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Promoting Sustainable Tourism in Algeria: Between Investing in Opportunities and Overcoming Challenges

تعزيز السياحة المستدامة في الجزائر: بين استثمار الفرص وتجاوز التحديات

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Abstract:

This research paper aims to shed light on the theoretical frameworks related to sustainable tourism development, with a focus on analyzing the economic performance and development reality of the tourism sector in Algeria. The available economic potentials that can be employed to enhance sustainable growth in this sector were reviewed, in addition to studying the structural and institutional obstacles that hinder the achievement of development goals related to sustainable tourism. Considering that Algeria has a diverse and rich natural capital, it has a competitive advantage that enables it to achieve sustainable economic growth, provided that effective strategic policies are adopted to overcome the challenges facing the implementation of the sustainable tourism development model.

Keywords: Tourism, Sustainable Development, Sustainable Tourism Development, Sustainable Tourism, SWOT.

JEL Classification Codes: Z3,Q01,Z32,C19.

ملخص:

تهدف هذه الورقة البحثية إلى تسليط الضوء على الأطر النظرية المتعلقة بالتنمية السياحية المستدامة، مع التركيز على تحليل الأداء الاقتصادي والواقع التنموي لقطاع السياحة في الجزائر. تم استعراض الإمكانيات الاقتصادية المتاحة التي يمكن توظيفها لتعزيز النمو المستدام في هذا القطاع، إلى جانب دراسة العقبات الهيكلية والمؤسساتية التي تعيق تحقيق الأهداف التنموية المرتبطة بالسياحة المستدامة. وباعتبار الجزائر تمتلك رأس مال طبيعي متنوعًا وغنيًا، فإنها تتمتع بميزة تنافسية تمكنها من تحقيق نمو اقتصادي مستدام، شرط تبني سياسات استراتيجية فعّالة للتغلب على التحديات التي تواجه تنفيذ نموذج التنمية السياحية المستدامة.

كلمات مفتاحية: السياحة،التنمية المستدامة، التنمية السياحية المستدامة ، السياحة المستدامة ،SWOT.

تصنيفات JEL : Z3، Q01، Z32،C19.

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1- Introduction:

Since independence, Algeria has focused on developing the tourism sector as an economic tributary, taking advantage of the infrastructure inherited from the colonial era. During the period 1962-1966, the promotion of tourism resources was strengthened and the construction of infrastructure in tourist expansion areas was planned. The year 1966 witnessed a strategic start with the issuance of the Tourism Charter, which included the sector within the development plans to stimulate economic growth and enhance the competitiveness of the Algerian tourism product.

By the end of the twentieth century, tourism had become an independent sector influenced by the energy transition and the concept of sustainable development. With the increasing need to preserve the environment and natural resources in light of the depletion of fossil fuels, the importance of adopting sustainable tourism emerged to ensure a balance between the well-being of tourists and the development of local communities.

Algeria has diverse natural and geographical resources, and an infrastructure suitable for developing the tourism sector as a sustainable alternative to hydrocarbons. The state has adopted the Master Plan for Tourism Development (SDAT 2025) as a strategic reference for achieving sustainable tourism development within the framework of the National Plan for Regional Development (SNAT 2025), with the aim of achieving a balance between social justice, economic efficiency, and environmental conservation, with a focus on development prospects until 2030.

1.1. Posing the problem: What are the challenges facing the implementation of the sustainable tourism strategy in Algeria?

1.2. Study methodology: The study adopted the descriptive analytical approach, addressing sustainable tourism in terms of concepts, characteristics, objectives, principles and standards. It also used SWOT analysis to evaluate the reality of the tourism sector in Algeria, based on official data and studies related to sustainable tourism development.

1.3. Importance of the study: This study draws its importance from the strategic role of the tourism sector in Algeria, relying on its rich natural, material, and human resources. It aims to highlight the sector's current state and analyze the development strategies, focusing on resource investment and addressing existing challenges.

1.4.Study plan: The study, in addition to the introduction and conclusion, is organized around two main axes as follows:

The study, within its theoretical framework, addressed sustainable tourism in terms of its characteristics, objectives, principles, and standards. It then moved on to analyze the components of the tourism sector in Algeria and the reality of sustainable tourism based on data and statistics, with the use of SWOT strategic analysis.

