Improving the Syrian Coastal Area in the Context of Sustainable Tourism

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Tourism is an important field of industry that helps create a large number of job opportunities in many fields that contribute to economic development and increase personal and national incomes. However, when tourism is planned irregularly and without discipline, it negatively affects the environment and natural resources by threatening the environmental resources of future generations. Therefore, we need sustainable tourism development to strike a balance between economic growth on the one hand and the protection of environmental resources and social values on the other. This study aimed to investigate the conditions of sustainable tourism planning. In line with this goal, a picture of the physical potential of the region was created by using the literature data on sustainable tourism, environmental analysis of the Syrian coastal region, on-site observation and mapping method, and qualitative research techniques. Suggestions are put forward in line with the findings that are presented in the created table. We believe that the study will make a positive contribution to the literature to ensure sustainable tourism development on the Syrian coast in terms of urban, environmental, social, and global aspects.

Introduction

Sustainable tourism contributes to economic development, employment creation, and infrastructure development in the host country. The concept of sustainable tourism started to emerge with the discussions on sustainability and the growing relationship between the environment and tourism at the Brundtland conference in 1987 with the title of "Our Common Future" (WCED 1987).

The total number of international tourists reached 1 billion in 2012, more than double the number recorded in 1990, and the World Tourism Organization expects it to reach 1.8 billion tourists by 2030 (UNWTO 2011, UNWTO 2017, Alčaković et al. 2017, Ovalı Kısa and Tachir 2017). In May 2022 point to international arrivals reaching 55% to 70% of pre-pandemic levels in 2022 (UNWTO 2022).

Syria has an abundance of tourist attractions of all kinds. The resorts are spread over the mountains in many areas in Syria, as well as there are beautiful Syrian coast resorts, where the sea meets the forest that covers the coastal mountains with a green carpet.

In addition, it is interspersed with rivers, waterfalls, springs, and lakes, and surrounded by forests on all sides. The coastal area also has excellent tourism

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potential due to its culture, history, and climate, as well as investment opportunities due to cheap labor and land (Syrian Ministry of Tourism 2022).

The Syrian case is a clear example of how and why tourism can lose its competitiveness during the years of the ongoing war. The tourism sector in Syria suffers from many problems. The current state of war has led to weak strategic plans, deterioration of infrastructure, and lack of sustainability, hindering the development of the tourism sector. By solving these problems and applying the concept of sustainable tourism, the Syrian coast will be a popular tourist destination at the international and global levels.

Literature Review

Tourism produces extraordinarily positive economic outcomes and is one of the world's most important sources of employment and economic gains. On the other hand, it is a very complex sector, and many stakeholders are involved in this sector, sometimes with conflicting interests. The prevention of conflicts requires the correct and fair use of resources. Depending on how tourism is managed, it can have very positive consequences. Sustainable tourism plays a positive role in the social, cultural, economic, environmental, and political development of destinations and creates significant development opportunities for many countries or communities. Uncontrolled tourism development can have devastating effects on natural resources, consumption behaviors, pollution, and social systems. The need for sustainable planning and management is vital to the survival of the industry (UNEP/MAP-METAP SMAP III Project 2009, UNWTO 2011, UNWTO 2017).

The World Tourism Organization has defined sustainable tourism as "tourism that takes fully into account its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, and supplies the needs of visitors, industry, environment and host communities" (UNWTO 2011). In addition, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) emphasizes that "sustainable tourism provides more meaningful relations with local people and a greater understanding of local cultural, social and environmental issues". The days when this concept began to be discussed date back to the 1990s (Butler 1990, Wheeller 1991, Zell 1992, Pleumarom 1993, Wheeller 1994, Glasson et al. 1995, Ovalı Kısa 2007, Ovalı Kısa and Tachir 2017). However, problems such as noise pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, which are effective in shaping air transport and also one of the conditions of today's travel, increase the importance of the concept of sustainable tourism even more. Sustainable tourism is also a concept that attracts attention due to its relation with sensitive areas such as the use of clean energy, the protection of natural resources, and local culture.

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) also proposed twelve major goals for sustainable tourism in 2005. These principles are illustrated in Table 1 (UNWTO 2005, Streimikiene et al. 2021).

