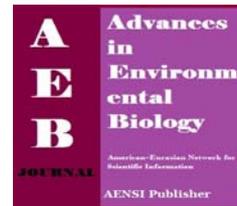




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### Studying Solutions of Development of Tourism in Urmia Lake Based On SWOT Model

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#### ABSTRACT

Nature tourism is a kind of passing leisure time that firm development and operation of it requires creation of substructures and superstructures in various fields of economic, social, cultural, ecological and management. If ecotourism or tourism is based on firm development, it will cause growth of accordance with the local and foreign currency earnings and GDP increase. Despite Lake Urmia is one of the most important tourist attractions in natural environment and considered within the context of ecotourism and has capabilities that could be of interest to tourists, such as geomorphology and wildlife and good herbal cover that because of activities against environment stricken serious risks of ecological and tourism development in the region brought into distortion. So, understanding its potentials, limitations, opportunities and solutions of development of tourism in this region is necessary. This study uses descriptive – analytical method, field studies and examining the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and limitations of development of firm tourism in the area of Lake Urmia with SWOT method offer strategies of development of firm tourism in this area.

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### INTRODUCTION

Nowadays by the increasing the leisure time and internal travel and entry of foreigners (that still these travels have done with economic, cultural, political, and recreational and medical science goals) the tourist-travelling sites highlighted and it has come to light that there is thought to have particular context.

During recent decades, tourism has significant growth and this industry is growing day by day. So, the twenty-first century has been called the century of tourism. Tourism in this vast activity should be organized in such a way that at the same time can achieve further growth, and protect the environment and cultural resources and heritage. This purpose has done under the approach, according to the statement of principle “Rio” about the environment that was organized by the World Tourism. Thus protecting and improving the natural environment and cultural life of the host society are goals of firm tourism and the basis of the environmental problems have root in amassing wealth and capitalism. Purpose of this paper is to introduce firm tourist places development features along the Urmia Lake. The method of this research is descriptive - analytical. Also SWOT technique has used for data analysis and presentation strategies for firm development of tourist facilities along Urmia Lake. lack of research on how best to integrate communities into decision making processes, increase public awareness on the needs for environmental protection, build capacity among communities, and create more effective institutional and legal systems to deal with nature reserves [2].

Yen-Ting and et al, [13] show that perceived value, satisfaction and activity involvement can promote environmentally responsible behavior of tourists. While perceived value directly affects environmentally responsible behavior, satisfaction and involvement play the roles of partial mediators in the behavioral model. Zinaida [15] assesses the results and roles of the networking and how they helped to contribute to change for SD. [5] suggested that EF analysis provides a unique, global perspective on sustainability that is absent with the use of locally derived and contextualized ST indicators and some (eco)tourism products may, potentially, make a positive contribution to resource conservation at the global scale.

The opportunity developing countries to enhance their development potential by harnessing their natural resources without, at the same time, destroying them cannot be denied. What is essential, however, is the recognition that, without adequate understanding of underlying factors and careful planning and management, ecotourism may include unsustainable aspects [3].

The ecotourism literature is focused on market segmentation, ecological impacts of wildlife viewing, and community-based ecotourism, but there has been minimal attention to critical areas such as quality control, the

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industry, external environments or institutions even as the components and parameters of ecotourism are being extended. This imbalance, combined with the fragmentation and lack of integration within the literature, suggest that ecotourism, as a field of academic inquiry, is still in a state of adolescence [12].

Reihanian and et al [6] Study the Sustainable tourism development strategy by SWOT analysis in the Boujagh National Park, Iran. Results showed that the existing tourism activities in the park did not conform to sustainability requirements. Thus, a SWOT analysis was used to identify the required management strategies to improve the tourism in the park.

This paper consists of seven sections. The first section examines the problems of tourism in the area of Urmia Lake, National Park. The second section focuses on the importance of tourism and ecotourism development. The third section deals with the theoretical and literary tourism and ecotourism. In the fourth part of this study that the modeling methodology is SWOT; and in the fifth section the characteristics of Lake Urmia as the study area will check and characteristics and attractions of ecotourism will examine. The sixth section examines the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats of Lake Urmia area, with special attention to natural attractions and ecotourism of the area and ultimately provides a strategy for tourism development in the area with attention to SWOT model.