1.5. Previous studies:

- Hathat Al-Sheikh**, The Reality of Sustainable Tourism in Algeria and Its Role in Protecting the Environment,** PhD Thesis in Management Sciences, University of Algiers 3, 2022/2023. This study aims to review the basic concepts of sustainable tourism development, with an analysis of the tourism sector in Algeria, and highlight its importance by evaluating its current reality and anticipating its future trends.
- Noura Suleiman Faissa**, Tourism Development in Algeria,** an article published in the Journal of Social Studies and Research, Volume 10, Issue 03, 2022, pp. 357-374. The study showed that the tourism sector in Algeria still faces many challenges that hinder its effectiveness, most notably the low quality of the tourism product, weak management of the sector, in addition to the lack of expertise in organizing tourism activities.
- Labkhour Sabrine and Kabiri Fatiha**, The tourism sector - reality, components and prospects,** Journal of Economic Policies in Algeria, University of Tlemcen, Special Issue (9), June 2022, pp. 1-14. The study concluded that Algeria has rich tangible and intangible tourism resources, but it still faces challenges in the weakness of its infrastructure, especially in the areas of transportation and communications, including land networks (including desert), maritime, air, and others.
- Salah El-Din Sharit and Najai Malika**, Opportunities and Challenges of Sustainable Tourism Development in Algeria**, an article published in the Journal of Commercial Research and Studies, Issue 4, September 2018, pp. 103-116. The study concluded that the tourism sector in Algeria still suffers from a noticeable delay compared to neighboring countries, but it has witnessed serious interest since the 2000s through the 2025 Horizons Tourism Development Master Plan.

2. The theoretical framework of the study:

Sustainable tourism is a major trend in contemporary tourism, aiming to balance the development of the sector with the protection of the environment and local communities. With growing awareness of the importance of preserving natural and cultural resources, governments and tourism companies are seeking to adopt strategies that ensure the long-term sustainability of the sector.

2.1. Definition of sustainable tourism:

The European Union defines sustainable tourism development as an activity that aims to preserve the environment and achieve economic and social balance, while improving the architectural level. Sustainable tourism seeks to meet the needs of tourists and local communities without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. It is based on resource management in a way that achieves economic, social and aesthetic benefits, while preserving cultural identity, the environment and biodiversity. (Ibrahim & Abdul Nabi, 2007, p. 04)

Salah El-Din Abdel Wahab defines sustainable tourism development as a development

process based on a comprehensive and planned scientific study, within an integrated framework that includes economic, social and environmental aspects, whether at the state level or in specific areas that enjoy natural resources and cultural landmarks. (Wahab, 1991, p. 182)

In 2004, the UN and the World Tourism Organization defined sustainable tourism development as applying management practices to all types of tourism and destinations. It emphasizes balancing environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects to ensure the sector's long-term sustainability. (Organsation, 2007)

Sustainable tourism aims to balance the needs of visitors with the requirements of host communities, contributing to future development. This is done by managing resources to meet economic, social and spiritual needs, while preserving cultural and environmental heritage and protecting biodiversity to ensure the sustainability of life and ecosystems.

The World Tourism Organization defines sustainable tourism as tourism that takes into account its short- and long-term economic, social and environmental impacts. It aims to meet the needs of visitors, workers, the environment and local communities, while achieving a balance between the economic, social and environmental dimensions of tourism activities. (Programme, 2005)

Based on the above, it can be said that sustainable tourism depends on understanding the components of the natural, social and economic environment, and aims to develop a tourism product that enhances civilization and biodiversity, while supporting local development. It is an important tool for sustainable development, requiring the sustainable exploitation of resources to ensure their continuity.

Sustainable tourism can be defined as the balanced use of tourist sites by receiving an appropriate number of visitors who are aware of the importance of these sites and how to deal with them responsibly. It aims to manage economic, social and natural tourism resources in a rational manner that achieves productivity while maintaining environmental balance.

Comparison between sustainable tourism development and traditional tourism development according to the following table:

Table (1) : Comparison between sustainable tourism development and traditional tourism development

Traditional tourism development	sustainable tourism development
rapid development	Development in stages
It has no limits	It has certain limits and power
Short term	Long term
Quantum Square	Hibiscus tourism (type)
Overseas Development Operations Management	Development management by local people

source: (Mohammed, 2015, p. 27)

2.2. Characteristics of sustainable tourism development:

The most important characteristics of sustainable tourism development are as follows:

- Tourism that achieves social justice by involving local communities in decision-making and meeting their needs, which enhances their contribution to the development of the tourism sector.
- Tourism that achieves social justice by involving local communities in decision-making and meeting their needs, which enhances their contribution to the development of the tourism sector.
- Tourism that is committed to available resources, and reduces negative impacts by rationalizing energy consumption and treating waste in effective ways to ensure sustainability and protect the environment.
- Tourism that provides opportunities for entertainment, education and cultural exchange for current generations while preserving resources and the environment for future generations.
- Tourism that meets the needs of tourists while at the same time protecting the local community and the environment.
- Tourism that integrates with other economic sectors to promote comprehensive and sustainable growth within the national economy.
- Tourism that is in line with local, regional and international strategies to achieve sustainable development at various levels.