Table 1. *The Principles of Sustainable Tourism*

		The principles of sustainable tourism
1	Economic continuity	to ensure the local application of policies designed so that tourism methods and initiatives can maintain their success and continue to deliver long-term benefits, corporate competitiveness at the national and international levels, and thematic context.
2	Local development	Increasing the contribution of tourism to the host destination by supporting measures to increase the rate of spending in the local area, meeting with local producers and service providers, and overnight visitors.
3	Quality of employment	to support professional specialization, to increase the number and quality of local employment that tourism creates, by improving wages and quality of service, without discrimination on issues such as race, gender, and disability.
4	Social Participation and Gender Equality	An attempt to distribute the economic and social benefits obtained from tourism activities on a wide and equitable scale, to improve opportunities, income, and services provided to economically and socially disadvantaged people.
5	Visitor Satisfaction	To provide visitors with a safe, satisfying, sustainable, and innovative experience without discrimination on the basis of race, gender, disability, age, or in any other way, and to support the phenomenon of the "responsible tourist".
6	Local Oversight	To ensure that local governments consult with other stakeholders in tourism in the planning, management, and implementation stages, to strengthen local residents/communities and civil society in the development of tourism in the area and involve them in the processes.
7	Social Welfare	To maintain and improve the quality of life of the local population by providing them with access to social structure, resources, opportunities, and life support systems without causing social degradation and abuse.
8	Cultural richness	respecting the historical heritage, unique culture, traditions, and distinctive features of the local population and increasing their values.
9	Physical safety	maintaining and improving the quality of urban and rural areas and preventing physical and visual degradation of the environment.
10	Biodiversity	to support the protection of natural areas, habitats, wildlife, species, and endemism (native species) and reduce their damage, to increase their awareness of maintaining a balance of protection and use during and after these practices.
11	Effective use of resources	reduce the use of finite and non-renewable resources in the development and operation of tourism facilities and services, increase local ownership and national and international awareness when it comes to natural, cultural, and historical values, and use protection balance during and after these practices to increase their awareness.
12	Environmental impact	To reduce air, water, and soil pollution and waste production caused by tourism companies and visitors, inform local residents, business staff and guests, in the context of environmental impact, and disseminate concepts such as "responsible business" and "responsible tourist".

Source: UNWTO 2005, Streimikiene et al. 2021.

These principles refer to the appropriate care, planning, and monitoring of sustainable tourism destinations. Some of these measures include preventing

damage to environmental resources, acting as a force for conservation, development, and implementation of sound sustainable policies in all areas of tourism, installing appropriate systems to reduce pollution caused by tourism developments, adhering to the precautionary principles, respecting the rights and needs of local people, protecting and supporting the cultural and historical heritage of people around the world, and implementing practices responsibly and ethically.

Sustainability sensitiveness has developed rapidly over the last few years, especially after the critical impact of COVID-19. Travel habits are changing and calmer destinations are preferred rather than crowded ones (Lew 2020). In the post-COVID world, changes in sustainable tourism are inevitable. In the future, a balance will be struck between visitor preference, locality, and regulatory constraints (Spalding et al. 2020). In line with this trend, it is foreseen that sustainable tourism will be evaluated with approaches where less developing countries are preferred, local is protected and environmental values, even carbon footprint, are taken into account.

Methodology

In this study, we aimed to develop suggestions for evaluating the potential of Syrian coastal areas in line with sustainable tourism principles. For this purpose, after the sustainable tourism literature review, environmental analyzes of the Syrian coastal areas (Lattakia, Tartous, Ras Al-Bassit, Jableh, Baniyas) were performed. The physical potentials of coastal areas were determined as a result of specific analyzes such as on-site observations, interviews with users of the area, photographing, and map studies. In line with the principles of sustainable tourism, separate proposals about environmental, economic, and social sustainability have been developed for the potentials identified in the coastal areas of Lattakia, Tartous, Ras Al-Bassit, Jableh, and Baniyas. Suggestions developed in this context can ensure the integration of Syrian coastal areas with Mediterranean coastal tourism.

Syrian Coastal Region

Syria is located on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea and has maritime borders with Lebanon, Cyprus, and Turkey. The Syrian coast extends from Tartous Governorate in the south to Ras Al-Basket in the north in two main governorates: Lattakia and Tartous, with a length of 180 km (Figure 1). The Syrian coast is also characterized by cities, villages, historical sites, beaches, forests, mountains, springs, streams, rivers, and lakes. There are several small uninhabited islands on the Syrian coast, and there is the inhabited and well-known island of Arwad, which is a distinct destination for tourists. In the last century, the Syrian coast also witnessed the development of large marine facilities, including a commercial port in Lattakia, a commercial port and an oil terminal in Tartus, and the Baniyas oil port (Dayoub et al. 2018).

Figure 1. *The Location of the Study Area*
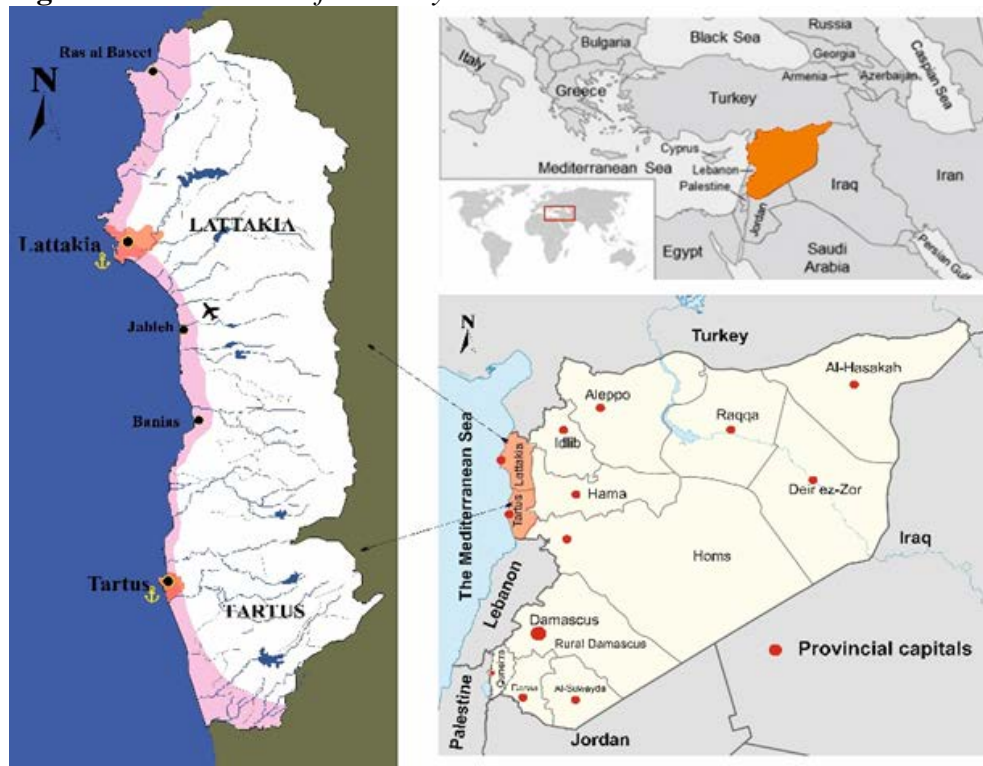
Source: https://2u.pw/M9VPk. Developed by Alalı (15 March 2022).

