established for the community to receive economic benefits. This approach facilitates the generation of employment opportunities, the augmentation of skill sets, and the equitable distribution of economic benefits derived from the tourism industry. Community-centric strategies play a crucial role in cultivating a conducive environment for the sustainable expansion of tourism.
 3. **Environmental Consciousness:** One noteworthy aspect of Erbil's approach to sustainable tourism lies in its steadfast dedication to the preservation and protection of the environment. Efforts such as the establishment of green spaces, advocacy for environmentally conscious lodging options, and support for sustainable modes of transportation demonstrate a commitment to mitigating the environmental impact of tourism. In addition to its preservation of the region's natural beauty, this approach also caters to an expanding demographic of environmentally conscious tourists.
 4. **Education and Awareness Campaigns:** One notable strength of Erbil is its dedication to educating both local residents and tourists about the significance of sustainable tourism practices. A coordinated endeavor is underway to advocate for responsible tourism behaviors, employing diverse campaigns and informational resources. The act of raising awareness contributes to the cultivation of a sustainable culture among all individuals and groups involved in the tourism industry.
- **Weaknesses**
 1. **Infrastructure and Resource Limitations:** One of the primary obstacles faced by Erbil pertains to the insufficiency of infrastructure and resources required to effectively facilitate sustainable tourism practices. Despite

ongoing initiatives to create environmentally friendly facilities and transportation options, the city continues to encounter obstacles in establishing contemporary and sustainable infrastructure capable of accommodating the increasing influx of tourists without exerting excessive pressure on the local environment and resources. The existence of this gap may impede the efficacy of sustainable tourism endeavors.

2. **Balancing Modern Development with Heritage Conservation:** The rapid modernization and urban development of Erbil present a potential threat to its ancient sites and traditional way of life. Maintaining a delicate equilibrium between the preservation of historical areas and the integration of new developments is a crucial endeavor. There exists a potential hazard whereby the endeavor to achieve modernization within the city may result in the overshadowing or neglect of certain facets pertaining to its historical and cultural identity. The potential consequence of this action is a reduction in the distinctive allure that initially draws tourists to Erbil.
3. **Dependency on External Factors:** The achievement of sustainable tourism in Erbil is contingent upon external factors, including regional stability and international perceptions. The political and economic stability of a region is of paramount importance in the attraction of tourists. The tourism sector can be significantly affected by fluctuations in these areas, which may potentially undermine efforts towards achieving sustainability.
4. **Limited Global Marketing and Perception Challenges:** Erbil, despite its abundant cultural and historical assets, encounters difficulties in the realm of global marketing and in addressing prevailing perception concerns. The historical backdrop of conflict and political strife in the region may dissuade prospective tourists. In order to broaden the international appeal and rectify any misconceptions, it is imperative to implement marketing strategies that effectively emphasize the city's safety, distinctive attractions, and commitment to sustainable tourism initiatives.

- **Opportunities**

1. **Cultural Richness and Historical Significance:** Erbil offers a wide range of topics for sustainable tourism research due to its cultural richness

and historical significance, which is exemplified by landmarks such as the renowned Erbil Citadel. This distinctiveness has the potential to captivate global recognition and financial support.

2. **Economic Development:** Prioritising sustainable tourism can invigorate local economies by generating employment opportunities and bolstering local enterprises, all the while safeguarding cultural authenticity.
 3. **Environmental Awareness:** This study can emphasise the significance of conserving natural landscapes and resources, which is vital given the escalating environmental challenges.
 4. **International Collaboration:** The distinct emphasis on Erbil has the potential to draw the attention of global researchers and organisations with an interest in sustainable tourism, thereby promoting collaboration and facilitating the exchange of exemplary methods.
- **Threats**
 1. **Political instability:** The geopolitical circumstances in the region may be unpredictable, which could affect the safety and availability of research areas and discourage international cooperation.
 2. **Constraints in Resources and Infrastructure:** Financial limitations, inadequate academic infrastructure, and absence of local expertise in sustainable tourism can impede the extent and breadth of research.
 3. **Environmental degradation:** such as water scarcity or land degradation, can hinder the feasibility of certain forms of sustainable tourism.
 4. **Excessive reliance on tourism:** There is a potential danger in placing too much emphasis on tourism, including sustainable forms, as it can render the local economy susceptible to fluctuations in the global market and environmental emergencies.