2.3. Sustainable tourism development goals:

In 2015, the United Nations Member States adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs), which is considered an important step towards promoting sustainable tourism, as it provides support and guidance to countries in this vital field. The plan aims to eradicate extreme poverty in developing countries, especially the poorest and least developed, promote the fight against discrimination and equality, and work to reduce the risks of climate change and global warming by 2030. This plan is based on promoting human development and its integration with local development strategies according to economic and social conditions, as the tourism sector contributes to achieving these goals through economic, social and environmental aspect

2.3.1. Economic objectives of sustainable tourism development:

The economic objectives focus mainly on enhancing the role of tourism in achieving economic growth, and include achieving full employment, promoting economic development at the regional and local levels, and improving the balance of payments. The following are the most important economic objectives related to this area.

2.3.1.1. Eradicating poverty in the world:

Tourism, thanks to its rapid growth, can contribute to the creation of diverse job opportunities and positively impact the local community. Sustainable tourism development focuses on combating extreme poverty by supporting small and medium enterprises, in addition to helping the most vulnerable groups such as women, youth and the elderly.

2.3.1.2. Eradicating world hunger:

Sustainable tourism supports food security and quality by promoting sustainable agriculture, using local products in hospitality, and reducing harmful chemicals. It encourages blending modern and traditional farming methods, while additional income improves local communities' engagement, enhancing the long-term value of tourism.

2.3.1.3. Raising the efficiency and productivity of work and economic growth:

Sustainable development is an economic goal linked to sustainable tourism development, given its vital role in the local and global economy. One in 11 people worldwide works in the tourism sector, either directly or indirectly. Applying the principles of sustainable tourism contributes to providing job opportunities for youth and women, supporting sustainable tourism projects, preserving traditional products and enhancing the culture of the local community.

2.3.1.4. Development of industry, appropriate technology and infrastructure:

Sustainable tourism development relies on sustainable infrastructure, with tourism helping governments maintain and enhance it to attract tourists and investment. It also supports sustainable industries and economic growth. In Algeria, solar and wind energy suit the climate, and legislation requiring hotels to use renewables can boost green technology demand, cut long-term costs, and reduce reliance on fossil fuels.

2.3.2. Social objectives of sustainable tourism development:

The social and civilizational objectives are to enhance the social and urban development of individuals, and increase their awareness of the history and geography of their homeland. They also aim to expand the opportunities for enjoying tourism and entertainment for citizens and foreign tourists alike. They can be summarized as follows:

2.3.2.1. Raising the level of health and feeling happy:

Sustainable tourism development contributes to improving public health and increasing happiness by investing tourism revenues in improving health services, which enhances prevention and treatment and reduces diseases and child mortality. Promoting community happiness also aims to achieve comprehensive well-being, a goal supported by the United Nations through the World Happiness Report to encourage countries to adopt development strategies that focus on the happiness of all.

2.3.2.2. Eradicating illiteracy and improving the education system:

Providing opportunities for continuing education and training qualified personnel is one of the most important means of supporting sustainable tourism development. The tourism sector contributes to stimulating education and training, facilitating the transfer of trained workers locally and internationally, and providing opportunities for youth and women in vocational training programs within sustainable tourism projects.

2.3.2.3. Preventing discrimination and achieving gender equality:

Sustainable tourism contributes to women's empowerment by providing job opportunities and income through participation in small and medium tourism projects, which enhances their active role in the local community.

2.3.2.4. Developing the local community and achieving regional balance:

Sustainable tourism is an effective means of promoting local development and bridging social and regional gaps. Ecotourism contributes to the development of urban and rural areas, enabling communities to invest their potential according to their social and cultural needs, and enhancing their integration into the global economy.

2.3.3. Environmental objectives for sustainable tourism development:

Environmental goals are essential to achieving sustainable development, as they focus on protecting the environment through the efficient use of natural resources, reducing pollution, and preserving the environment by adhering to the maximum capacity of tourist areas. The most prominent of these goals include:

2.3.3.1. Protection of aquatic life in seas and oceans:

Protecting the marine environment and beaches is an essential part of sustainable development, especially in coastal and island countries such as Egypt. Beach tourism contributes to the green economy and provides job opportunities, while preserving marine ecosystems requires effective management of beach tourism areas to achieve sustainable tourism and environmental protection.

2.3.3.2. Providing sanitation and clean water supply:

Tourism contributes to improving sanitation and waste management services and providing clean drinking water, while controlling sources of pollution in water, air and soil. It also supports the use of clean technologies to ensure sustainable water use.

2.3.3.3. Widespread use of clean energy sources:

The increasing reliance on clean energy is helping to transform tourism into a major driver of renewable energy sources such as solar and wind, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and supporting efforts to combat climate change.