Transport

A major highway connecting Latakia to Aleppo and the Euphrates Valley was completed after building a railway to Homs. Most of the city can be reached by taxi and other public transport. Buses transport people to various cities in Syria, Lebanon, and Turkey. Latakia train station is located in Yemen Square. Chemins de Fer Syriens ran transport services, including two flights per day to Aleppo and a weekly flight to Damascus via Tartus (Ministry of Transportation 2022, Dayoub et al. 2018). The airport is located 25 kilometers south of Latakia and operates as a national and regional airport with regular flights to Sharjah, Jeddah, Riyadh, and Cairo. Latakia port is also a junction point in six organized cruises between Alexandria, Izmir, and Beirut. Additionally, there are irregular ferry services to Cyprus. Tartous has a developed network of roads and highways. A railway network operated by Chemins de Fer Syriens connects Tartus with the main cities of Syria, although only one passenger line is in service between Latakia and Tartus (Zhao et al. 2017). Unfortunately, most of these flights, both domestic flights between Syrian cities and international flights have stopped working due to the crisis that Syria is going through (Hijazi 2008) (Figure 2).

Figure 2. *Transportation and Water Surfaces on the Syrian Coast*
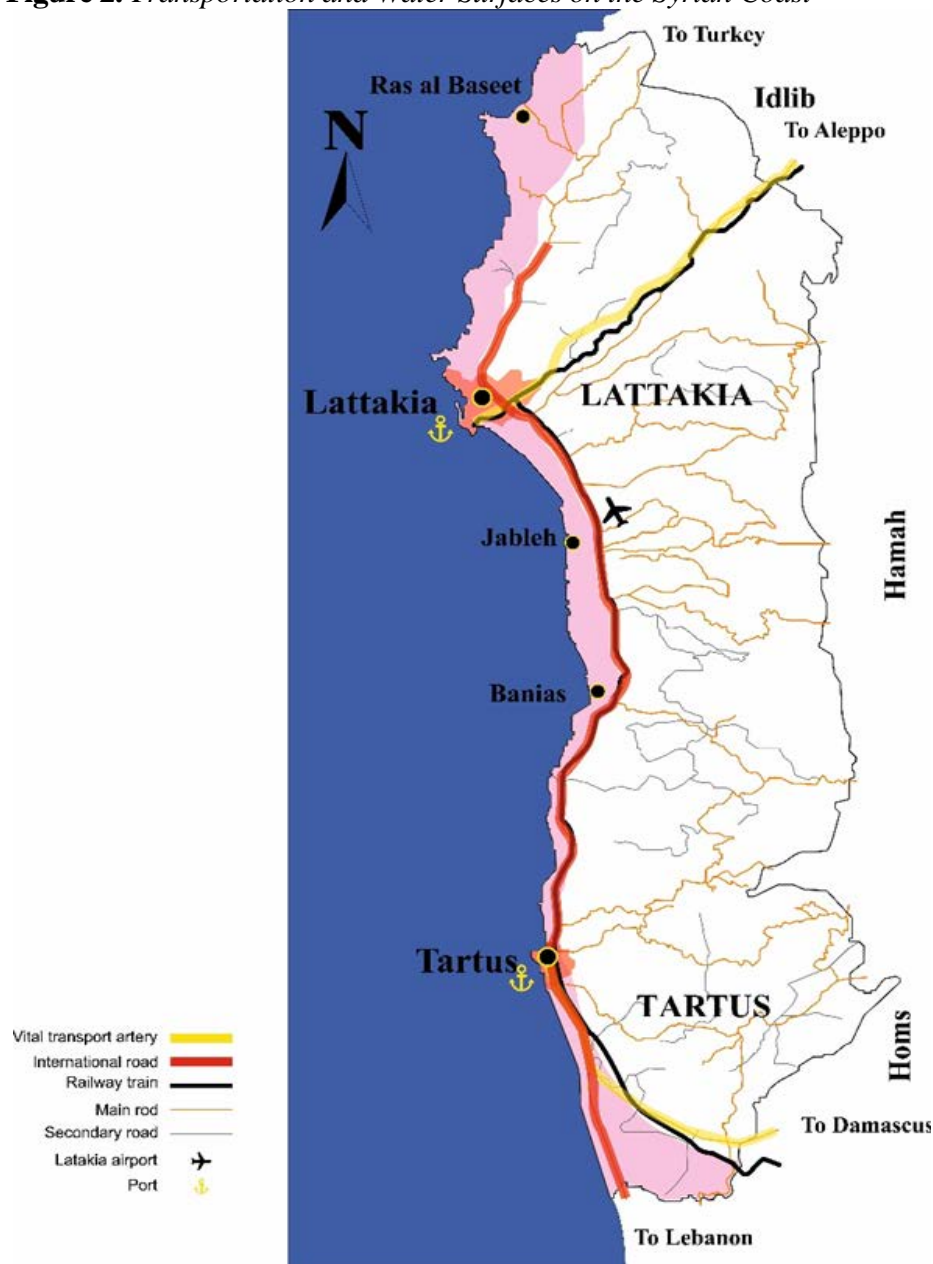
Source: https://2u. pw/Drtlv. Developed by Alalı (17 March 2022).