#### *Statement of the Problem:*

Lake Urmia is one of the most important natural firm attractions of Iran that because of Mediterranean weather and beautiful nature of the area can attract a lot of tourists. But in recent years drastic reduction of water in Lake Urmia endangered the development of tourism and coastal in the area. Since 250 thousand hectares of Lake Urmia became Salinas and salinity of its water come to 240 grams per liter. Activities such as digging underground wells, unauthorized construction activities such as dams, drought, changing area using caused crisis such as reduction water level, decline the beautiful perspective of Urmia Lake, destruction of aquatic vegetation and naturally inhibits; and caused stop of growth of natural tourism in the region.

Tourism especially natural tourism at current world, is a pure industry and the third dynamic economic phenomenon, full boom and extensible that after oil industry and car sphere has snatched the from other world industries. So according to world tourism organization estimates, the value of tourism and travel in future decade with sprint more from world trade will reach the above statistics of export at other sections of economic. [4].

Despite having the potential of firm natural tourism such as Island and stone rocks, scenic valleys, trees and herbaceous vegetation types, a variety of wildlife, including mammals, birds, reptiles and beautiful beaches, Lake Urmian can within saving the environment and the use of natural attractions, be attentive to tourists and cause entrepreneurship and increase of income and welfare of the community.

#### *Theoretical Foundations:*

Population growth and consequences of industrial life have increased human need for nature recreation areas to eliminate the effects of mechanical fatigue, mental relaxation [8]. Tourism or leisure tourism as one of the species of leisure travel is a new chapter in the twenty-first century travels for human [10].

Tourism in terms of travel motivation can be divided to following forms.

1- Recreational tourism: recreation, rest, use of appropriate weather stakeholders, visit relatives, friends and acquaintances, are the main reasons for recreational tourism. Available data indicates that this form of tourism accounted the largest number of tourists in the world.

2 - Treatment tourism: using from hot waters of Sareyn in Iran, mining water in France and Italy, the sacred rivers like the Ganges in India, are examples of this type of tourism.

3- Cultural, art and history tourism: visiting historical monuments, arts and culture, museums, libraries and universities fall into this category.

4 - Religious and pilgrimages tourism: pilgrimage of Shrine house, the tombs of the holy Prophet and Imams, mosques, churches, temples and tombs are of this type of tourism.

5 -Sport tourism: include participation in sports or watching sports events.

6 - Economics and business tourism: include participation in commercial, industrial and services exhibits and visiting industries and markets.

7 - Scientific and political tourism: participation in international forums and summits, congresses and seminars, education, scientific research and education, national and religious festivals, funerals of political leaders and such things fall into this category [6].

#### *Firm Ecotourism:*

In recent years that nature tourism or ecotourism from concept view at different communities has politicized and also in public institutions and life environmental organizations and firm development and also creation revenues currency and Rial in impure production of national have significant growth Ecotourism is composed from the terms of ecology and tourism and in fact is the results of extreme challenges between fans

and non-fans who using nature and fans of rational utilization of natural potential with protection and sustainable utilization of natural resources [7].

Firm ecotourism should be environmentally compatible and should not result in the destruction of natural resources and reduce them. With teaching and learning for all involved parties, including the local population, ecotourism, government officials, tourism operators' etc. and provide with long-term benefits of community through continuous protection from local sources. So that in firm ecotourism in addition to the environmental and socio-economic objectives, ethics and values issues should also be observed [14].

#### *The Case Study:*

Lake Urmia with its bitter and salty water is located at 21 km of East of Urmia in both East and West Azerbaijan province with an area of approximately 5000 square kilometers and an altitude of 102 islands and 1267 meters from sea level; that contrary to the expectations evaluated existing of *Artemia* are living there. It is noteworthy that the road began in 1359 and is still being constructed in the middle of Lake Urmia and connects two centers of province. Lake Urmia has an area of approximately six square kilometers and its average depth is about 60 m. Lake Urmia has 56 islands that King's Island is the only inhabited island. A number of mineral water springs on the island can be seen.