2.3.3.4. Creating sustainable cities and communities:

Sustainable tourism development contributes to improving infrastructure, protecting natural and cultural heritage, which enhances tourism. This includes investing in the green economy to develop transportation and reduce pollution, as well as preserving archaeological sites and creating green cities and buildings that benefit residents and tourists.

2.4. Principles of sustainable tourism:

Given the importance of the above points, and in order to implement local policies and practices related to sustainable tourism plans, the following principles must be taken into account: (Programme, 2005, pp. 8-9).Principle of strategic planning: Tourism planning, development and management should be an integral part of regional or national strategies, ensuring integration between the various stakeholders. Planning should include short- and long-term objectives, taking into account all directly or indirectly influential elements.

2.4.1. Ethical principle: Agencies, institutions, groups and individuals should respect the religious values and social customs of host communities, while preserving their environment and economy. Traditional patterns of community life and behaviour, including political aspects, should be preserved.

2.4.2. Sustainability principle: Tourism must be planned and managed in a sustainable manner to ensure the protection of the natural and human environment in the host area, while achieving maximum economic benefit from it.

2.4.3. Principle of equity: Tourism should contribute to a fair distribution of revenues between the parties responsible for tourism promotion, members of the local community and the host region.

2.4.4. The civilizational and cultural principle: Comprehensive studies must be conducted on the nature of tourism and its effects on the population and the cultural environment before and during the development process, with this information being made available to the local community to enable it to protect the cultural heritage and achieve positive impacts**.**

2.4.5. Environmental protection principle: A comprehensive analysis of all environmental, social and economic aspects must be conducted before starting any tourism or development projects, to ensure that the needs of the environment and society are met in an integrated manner.

2.5. Sustainable tourism criteria:

In this context, we review the most important principles related to it. (Nasreen, 2017, p. 46)

2.5.1. Interaction criterion: Since tourism affects and is affected by other economic sectors, these sectors must be identified and the interconnections between them analyzed.

2.5.2. Systems Integration Criterion: Given the complexity of the tourism sector and its interconnectedness with multiple industries such as accommodation, catering, and entertainment, strategies specific to each sub-sector must be developed to ensure the sustainability and integration of the tourism industry as a whole.

2.5.3. Previous experience criterion: The success of sustainable tourism development depends on benefiting from previous experiences and organizing them within the framework of clear scientific concepts.

2.5.4. Natural resources priority criterion: To achieve sustainable tourism development, priority must be given to the protection of natural resources and ecosystems, and their conversion into protected areas when necessary**.**

2.5.5. Guidance and allocation criteria: The categories that benefit from the application of sustainable tourism development must be identified and clear criteria must be set that define the concept of sustainability according to their needs.

3. Analytical study of sustainable tourism in Algeria:

Algeria has a strategic global geographic location and a rich cultural and natural diversity. A modern transportation network according to international standards, including highways, ports and airports, which enhances ease of movement, supports it. Media and communication also contribute to connecting it to the world, allowing access to international destinations within a few hours.

The tourism sector is one of the most prominent strategic sectors in which Algeria has enormous potential, thanks to its rich natural, cultural and historical diversity. These advantages qualify it to be one of the most important tourist destinations in Africa. However, the development of this sector requires continuous support and optimal exploitation, in line with the country's economic development policies.

In an effort to achieve sustainable development in general, and sustainable tourism development in particular by 2030, the state’s interest is evident through its adoption of the National Territorial Development Plan (SNAT), which includes the Tourism Development Plan (SDAT 2030) (Mostawy, 2019, p. 77) .

Through legislative texts, in particular Law No. 03/01 of February 17, 2003, on sustainable tourism development, the State seeks to provide a suitable and stimulating environment to

promote investment in the tourism sector, create new job opportunities, and restore Algeria's position as a distinctive tourist destination. The law also aims to make the best use of cultural, historical, natural and tourist heritage assets, while ensuring the protection and preservation of the environment. (Law No. 03-01 of 03-17-2003 relating to the sustainable development of tourism, 2003, p. 05)

3.1. Tourism components in Algeria:

Algeria is characterized by a rich diversity in its tourism resources, whether natural, God-given, or historical, resulting from the succession of civilizations. It also has material components that qualify it to be a leading global tourist destination.