The Climate

The Syrian coast has a Mediterranean climate, with average temperatures ranging from 12°C (53.5°F) in January to 27°C (81°F) in August, which is the warmest month on the coast (but often Inland too). These are the average temperature in the Sahel, the precipitation is 770 mm (30 inches) per year and is concentrated between October and April, with a maximum in winter. It rains 150/160 mm (5.9/ 6.3 inches) per month in December and January, and during the summer months when there is no rain, the weather is hot and sunny but softened by the breeze.

In the Sahel, the sun shines regularly in the summer, while in the winter there is variability between cloudy and sunny days. The Mediterranean is warm enough to swim from June to October. There is a mountain range behind the coast, which is 1,562 meters (5,125 feet) high and separates the Mediterranean from the mainland (Musa 1997, Dayoub et al. 2018).

Urban Development

The coastline (the area where no construction permit is granted) will be extended to no less than 100m, and the current line is 75m so that the natural area that will be directly or indirectly affected by possible climate change will expand further (Dayoub et al. 2018).

The coastal region faces many problems due to the intensity of land use and controversial demands for its use, which are often harmful to the natural environment. Filling or emptying coastal areas creates economic and environmental problems for coastal tourism and planning, as well as causing physical changes in coastal areas. To date, about a third of the length of the coast has been altered by the construction of structures such as hotels, restaurants, industrial plants, oil factories, and commercial ports, as well as extended rocky areas on the seafronts of coastal cities (UNEP/MAP-METAP SMAP 2009, Hassan and Hui 2020).

Some areas of the shoreline are under threat due to coastal erosion caused by engineering and development projects that do not take into account coastal processes and dynamics. Sea level rise caused by climate change may increase the impact of this erosion in the future (Rizzetto 2020).

Tourism

The Syrian coasts are located in the northwestern part of the Syrian territory and are affiliated with the governorates of Tartous in the south and Latakia in the north. The Syrian coast extends from the Tartous governorate in the south to Ras al-Bast in the north in two main governorates, Lattakia and Tartous, with a length of 180km. It is about 35 nautical miles (65 km) from the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. The Syrian coast includes many touristic, archaeological sites and many vacation spots (Al-Kanamah 2014, Syrian Ministry of Tourism 2022), (Table 2).

Table 2. *Tourist Attractions and Potentials on the Syrian Coast*

	Potentials	Pictures
Jableh	- A coastal city located 29 km south of Latakia. - It has an old port and is bordered by the sea to the west. - It includes an important Roman theater with a capacity of seven thousand spectators. - It includes the Sultan Ibrahim bin Al-Adham Mosque and Al-Mansoori Mosque. - It has ancient baths whose construction dates back to 900-1200 years. - The United Nations recognized the city of Jableh as an ancient city (Ministry of Tourism)	
Baniyas	- Coastal city. - The Banias River flows through it and the Sin River flows near it. - It has several important archaeological sites, including Al-Marqab Castle, the Seventh Tower, and Khan Bait Jabour. - It has a port for fishing and hiking. It has an oil port and an oil refinery (Ministry of Tourism)	
	Potentials	**Pictures**
Lattakia	- Syria's main port on the Mediterranean Sea. - An important city on the Mediterranean Sea. - It is one of the five cities established by Seleucus Nicator in the second century BC and named after his mother (Laodicea). - It contains some antiquities dating back to several historical periods. - It has economic importance as a vital lung and a major port for Syria. - It plays an excellent and active touristic role. With its beautiful nature, beaches, swimming pools, and forests, it is a tourist resort for recreation and swimming. - It is also a starting point for trips across the Syrian coast, whether on the beaches or in the green mountains. - Many events and art festivals are arranged in it. These tourism, cultural, sports, and artistic events attract Arab and foreign tourists.	

