

## Strategic key points of improvement of ecotourism at southern part of Isparta Province

Ahmet Tolunay\*

Süleyman Demirel University, Faculty of Forestry, Isparta, Turkey

\* Corresponding author: ahmettolunay@sdu.edu.tr

**Abstract:** The Isparta Province is located on the western area and the central part of the Mediterranean Region. It is at the center of the "Lakes Region". The high and hilly grounds of the province are surrounded by natural borders, such as the Sultan Mountains from the northeast and east, the southern extensions of the Beyşehir Lake and Göl Mountains, higher parts of the Antalya Basin from the south, the Karakuş Mountains, Söğüt Mountains, Burdur Lake and Ağlasun and Bucak plateaus from the west and southwest. The land of the Isparta Province is hilly in general. In addition to the mountains reaching a height of 3.000 meters, also the plains characterized as lowlands and valleys as well natural lakes of different sizes in the region define the natural structure of the province. The province has an altitude of approximately 1.050 m. The Isparta Province is one of the provinces comprising the highest number of lakes and ponds within its borders in Turkey and even across the world. All or parts of the Lakes of Eğirdir, Beyşehir, Gölçük, Kovada and Burdur are located within the borders of the province. Isparta Province, east to west, north to south, is a region with extremely large geographical diversity. Geographic locations and locations as the natural environment integrated with our villages, nature based on all kinds of sports activities (mountaineering, trekking, paragliding, horseback excursions, rafting, biking and motor trips, etc.), organized possible. Farms or villages for leisure tourists who choose the "natural flavors to" be here, given that the waters, forests, mountains, prevent pollution, agriculture and livestock depend on traditional modes of production survival of great importance. In short, a place of rural tourism and culture for the continuity of nature conservation is essential. This work was carried out in two stages. The sources of ecotourism and their potentials have been investigated in the first stage. At this stage, the potential of ecotourism destinations has been identified. SWOT analysis was used as a research method. These destinations are; Kızıldağ National Park, Kovada Lake National Park, Kasnak Oak Natural Reserve Area, Sığla Forest Natural Reserve Area, Yazılı Canyon Natural Park, Gölçük Natural Park, Başpınar Natural Park, Isparta City Forest, Historical Ayazmana Promenade, Natural Monuments, Caves, Mountains, Tablelands, Hunting Areas. In the second stage ecotourism supply and demand situation has been researched. Ecotourism supply and demand aspects of the assessment to be able to demand located at the tourists, on the supply side the rural population, trades and operators and responsible for regulation in the public sector to the persons involved the method has been applied by individual interviews. Eight strategic areas have been identified in order to make the Isparta Province become a brand in ecotourism by 2023. These strategies are; development and planning strategies, educational strategies in the tourism sector, promotional and marketing strategies, strategies on diversification of tourism, strategies on the development of archaeological and cultural assets, infrastructure and transportation strategies, strategies on visitor management, monitoring strategies.

**Keywords:** Ecotourism, Ecotourism destinations, Supply and demand relations, SWOT analysis, Questionnaire, Isparta