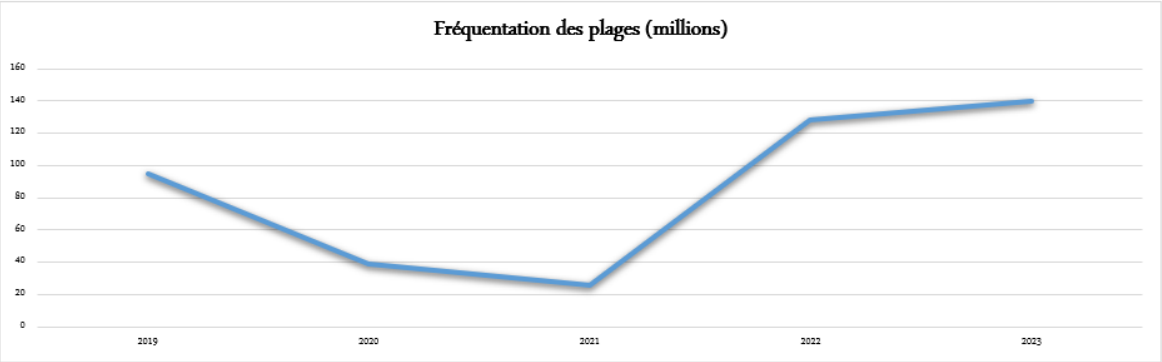
3.1.1. Natural capabilities:

Algeria has a natural diversity that includes geographical location, climate, terrain, coastal strip, and thermal areas, which makes it a unique tourist destination. It is the largest country in Africa and the Arab world, and the tenth largest in the world in terms of area, and enjoys a strategic location in North Africa, the Maghreb, and the Mediterranean Basin.

3.1.1.1. Coastline: The Algerian coastline extends over 1,641.32 km and includes 14 coastal states and 136 municipalities overlooking the sea, making it a prominent tourist destination. The coast has 617 beaches, of which 437 are licensed for swimming, which enhances the potential for developing health and leisure tourism through thalassotherapy resorts. However, there are currently only three resorts (two public and one private). The coast is at its peak during the summer season, when demand increases annually.

Table (02) : Tourist frequencies during the summer season for the period 2019-2023 (unit million)

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total number of beaches	581	565	585	602	617
Number of licensed beaches for swimming	426	362	409	432	437
Number of beaches not licensed for swimming	155	203	176	170	180
Frequencies on beaches unit per million	95	39	26	128	140



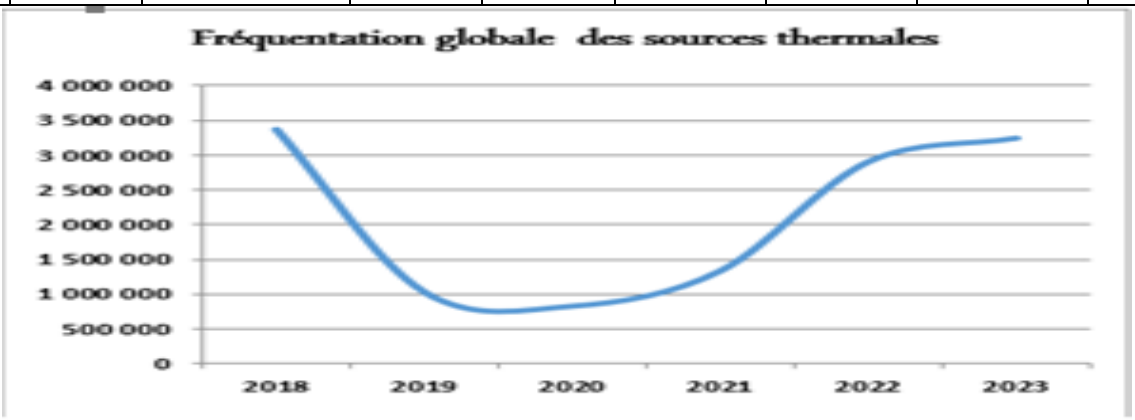
Source: Official website of the Ministry of Tourism and Traditional Industry https://www.mta.gov.dz

3.1.1.2. Topographic **variation:** In the north, Algeria includes hill plains such as the Mitidja Plain, Oran, and Annaba, followed by mountain ranges such as the Chelia Mountains in the Aures to the east, the Lalla Khadija peak in Djurdjura, and the snow-capped Chrea Mountains in the center. In the south, the Saharan Atlas extends across vast areas and includes virgin areas. The Ahaggar and Tassili Mountains are home to Algeria's highest peak, Tahat, at 3,003 meters (Habal & Haroush, 2019, p. 277).

3.1.1.3.Thermal springs: Algeria has about 282 thermal springs, 34 of which are used in traditional ways, which gives it great potential to develop thermal tourism and attract local and international tourists. Studies have proven the effectiveness of these waters in treating chronic diseases such as rheumatism, respiratory and skin diseases. There are currently 90 concessions for the exploitation of thermal waters, in addition to about 100 springs that can accommodate new projects. The following table shows the development of thermal tourism in Algeria between 2018 and 2023.