Tartous	• The city of Tartus is located in western Syria, on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea. • A historical Phoenician city, which the Phoenicians called "Antarados", and the Byzantines called "Tattoos". • Opposite it lies the island of Arwad (Arados), a historical Syrian island that was a maritime kingdom. • The city includes ancient historical monuments from different civilizations. • It contains the first cathedral in the world, named after the Virgin, and today it has been turned into a museum that includes antiquities from the various Syrian eras and civilizations that passed through Tartous. • The tower of Tartous Castle, the main waterfront of the old city. • Church of the Knights Templar. • The Three Walls of the Old City. • Tartous Church - the popular bath.	
Ras Al-Bassit	• Ras al-Bassit is located in the north of Lattakia Governorate on the Syrian coast. • 50 km away from the city of Lattakia. • The site has varied topography, starting with flatlands on the seashore and rising smoothly towards green hills and forests. • The site offers distinctive views of the Mediterranean, Jabal Al-Aqra, and Jazirat Al-Hammam with open-wide angles, which helps to enrich the visual perspective of the area. • The beach is sandy (Souda sand). In the center of the site, there is the Sheikh Hassan River, which flows into the sea. (Ministry of Tourism)	

Source: Syrian Ministry of Tourism 2022. Developed by Alalı.

Tourism Planning Experiences

The movement of historical and schematic development in Syria did not start until the time of the French Mandate when the French made an urban survey of all the ancient, inhabited cities and archaeological areas such as Ugarit and Amrit. After that, due to the events and coups that Syria experienced until 1971, there was no noticeable organized development in Syrian cities, where the National Tourism Plan of 1974 AD was the first plan of a regional nature. Then, there was a gradual development of the organizational schemes for the major cities, but it was not based on the touristic purposes for the tourism sector, but rather the aim was in general to secure the housing and industrial needs.

Syrian coastal areas are important coastal areas facing the Mediterranean, in this context, there are international, local, regional, and sectoral studies in coastal spatial planning as well as collective studies involving international, local, and different disciplines (Syrian Ministry of Tourism 2022, Al-Kanamah 2014), (Table 3).

Table 3. *Planning Studies for the Tourism Sector in Syria*

Date	Title	Company	Level	Scope
1974	National Tourism Plan	French company Otam	Regional	Syrian Coast Province
1988	Study of the tourism development area on the Syrian coast	General Company for Tourism Studies	Sectoral	Ras Al-Basit, Wadi Qandil, the northern and southern tourist city of Lattakia
2000	Study of the tourism development area on the Syrian coast	Domino's French company	Sectoral	Ras Al-Basit, Wadi Qandil, the northern and southern tourist city of Lattakia
2003	A management plan for the development of the tourism sector. Integrated management of the beach extending between Jbeil - Amchit (Lebanon) to Lattakia (Syria)	Center for Regional Priority Activities, European Union	Regional	The coastal area of Syria and Lebanon
2008	The project to develop the northern coastal region of Lattakia	A modernization project of municipal administration in cooperation with the Ministry of Local Administration	Sectoral	The northern tourist area of Lattakia
2011	Planning study for the Ras al- Bassit area	Consulting office (Damascus)	Sectoral	Ras al-Bassit area

Source: Syrian Ministry of Tourism 2022, Al-Kanamah 2014.

The Current State of Tourism

Because of the damages and losses suffered by the tourism sector, which led to a complete cessation of tourism activity in several cities and regions that witnessed turbulent political events in Syria since the beginning of 2011, especially in hot spots, tourism activity declined significantly in all Syrian cities, even in the capital, Damascus. The number of tourists coming to the country decreased after Western countries and regional countries gave stern warnings to their citizens not to come to Syria.

With the decrease in the percentage of tourist arrivals and tourism investments in Syria by 98% due to the crisis, 371 hotel facilities, 17 of which are in BOT format, and nearly 400 tourism projects, and more than 258,000 workers were stopped working in the tourism sector and partner sectors. The value of direct and indirect damages amounted to approximately 330 billion Syrian pounds, equivalent to 25 billion pounds per month. Since the crisis that Syria is going through has cast a shadow on excessive tourism investments, some projects have stopped working due to their occurrence in hot regions or their proximity to these regions, and the sanctions imposed on Syria have led to the reluctance of most contracted management companies to keep up with these projects (Syrian Ministry of Tourism 2022, Syrian Ministry of Transport 2022).

## Environmental Problems on the Syrian Coast

The most important problems that the coastal strip suffers from are environmental, social, economic, and urban-related problems, for example;

1. **Uncontrolled urban development along the coast:** Rapid urban and industrial development, the absence of pollution control and treatment facilities, as well as uncontrolled development along the coastline, and the random expansion of uncontrolled low-density housing development have led to significant pollution of the coastal and marine environment.

2. **Water pollution:** It is the changes caused by groundwater, riverbeds, and air pollution in the marine environment that limit the effectiveness of beaches, seawater, coastal appearance, and tourism use.

3. **Degradation of vegetation cover and deforestation:** The depletion of forest cover is related to a variety of conflict-related socio-economic factors, including frequent wildfires, illegal logging, agricultural expansion, charcoal production, and weak state institutions in natural resources management and environmental development.

4. **Pollution by solid waste and beach waste:** It is caused by poorly protected landfills exposed to the wind (random dumps, piles of rubbish, and rubble from buildings and engineering projects), rubbish and plastic bags scattered on agricultural land, beaches, valleys, streams, or on roadsides, marine solid waste and dirt dumped on beaches.

Suggestions for Developing the Syrian Coastal Area in the Context of Sustainable Tourism Development

Although Syria has a comparative advantage in attracting tourists with its huge momentum in historical and cultural sites and its low prices, its share in world tourism is still far below its status and potential. Tourism in Syria still faces major obstacles that limit its growth, including the lack of investment in infrastructure and basic services, the lack of professional human and technical workforces, especially after the outbreak of the conflict in 2011, and most importantly, the lack of a policy to develop the tourism sector and promote and market its products. In addition, the tourism industry in Syria has been affected by the political and security events prevailing in the region, and the lack of security and stability will remain a major obstacle to the real development of this important sector (Figure 3, Table 4).