#### *Eco touristic Attractions of Urmia Lake:*

National Park of Lake Urmia due to favorable weather conditions and natural slopes is the only remaining part of the Zagros Mountains and the majority of its plant species has forage and pharmaceutical value. Also the favorable natural conditions caused some natural events hence cover of half-forest of Aras trees, wild pistachio, almond, hackberry, barberry plants and delicious item of the sheep population on the island of extinct deer overpopulation on the island as well as bruises and tears and rare species birds, reptiles and amphibians. Specific characteristics of the water of Urmia Lake, easy access to food, adequate security and availability of biological resources, has led the park throughout the year, to the largest breeding area and a large number of migratory birds overwintering sites and local birds. This, in terms of economic value, aesthetic, scientific research is extremely important and can stabilize the value of park in the world as an outstanding example of natural heritage. Well as a hard skin called *Artemia Urmia* (prawns of saline water) lives on Lake Urmia that is fishing and currently being exported to foreign countries. Ports on Urmia Lake, also, from the past are one of the ways between the provinces of West and East. In future after finishing the construction of Shahid Kalantar highway on Urmia Lake, the economy face of was changed and boating, sailing and water skiing facilities at Lake Urmia increase the attractions of the lake.

#### *Method:*

This research of purpose is the developmental-application and of method is descriptive - analytical. For collecting data field and library studies such as seeing and visiting the attractions of Lake Urmia area was used. Then for analyzing data and offering techniques and strategies for firm tourism in Lake Urmia SWOT technique was used.

**Table 1:** SWOT Matrix and determining strategy



## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Internal and external factors affecting the development of ecotourism in the area of Lake Urmia have shown in tables 2 and 3. These factors in the context of the strengths, weaknesses (internal factors) and opportunities and threats (external factors) have been identified and in four main areas: economic, social, cultural, ecological and management has been studied [11,7].

**Table 2:** Matrix of external effective factors on firm tourism development in Lake Urmia

Index	Strengths	Weaknesses
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_ The ability of coastal and marine tourism and attract wealth for investment</li> <li>_ Existing of strong economic resources in the water because of the salt and high water saturation</li> <li>_ The use of reeds in Lake Urmia in crafts</li> <li>_ To aquaculture such as fish and other marine species, and its sales</li> <li>_ Attention to the breeding and development of medicinal plants in Lake Urmia</li> <li>_ Entrepreneurship through entrepreneurial development services for tourist such as beach biking, sailing, yacht, places designed especially for swimming, creating exhibitions and sports competitions, a marina and a children's play area....</li> <li>_ The use of around lands for grazing livestock</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_ Lack of adequate funding for tourism development in wetland areas such as organization, planning and management of the institutions responsible for the management of Lake Urmia and wetlands of province and....</li> <li>_ Lack of fish hunting and aquatic animals and sell them in the market because of more salt of water</li> <li>_ Regardless of the economic consequences of short-term projects such as building dams and Shahid Kalantar highway on Lake Urmia</li> </ul>
Socio cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_ Existence the historic Islands in Lake Urmia</li> <li>_ Ability to attract tourists to the area because of certain religious and ethnic</li> <li>_ Commitment to community involvement in tourism development in wetlands of Lake Urmia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_ Lack of involvement of NGOs to inform the environmental impact for development projects within Lake Urmia</li> </ul>
Ecological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_ Biodiversity in Lake Urmia with a variety of animals such as white pelicans, flamingos and....</li> <li>_ Modifying the microclimate (temperature and humidity) due to the high level of Lake Urmia</li> <li>_ Hot springs and mud</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_ Appropriation bulk water to agriculture harvesting dams but they dry Lake Urmia evaporation and cause loss</li> <li>_ Issue license to construction well and removal water</li> <li>_ Loss of habitat for migratory birds and native security in the discharge of pollutants from vehicles traveling to Lake Urmia</li> <li>_ High salinity and the loss of animal species such as Artemia because of lack of water exchange in two northern and southern part</li> <li>_ The loss of the beautiful view of Lake Urmia by reducing the depth of water and natural species.</li> </ul>
Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_ Law approval for banning the hunting waterfowl within wetlands</li> <li>_ Join to Ramsar Convention and the UNESCO biosphere</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_ Approval of several dams projects by the relevant authorities and its impact on the lack of water entering Lake Urmia</li> <li>_ Neglect and disregard of the obligations of Ramsar Convention and International Environmental Law</li> <li>_ Lack of legislation of important law to save water for other areas of Lake Urmia such as the rehabilitation of wetlands by the competent authorities.</li> </ul>