Table(03) :Development of the thermal tourism situation in Algeria during the period 2018-2023. (labkhour & Kabiri, 2022, p. 04)

Year	number		Active institutions				Projects	
	Thermal springs	Grants for the exploitation of thermal springs	Hamwi complex		Thalassotherapy Center		In progress	Stopped
			generality	particular	generality	particular		
2018	282	83	8	15	2	1	38	19
2019	282	92	8	18	2	1	43	20
2020	282	93	8	18	2	1	44	20
2021	282	93	8	19	2	1	44	20
2022	282	92	8	21	2	1	25	22
2023	282	93	8	24	2	1	25	18

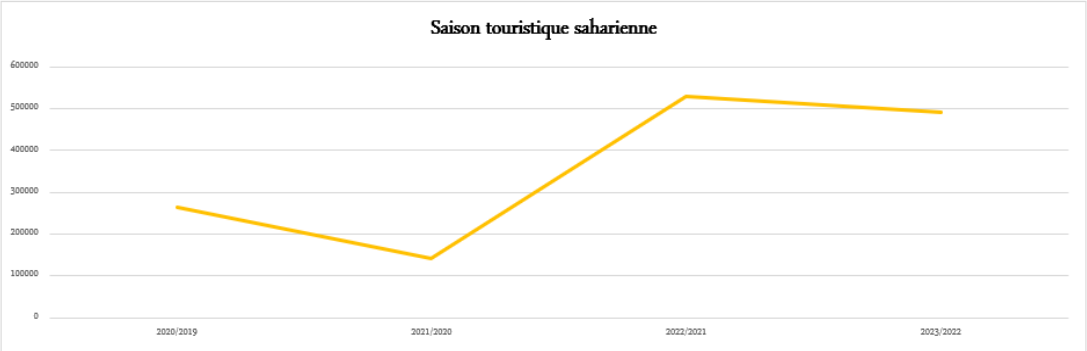


Source: Official website of the Ministry of Tourism and Traditional Industry www.mta.gov.dz

3.1.1.4. Desert area: The Algerian desert constitutes about 85% of the country's area, and is considered one of the most beautiful unspoiled natural areas in the world. This desert represents a major tourist product that gives Algeria an international competitive advantage thanks to its uniqueness and exceptional attractiveness, which qualifies it to enter the global tourism market effectively. Among the most prominent tourist attractions are the city of Ghardaia, Timimoun, and the ancient palaces that are distinguished by their unique beauty. The social simplicity and human kindness of the Bedouin communities also add a distinctive character, in addition to the Hoggar and Tassili Mountains, classified as a world cultural heritage by UNESCO. (Habal & Haroush, 2019, p. 279)

Table(04) :Development of desert tourism during the period 2019-2023:

Year	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
Residents	240927	127418	512871	465025
Foreigners	23501	12857	15035	26827
the total	264428	140275	527906	491852



Source: Official website of the Ministry of Tourism and Traditional Industry www.mta.gov.dz.

3.1.2.Historical assets: Algeria is characterized by a rich cultural and historical wealth that makes it an ideal destination for cultural tourism. Its cultural diversity reflects the influence of successive civilizations, as its cities preserve monuments dating back to the Roman, Phoenician, and Numidian civilizations. Algeria also includes about 1,000 sites and monuments classified as national heritage, in addition to 7 sites listed as part of the tangible world heritage of UNESCO, namely: Beni Hammad Castle, Timgad, Kasbah of Algiers, Tipaza, M'zab Valley, Djemila, and Tassili N'Ajjer.

3.1.3. Material components:

3.1.3.1. Accommodation: The Algerian authorities pay great attention to developing tourist accommodation facilities, as development plans have been implemented to enhance accommodation capacities to effectively meet the needs of tourists. During 2023, 56 hotel establishments were added with a capacity of 6,171 beds, bringing the total number of hotel establishments to 1,638 with a total capacity of 151,052 beds, compared to 145,526 beds in 2022. The following table shows the development of tourist accommodation in Algeria during the period 2018-2023.

Table (05) : Development of tourist accommodation in Algeria during the period 2018-2023.

Classification	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
urban	74712	80470	81863	85577	93906	97721
coastal	32581	32926	32971	33588	37586	39059
desert	5477	5895	6299	6620	6946	6986
Hamwi	4502	4502	4598	4598	5189	5339
climatic	1883	1883	1883	1883	1883	1883
the total	119155	125676	127614	132266	145526	151052

Source: Official website of the Ministry of Tourism and Traditional Industry www.mta.gov.dz.