After reviewing the literature, material capabilities, and maps of the Syrian coast, a number of proposals were put forward for the development of the Syrian coastal area in the context of sustainable tourism development.

Figure 3. *Proposals for the Development of the Syrian Coast*
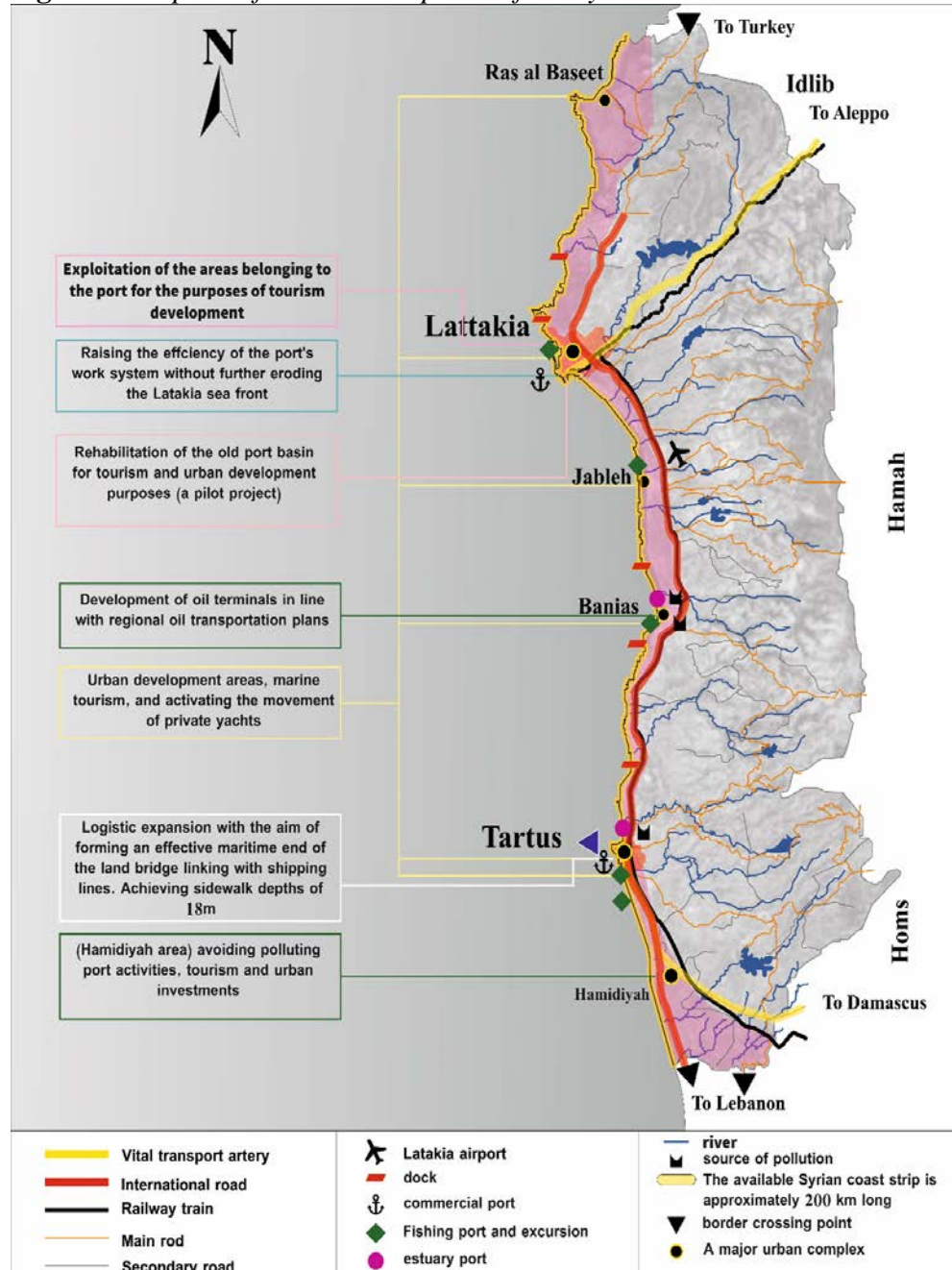
Table 4. *Suggestions for Developing the Syrian Coastal Area in the Context of Sustainable Tourism Development*