The preservation of historical sites and promotion of local culture in Erbil constitutes a fundamental aspect of its sustainable tourism endeavor. Not only does this endeavor serve to safeguard the cultural legacy of the city, but it also provides a valuable and immersive encounter for visitors. The city's dedication to environmental preservation through the establishment of green spaces and implementation of sustainable tourism practices sets a precedent for other cities in the surrounding area. The underlying suggestion is the establishment of a sustainable tourism framework that

can be duplicated in comparable historical and cultural settings, guaranteeing the simultaneous advancement of heritage preservation and tourism. The economic advantages derived from the implementation of sustainable tourism practices in Erbil are considerable. Erbil exemplifies the utilization of tourism as a means for economic development and poverty alleviation by actively engaging local communities and implementing measures to ensure equitable distribution of the economic benefits derived from tourism. This approach emphasizes the significance of tourism models that prioritize community engagement, as they not only contribute to the economic growth of local areas but also empower local residents, thereby promoting long-term sustainability.

Erbil encounters various challenges, including the need for infrastructure development, the delicate balance between modernization and heritage conservation, and the imperative of effective global marketing. These challenges necessitate the implementation of strategic responses. The resolution of these challenges is imperative for the ongoing efficacy of its endeavors in sustainable tourism. This entails engaging in both local initiatives and collaborating with regional and international stakeholders to bolster infrastructure, enhance global perceptions, and attract a varied tourist demographic. The experiences observed in Erbil provide significant insights that can be applied to other destinations seeking to establish and implement sustainable tourism practices. The city's comprehensive strategy for incorporating sustainable practices into tourism development, which encompasses cultural preservation, environmental conservation, and community engagement, serves as a model for integration. In light of the ongoing challenges surrounding sustainability in the global tourism sector, Erbil's endeavors highlight the significance of embracing comprehensive and all-encompassing approaches that address the requirements of tourists while also prioritizing the welfare of local communities and ecosystems.

The Erbil case underscores the necessity of strategic planning and policy formulation in the realm of sustainable tourism. Educational initiatives targeted towards policymakers and tourism managers ought to prioritize the significance of incorporating cultural preservation, environmental stewardship, and community engagement within the framework of tourism policies. This entails comprehending the distinct cultural and historical backdrop of a given location, evaluating the environmental consequences, and acknowledging the socio-economic factors in operation. The implementation of strategic

planning is of utmost importance in the development of a sustainable tourism framework that exhibits both resilience and adaptability in response to dynamic conditions. Another significant implication pertains to the necessity of enhancing capacity and fostering skill development among individuals engaged in the tourism industry. This encompasses the provision of training to local guides, hospitality personnel, and artisans with regards to sustainable tourism practices, customer service, and environmental conservation. Educational endeavors ought to prioritize the augmentation of indigenous competencies and expertise, thereby ensuring that the labor force is adequately prepared to provide tourism experiences that are both of superior quality and capable of long-term viability. This not only enhances the level of service but also guarantees that the local community receives direct benefits from tourism endeavors.

Erbil's approach emphasizes the importance of community education and involvement in the realm of sustainable tourism. It is imperative to establish educational initiatives aimed at enhancing the understanding and knowledge of local communities regarding the advantages associated with sustainable tourism, as well as their potential contributions to this field. This entails providing education to community members regarding the significance of their cultural and natural resources, as well as instructing them on methods to safeguard and enhance these assets. The involvement of communities in the process of tourism planning guarantees the incorporation of their needs and perspectives, thereby fostering a more sustainable and inclusive approach to the development of tourism. The experience of Erbil presents a significant and instructive opportunity for the advancement of global collaboration in the realm of sustainable tourism education. There exists potential for collaboration between educational institutions and tourism organizations in order to facilitate the exchange of knowledge, best practices, and resources. The exchange of ideas and experiences on a global scale has the potential to foster the creation of novel strategies for sustainable tourism that are specifically designed to suit diverse cultural and environmental circumstances. Collaboration of this nature has the potential to cultivate a worldwide network of sustainable tourism professionals, thereby augmenting the overall caliber and influence of sustainable tourism endeavors on a global scale.