#### *Analysis of strengths, weakness points, opportunities and threats:*

According to the findings, in the area 16 internal strengths internal versus 8 internal weaknesses and 16 opportunities versus 12 opportunities in conclusion of firm tourism development can be seen. Therefore, we can conclude that despite the weaknesses and risky threats; it can be with adoption consistent strategies in different levels, back the firm tourism attractions to the area again.

#### *Summary and Conclusions:*

Despite having natural tourism attraction such as Island and stone rocks, scenic valleys, trees and herbaceous vegetation types, and beautiful beaches and... Lake Urmia has the potential to attract tourists; but for some reasons such as drought, the dam on the Lake, groundwater wells for irrigation of agricultural lands and... the ecosystem of the area stricken inappropriate changes. Due to the high potential of tourism and firm tourism development to attract investment to the region and thus can provide a solution such as coastal and marine tourism development on Lake Urmia wetlands area, used people associations to attract tourist, prevent excessive exploitation of groundwater through regulation and education and introduce alternative ways, prevent conversion of pasture lands to agricultural and improve the quality of water of Urmia Lake, Review on the rules of the Lake such as harvesting resources in areas of the Lake; turn around applications, infrastructure construction... review of the existing tourism facilities to increase tourism and tourism development, codification especial law for reducing water removal and water pollution, development different facilities of

tourism such as sports facilities, recreation centers, cultural and...., all of these can help to tourism development in this area.

**Table 3:** Matrix of external effective factors on firm tourism development in Lake Urmia

Index	Opportunities	Threats
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_ Construction of tourist complexes around Urmia Lake, such as hotels, motels, apartments and residential....</li> <li>_ Increase funding and tourism budget in the area and attract tourists</li> <li>_ Provision of financial assistance by the international financial and monetary institutions such as International Group Bank, World Fund Program of Civil United Nations, Asian Development Bank Fund to the protection of wetlands and Lake Urmia</li> <li>_ Identify global markets to attract tourists and foreign exchange earnings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_ Loss of revenue because of loss of natural attractions, wildlife and... in the area</li> <li>_ Change the use or destruction of natural pastures and hitting the livestock industry</li> <li>_ Increase pressure on sources because of vast usage of ponds</li> <li>_ The loss of economic activity and other aquatic caught species due to salt and reduction of aquatic population</li> </ul>
Socio - cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_ Motivating people to participate in the development of tourism and ecotourism in the area</li> <li>_ Publish reports about wetland monitoring in the newspapers, and the Internet</li> <li>_ Create shopping attractions of the area according to rich and local culture and attract tourists</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_ Negatively affected indigenous cultures and the culture of the inhabitants of tourists</li> </ul>
Ecological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_ Revitalize and diversify biological in ecosystem (river and around wetland) and at species level (flamingo and pelicans and, yellow stag and ram and ewe and Artemia)</li> <li>_ Size principles of water quality and level water of Lake Urmia</li> <li>_ Control and management of traditional perceptions by local people</li> <li>_ Special note to beal of rivers as locations with priority from biological diversity view</li> <li>_ Transfer water from nearby rivers like Glass river in appropriate locations to Lake Urmiaand dams such as Kanisib and Silveh.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_ Development of agriculture, industry and urbanization increase competition over water and cause reduction of water in Lake Urmiaand around pond and finally dryness.</li> <li>_ Increase discharge contaminants of the chemical agriculture, increase waste industrial and urbanization and their entry into the water</li> <li>_ Reduction of flowing input waters because of drought and exploitation from flow rivers through dams and dependent networks</li> <li>_ Development of Agriculture, Change the use or destruction of natural pastures</li> <li>_ Vast utilization of underground water resources</li> </ul>
Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_ Signatory to the Ramsar Convention for international support to save Lake Urmia with all applicable laws with the initiative taken by Iran</li> <li>_ Establishment of one administrative team monitoring at office the environment and performance education necessities</li> <li>_ Management of the protected areas around Lake Urmia</li> <li>_ Support local NGOs organizations .</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_ Lack of necessary legislation to deal with supplements in areas such as environmental degradation, indiscriminate hunting of aquatic</li> <li>_ Lack of stable management of water resources and usage of agriculture land</li> <li>_ Lack of management attention to protect from diversity biological and firm utilization from pond resources</li> </ul>