	Objectives	Indications/Suggestion
The Environment	Improving the quality and continuity of the environment and landscape	▪ Increasing the area of green land ▪ A survey of the general concept indicating general satisfaction with environmental conditions
	Minimizing the impact of new facilities on the interface	▪ Increasing the number of new facilities taking into account traditional construction compared to previous years
	Reducing the impact of transportation	▪ Reducing the number of cars in the city center compared to previous years
	Reducing the amount of waste (especially on the beach)	▪ Increasing the number of recycling bins on the beach ▪ Increasing the number of trash cans on the beach
	Reducing untreated wastewater	▪ Improvement of seawater quality manifested by blue quality
	Improving the landscape on the beach	▪ Increasing the number of trees on the beach and in the back area parallel to the beach
Economy	Improving the quality of the tourism product	▪ Introducing at least two tourist attractions based on traditional implementations
	Extension of the tourism season	▪ Increasing the number of days of the tourist season to more than 120 days
	Increasing the quality of visitor experience	▪ The results of the surveys aimed at measuring tourists' understanding of the quality of the experience indicate that the expectation of quality service is increasing.
	Developing the tourism brands for the sector	▪ A survey of tourists shows their recognition of the distinctive image of the studied sector
	Defining and applying the concept of destination management	▪ Creating a tourism development plan
	Developing simultaneous marketing of the sector as a unique and distinct destination	▪ Developing clear intent visual campaigns
	Introducing the image of catering, recreation, and accommodation facilities	▪ Conducting surveys on the perception of tourists on any topic
	Increasing the local population's share of tourism income	▪ Increasing domestic revenues from tourism
	Increasing the proportion of local products in the tourism sector	▪ Increasing the number of hotels offering local products ▪ Increasing the number of restaurants serving meals and local foods ▪ Increasing the number of accommodation facilities that reinforce the traditional identity
Social	Supporting the quality of life in the sector	▪ Increasing GDP
	Respecting the cultural and historical heritage	▪ Respect for cultural and historical heritage should be expanded

Discussion

The aim must be to develop the Syrian coast and beaches as a distinct destination for tourism within the natural environment and present them as a high-quality tourism site, therefore, the coast was divided into several sectors to make it easier to deal with the coast.

Sector (1) Ras al-Bassit: The development and reserves of Ras Al-Bassit and avoiding continuous and intense construction near the sea provide natural spaces and create the greatest pleasure for tourists.

Sector (2) Latakia: It is logical that the unjust tourism sector development of Lattakia should be stopped and that this is accompanied by a high-level tourism plan that allows the area to renew the depleted resources and relieves pressure on the polluted environment.

Sector (3) Jableh: The area constitutes a planning area for diverse and sustainable tourism according to the region's rich environmental, cultural, and heritage data.

Sector (4) Baniyas: The unjust tourism development of the Baniyas sector must be stopped, and this must be accompanied by a high-level tourism plan that

secures the area's renewal of isolated resources and relieves pressure on the polluted environment in estuaries due to oil and industrial pollutants.

Sector (5) Tartous: The area bounded between the Protectorate of the Prophet Matta, the archaeological fortress of Suleiman, and the Sheikh Dib Citadel constitutes an important and rich tourist planning area that is connected to multiple service axes, providing great flexibility in dealing with mountainous ridges and ensuring sustainability in tourism development (Figure 4).

Figure 4. *The Division of the Syrian Coast into Sectors*
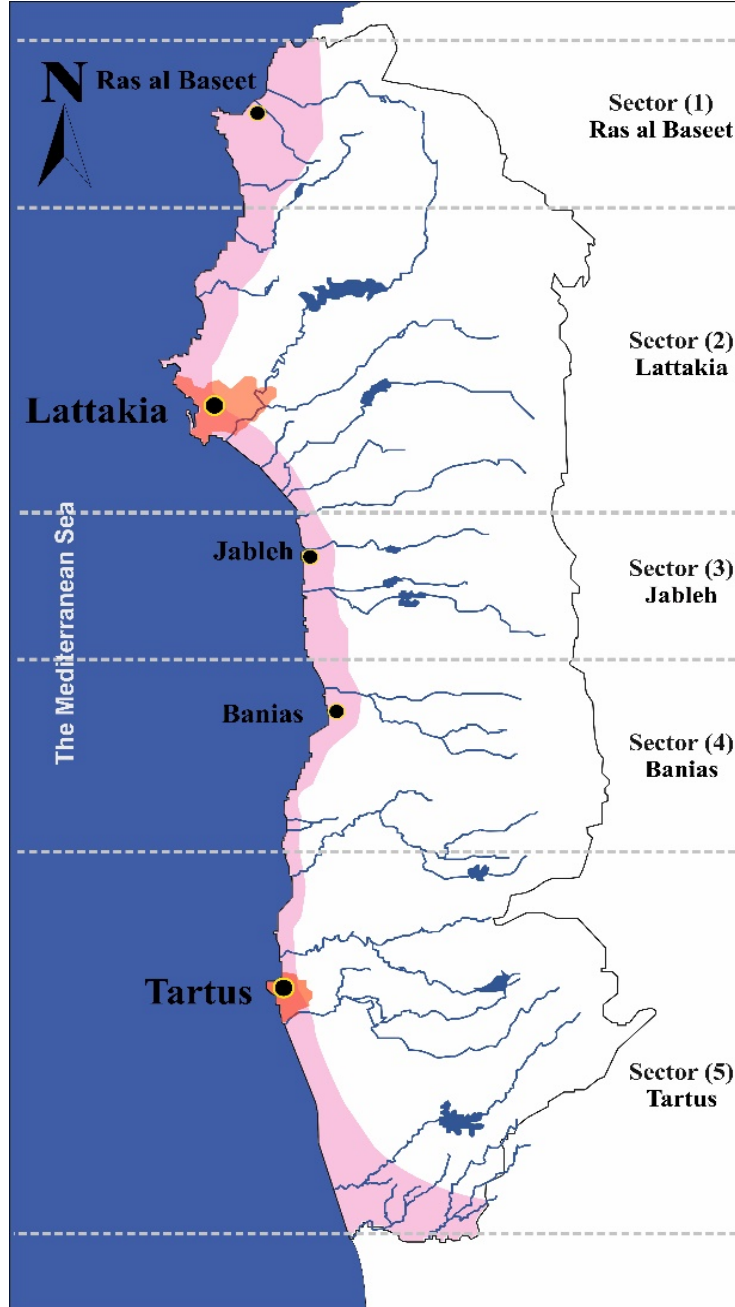
Source: Developed by Alalı (17 May 2022).