3.1.3.2. Transport: Transport services are a key element in promoting tourism development. Algeria has a network of national, state and municipal roads, in addition to the East-West highway extending for about 1,200 kilometers. However, this network remains insufficient compared to the vast area of the country, especially in desert areas. The railway network has recently witnessed significant development, through the electrification of some lines and the introduction of high-speed trains, which contributed to the modernization of the network, especially on the medium lines. Urban transport services have also been improved via trams and metro, but these efforts are still insufficient to fully meet the needs.

3.2. The reality of tourism in Algeria: (labkhour & Kabiri, 2022, pp. 06-08)

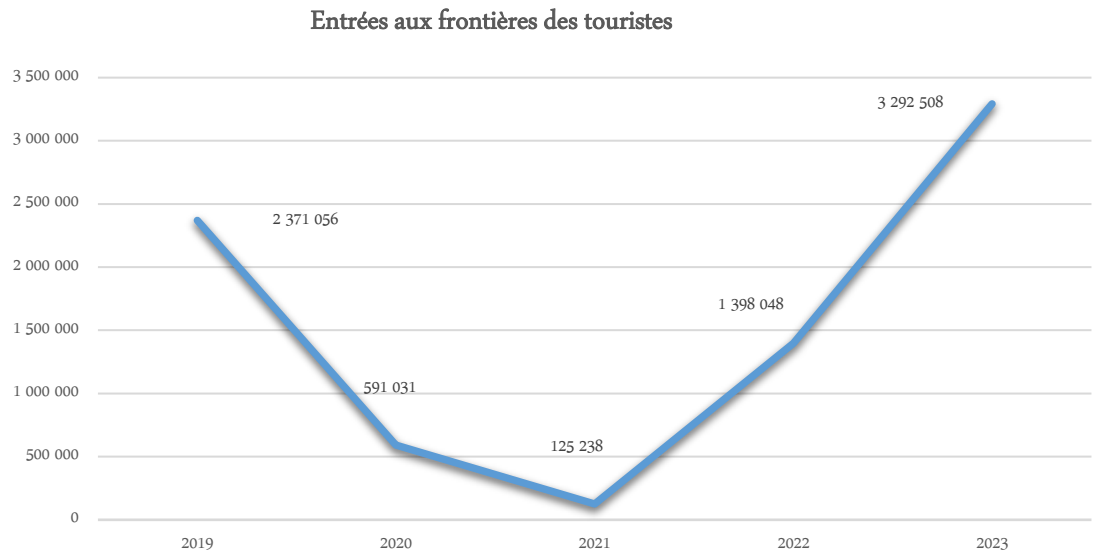
This point aims to evaluate the status of the tourism sector in the national economy by analyzing the most prominent tourism indicators, based on the latest statistics of the Ministry of Tourism and Traditional Industry and data from the World Tourism Organization.

This is done by reviewing and discussing a set of key indicators that show tourism activity data in digital form.

3.2.1. Development of the number of incoming tourists: The indicator of the growth in the number of tourists is considered one of the most prominent indicators that measure the performance of the tourism sector and its ability to attract visitors. The following table shows the number of tourists arriving in Algeria during the period 2010-2020 (in million tourists):

Table (06) : Number of tourists arriving in Algeria during the period 2019-2023

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Foreigners	1 933 778	509 736	66 995	757 380	2 195 519
Growth rate	-	-73,64%	-86,86%	1030,50%	189,88%
Algerians residing abroad	437 278	81 295	58 243	640 668	1 096 989
Growth rate	-	-81,41%	-28,36%	999,99%	71,23%
grand total	2 371 056	591 031	125 238	1 398 048	3 292 508
Growth rate	-	-75,07%	-78,81%	1016,31%	135,51%



Source: Official website of the Ministry of Tourism and Traditional Industry www.mta.gov.dz.

It is clear from the previous table that the number of tourists arriving in Algeria went through two main stages:

- **Phase 1 (2019-2021)**: This period witnessed a sharp decline in the number of tourists, reaching only 125,238 tourists, with an average negative growth rate of -76.94%. This is due to preventive measures and border closures due to the outbreak of the Corona pandemic (Covid-19).
- **Second phase (2021-2023):** This phase was marked by a significant increase in the number of tourists, reaching 3.292 million tourists, a record number in the history of Algerian tourism. This is due to the improvement in security and economic conditions, in addition to the facilitations related to visas for desert tourism and tourism investment support policies. Of the total tourists, foreigners accounted for 66.68%, equivalent to 2.195 million tourists, an increase of 189.88% compared to the previous year, while the overall growth rate during the period amounted to 135.51%.

It is clear from the above that the number of tourists coming to Algeria has witnessed a relative increase, but it is still limited compared to other countries. This is due to the impact of the policies followed in the country to attract tourists, which have not yet achieved the desired results on a large scale.