**Table 4:** Priority classification of effective factors at development firm tourism around Lake Urmia on the basis of SWOT model

Internal	External
<p>Prioritize strengths (S)</p> <p>S1: Area's ability to capitalize on tourism, coastal and marine areas and Fundraising</p> <p>S2: Entrepreneurship with service jobs related to tourism development such as beach biking, sailing, yacht, designed environment especially for swimming, creating exhibitions and sports competitions, a marina and a children's play area....</p> <p>S3: Possibility of aquaculture, such as fish and other marine species, and its sales</p> <p>S4: The presence of biodiversity in Lake Urmia with a variety of animals such as white pelicans, flamingos and.....</p> <p>S5: Modifying the microclimate of area (temperature and humidity) due to the high level of Lake Urmia</p> <p>S6: Possibility to attract tourists to the area because of certain religious and ethnic of people</p> <p>S7: Join the Ramsar Convention and the UNESCO Biosphere</p> <p>S8: The historic islands in Lake Urmia</p> <p>S9: The presence of strong community participation in tourism development in wetlands of Urmia Lake</p> <p>S10: The presence of hot springs, mud therapy</p> <p>S11: The presence of strong economic sources in the water because of the high salt water saturation</p> <p>S12: The use of around lands for the pond for livestock grazing</p> <p>S13 : Pass a law banning the hunting of waterfowl in wetlands</p> <p>S14: note to foster and development of medicinal plants in Lake Urmia</p> <p>S15: The use of reeds in Lake Urmia for crafts</p>	<p>Prioritize opportunities (O)</p> <p>o1: Transfer water from nearby rivers like Glass river in appropriate locations to Lake Urmia and dams such as Kanisib and Silveh</p> <p>o2: Revitalize and diversify biological in ecosystem (river and around wetland) and at species level (flamingo and pelicans and, yellow stag and ram and ewe and Artemia)</p> <p>o3: Formation of tourism complex around Urmia Lake, such as hotels, motels, apartments and residential....</p> <p>o4: Increase tourism funding and budget in the area and attract tourists</p> <p>o5: International support for the Ramsar Convention signatories to save Lake Urmia with taking the initiative by providing the relevant laws in Iran</p> <p>o6: Motivating people to participate in the development of tourism and ecotourism in the area</p> <p>o7: Create shopping attractions of the area through attention to rich and local culture and attract tourists</p> <p>o8: Identify global markets to attract tourists and foreign exchange earnings</p> <p>o9: Size principles of water quality and level water of Urmia lake</p> <p>o10: Control and management of traditional perceptions by local people</p> <p>o11: Management the protected areas around Lake Urmia</p> <p>o12: Special note to beal of rivers as locations with priority from biological diversity view</p> <p>o13: Provision of financial assistance by the international financial and monetary institutions such as International Group Bank, World Fund Program of Civil United Nations, Asian Development Bank Fund to the protection of wetlands and Lake Urmia</p> <p>o14: Support of Local NGOs organizations</p> <p>o15 : Establishment of one administrative team monitoring at office the environment and performance education necessities</p> <p>o16 : Publish reports about wetland monitoring in the newspapers, and the Internet</p>
Internal	External
<p>Prioritize weaknesses (W)</p> <p>W1: Allocation of bulk harvesting water to farm dams but they dry Urmia Lake, evaporation and loss</p> <p>W2: Issuing license to construction well and removal water</p> <p>W3: Lack of adequate funding for tourism development in wetland areas such as organization, planning and management of the institutions responsible for the management of Lake Urmia and wetlands and....</p> <p>W4: Regardless of the economic consequences of short-term projects such as building dams and Shahid Kalantar highway on Lake Urmia</p> <p>W5: Loss of security of migratory birds and native birds in the discharge of pollutants from vehicles traveling to Lake Urmia</p> <p>W6: The loss of a beautiful view of Lake Urmia by reducing the depth of water and natural species</p> <p>W7: Lack of respect and disregard for international environment law obligations of the Ramsar Convention</p> <p>W8: Lack of inform for participation of NGOs to the environmental impact of development projects within Lake Urmia</p> <p>W9: Approve of authorities of several dams project and its impact on the lack of water entering Lake Urmia</p> <p>W10: Lack of fish and aquatic hunting and sell them in the market because for more salt</p> <p>W11: High salinity and the loss of animal species such as Artemia because of water exchange in two northern and southern parts</p> <p>W12: Lack of important legislation for saving Lake Urmia such as the rehabilitation for entering other waters of the lagoon by the competent authorities</p>	<p>Prioritize threats (T)</p> <p>o1: Development of agriculture, industry and urbanization increase competition over water and cause reduction of water in Lake Urmia and around pond and finally dryness.</p> <p>o2: Reduction of flowing input waters because of drought and exploitation from flow rivers through dams and dependent networks</p> <p>o3: Lack of stable management of water resources and utilizing agriculture lands</p> <p>o4: Reducing the scope of profits due to the loss of natural attractions, wildlife and... in the area</p> <p>o5: Increase pressure on sources because of vast usage of ponds</p> <p>o6: The loss of economic activity and other aquatic caught species due to salt and reduction of aquatic population</p> <p>o7: Vast utilization of underground water resources</p> <p>o8: Lack of necessary legislation to deal with supplements in areas such as environmental degradation, indiscriminate hunting of aquatic</p> <p>o9: Increase discharge contaminants of the chemical agriculture, increase waste industrial and urbanization and their entry into the water</p> <p>o10: Development of agriculture, change utilization or degraded natural pastures</p> <p>o11: Change utilization or degraded natural pastures and hitting the livestock industry</p> <p>o12: Lack of management attention to protect from biological diversity and interest stable utilization from pond resources</p> <p>o13: The negative influence of indigenous cultures from tourists' culture</p>