the educational managerial implications derived from the study "Identifying Sustainable Tourism Activities in Erbil" underscore the importance of implementing comprehensive educational strategies that encompass various elements such as strategic

planning, capacity building, community engagement, and global collaboration. The inclusion of these elements is of paramount importance in the development of a sustainable tourism sector, as they not only contribute to the economic growth of local communities but also serve to safeguard cultural heritage and maintain environmental sustainability.

An important area that warrants further investigation is the comprehensive evaluation of the effects of sustainable tourism initiatives in Erbil. This may encompass the examination of the socio-economic ramifications on indigenous communities, the ecological consequences arising from the growth in tourism, and the safeguarding of cultural heritage. Gaining a comprehensive understanding of the tangible effects, encompassing both advantageous and detrimental outcomes, will yield valuable perspectives on the efficacy of existing approaches and facilitate the identification of potential areas for enhancement. Engaging in comparative analyses with other historical cities that have successfully implemented sustainable tourism practices can offer a more comprehensive outlook. This research would contribute to the comprehension of how diverse cultural and historical contexts impact the formulation and effectiveness of sustainable tourism strategies. Furthermore, this would facilitate the identification of optimal methodologies and pioneering strategies that could be modified and executed in the city of Erbil.

The investigation of technological advancements in the realm of sustainable tourism represents a highly auspicious avenue of research. The exploration of the potential of emerging technologies such as virtual reality, augmented reality, and smart tourism tools to augment the sustainability of tourism in Erbil presents intriguing prospects. This study has the potential to offer valuable insights into the utilization of technology for enhancing visitor experiences, optimizing the management of tourist sites, and mitigating environmental repercussions. There exists a necessity for scholarly inquiry that centers on the enduring sustainability and resilience of tourism in the city of Erbil. This encompasses the examination of strategies for urban adaptation to dynamic environmental conditions, economic volatility, and evolving tourist preferences. Conducting research in this domain would contribute to the formulation of effective approaches aimed at bolstering the resilience of Erbil's tourism industry in light of forthcoming adversities, such as climate change, political volatility, and global economic fluctuations.

The proposed recommendations for additional research on the topic of "Identifying Sustainable Tourism Activities in Erbil" seek to augment our comprehension of the successful implementation and long-term maintenance of sustainable tourism practices within urban environments that possess significant historical and cultural value. Through the examination and exploration of these specific domains, scholars have the potential to make substantial contributions to the advancement of sustainable tourism strategies. This not only yields advantages for destinations such as Erbil, but also imparts valuable insights that can be applied to urban centers globally.

There are limitations in this study, as the first of these limits is the objective limits of the study, as the subject of the study was limited to sustainable tourism, and the limitation lies in the dynamic and evolving nature of both the concepts of tourism and sustainability. The tourism sector is witnessing dynamic transformations as a result of various factors, including global economic patterns, technological progress, and evolving tourism trends. Likewise, the understanding and application of sustainability is constantly evolving. This means that research findings have the potential to quickly lose relevance or may not comprehensively include the latest developments and methodologies in the field of sustainable tourism.

As for the spatial boundaries, it was limited to Iraq, specifically and in particular to Erbil. Given its distinct historical, cultural and geopolitical characteristics, the implications and observations obtained from the analysis of sustainable tourism practices in this particular city may have limited applicability to alternative settings. The unique circumstances that Erbil faces, including its rich historical heritage, complex political environment, and distinct economic landscape, may exhibit marked disparities compared to other geographic regions. Hence, it is necessary to exercise caution when attempting to extrapolate these findings to diverse cultural or geographic contexts.

The third limit was the selection of participants, which was limited to twenty managers from various institutions related to tourism. Any future research can be conducted on residents about their perception of sustainability and sustainable tourism in Iraq.

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