Recommendations

As a result of the above research and on-site monitoring analysis, the following recommendations should be realized in the Syrian coastal areas considering principles of sustainable tourism:

Economical Sustainability

1. Economic growth
    - Expanding Lattakia Airport and establishing an investment mechanism in the tourism sector (increasing international travel and activating a contracting carrier system and air transport between governorates).
    - Encouraging and organizing internal and external cruise ships and striving to complete the construction of ports in Ras Al-Bassit, Jableh, and Banias, and achieving the integration of tourist ports.
    - Using scientific methods to gain more attractive and relevant economic ownership while preserving historical influences and ensuring sustainability factors.
2. Local development
    - Improving all tourism features and possibilities in the field of investment and formulating attractive and high-quality tourism products that meet the needs of the tourism market.
    - Diversifying travel and product models, targeting new travel markets, and developing existing travel markets.
    - Investing in Archeology and History
3. Quality of workforce
    - Establishing tourist ports and modern passenger terminals separate from commercial ports and terminals.

Social Sustainability

4. Ensuring social participation and gender equality
    - Improving the level of service for the existing tourist areas:
5. Visitor satisfaction
    - Creating landscaped gardens with pavilions and simple service toilets around the archaeological sites.
6. Local oversight
    - Arranging an exhibition of marine tourism on the Syrian coast, inviting Mediterranean countries, organizations, and travel agencies.
    - Religious tourism can be encouraged.
7. Social welfare
    - Improving the level of service for cultural and archaeological sites.

8. Cultural richness
   - Building Phoenician cities that simulate ancient city life and create a market for handicrafts that inspire life in Ugarit and Amrit

Environmental Sustainability

9. Physical safety
   - Developing tourism management plans for archaeological sites and implementing sound and light shows at the sites.
10. Biodiversity
    - Establishment of zoos within an integrated ecological framework and the use of unusual local biotypes (biodiversity).
11. Effective use of resources
    - Building a comprehensive tourism project, providing facilities, encouraging qualified investment, and achieving balanced and sustainable tourism development.
    - Encouraging investment in projects and activities such as water sports city cable cars, etc.
    - Encouraging eco-tourism (nature-friendly) and exploration tourism to provide the needs and equipment for investing in the existing reserves.
12. Environmental impact
    - Developing and strengthening infrastructures necessary to build tourist facilities.
    - Developing travel vehicles and modernizing border crossings and tourist service centers.

Conclusion

As a result of the determination of the on-site observations, interviews with users, photographing and map studies, and an analysis of the Syrian coastal areas and in line with the suggestions and criticisms of the area, we suggest that it is necessary to develop the Syrian coast for tourism considering its contribution to the sustainability of the area and development of tourism revenues.

Therefore, in addition to increasing the environmental awareness of all segments of society and the tendency to solve environmental problems, it is necessary to increase the interest in the protection of the environment and natural resources. It also improves infrastructure and public services. Linear urban growth along the beach must be halted. The natural beaches, water resources, and marine habitats should be protected from pollution. In addition, the expansion of polluting industrial investments must be reduced and the environmental sensitivity of those in charge must be increased. The role of oil ports and estuaries for sustainable development must be activated in a highly efficient and technical way. Attention should be paid to the development of regulatory mechanisms and plans to ensure various development needs-investments and housing demands.

In this direction, the results of the study are as follows:

1. It is very important not to abandon and urbanize the Ras Al-Bassit, which has large green spaces, a sandy beach, and coasts where the mountains meet the sea in line with sustainable eco-tourism and the prevention of marine pollution.

2. Lattakia, which has a lot of tourism potential, can contribute to sustainable tourism if the areas belonging to the port are exploited for the purposes of tourism development and archaeological areas are operated in line with sustainable tourism. It is also important to stop the uncontrolled urban sprawl on the coastline and reduce pollution caused by waste and sewage water.

3. Jableh is the area between Siano Hill, the Castle of Bani Qahtan, and the Cedars and Shuh Reserve, since this region has diversification based on rich environmental, cultural, and heritage facts, it is very important to consider it as an ecological tourism area.

4. In Baniyas, there is an oil refinery and an oil port, so if pressure is reduced on the polluted environment due to oil estuaries and industrial pollutants, this will contribute to environmental development.

5. Tarsus is an important area rich in tourism potential. Therefore, the pollution of ports and urban activities, which negatively affect sustainable environmental development and tourism investment, must be avoided.

The development of coastal areas and the protection and sustainability of the seas are extremely important. We have to keep the water clean; we have to protect the ecosystem because these are the parts of the cycle. In this direction, it is extremely important to use the coasts with the understanding of ecological and sustainable tourism.

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