**Table 5:** Matrix summary of necessary guidelines and approaches to development firm tourism around Lake Urmia

Aggressive strategies (SO)	Diversification strategies (ST)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_ Development of coastal and marine tourism around Lake Urmia and wetlands</li> <li>_ Using people association to promote tourism</li> <li>_ Appropriate use of wetland adjunction to Ramsar commissions and taking appropriate integration of financial funds to promote firm tourism in the area</li> <li>_ Taking advantage of convenient features such as aquatic wildlife, landscape, suitable for fishing, boating and ... to boost tourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_ Prevent from utilization of excessive exploitation of groundwater through regulation and education and introduce alternatives</li> <li>_ Prevent from conversion the pasture lands to agricultural lands and improve the Lake water quality</li> <li>_ Diversify of services for tourism in the area to increase tourism and create jobs</li> <li>_ Create different ads for the introduction of landscape features and attractions of Lake Urmia through books, magazines, national media, and internet and...</li> </ul>
Review strategies (SO)	The repellent strategies (WT)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_ Review on the rules of the Lake such as harvesting resources in areas of Urmia Lake, turn around applications, infrastructure construction...</li> <li>_ Review of the existing tourism facilities to increase tourism and tourism development</li> <li>_ Review of relevant institutions to educate citizens and organizations to increase participation and reduce perceptions of tourism development compatible with environmental sustainability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_ Special regulation for water loss and water pollution</li> <li>_ Development different facilities of tourism such as sports facilities, recreation centers, cultural and....</li> <li>_ Good infrastructure and use private sector association in building infrastructures and superstructures of tourist industry of the area</li> </ul>

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