3.2.2. Tourism balance sheet status 2010-2020 (unit million dollars)

The balance of payments is one of the main indicators that assess the economic status of any country, as it reflects the impact of different sectors in strengthening the country's reserves. In this context, the tourism sector stands out as one of the important factors in this balance. The following table shows the contribution of the Algerian tourism sector to the balance of payments during the period 2010-2020.

Table - 07 - Contribution of the Algerian tourism sector to the balance of payments during the period 2010-2020

Years	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Expenses	716	595	598	531	679	762	556	632	542	670
Revenue	234	300	295	326	316	347	346	171	197	140
Balance	392-	295-	303-	205-	363-	415-	310-	461-	345-	530-

Source: https://data.worldbank.org

The table shows that the tourism balance witnessed a continuous deficit between 2010 and 2019, as a result of the increase in tourism spending compared to revenues. The deficit peaked in 2019, reaching $530 million, which negatively affected the balance of payments.

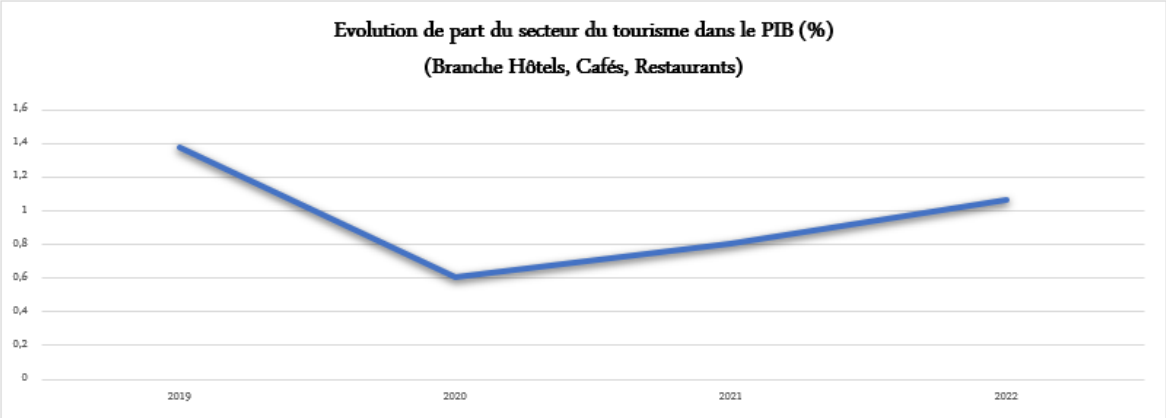
3.2.3. Contribution of the tourism sector to the GDP (2016-2021)

The following table shows the percentage of the tourism sector's contribution to PIB during the period 2019-2021.

Table 08 - Contribution ratios of the tourism sector to PIB during the period 2019-2021.

Years	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Contribution rate in Pib%	1.38	0.61	0.81	1.06	1.47

Note: GDP excluding hydrocarbons



Source: Official website of the Ministry of Tourism and Traditional Industry www.mta.gov

The tourism sector is one of the main sectors that contribute to supporting the gross domestic product in many countries. From the previous table, we note that the percentage of tourism's contribution to the gross domestic product went through two stages: the first between 2019 and 2020, where it declined to 0.6% due to the outbreak of the Corona pandemic, and the second between 2020 and 2023, where it recovered to reach 1.47%. Despite the great natural and material capabilities that Algeria possesses in this field, this percentage remains low, which reflects the continued dependence of the Algerian economy on hydrocarbon revenues, and the

lack of significant progress in developing the tourism sector.

3.2.4. Tourism investment projects: (Mansour & Bin Turki, 2022, p. 151)

Tourism investment is defined as the allocation of financial resources to develop tourism facilities within a suitable environment that includes advanced infrastructure and tourist attractions, in addition to appropriate legislation. Tourism investment has witnessed a significant increase since 2018, because of the decline in oil prices, which prompted the state to direct more funds towards this sector in light of the decline in foreign exchange reserves. The size of tourism investment projects has developed compared to other sectors, and the type of tourism establishments exploited has diversified according to quality standards, as shown in the following table.

Table 09: Status of tourism projects and operating tourism establishments (2018-2023)

	Years						
	Type of tourism projects	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
number	Projects under construction	799	889	804	747	701	674
Growth		-	11.26	-9.56	-7.08	-6.15	-3.85
number	Stopped projects	181	239	308	342	427	455
Growth		-	32.04	-28.87	11.03	24.85	6.55
number	Completed projects	67	107	87	111	92	89
Growth		-	59.7	-18.69	27.58	-17.11	-3.26
number	Exploiting institutions	225	225	226	246	250	241
Travel agency		200	200	200	222	231	258
Heat stations		7	7	7	7	7	7

Source: Official Website of the Ministry of Tourism, Traditional Industry and Family Work, statistics, basic components of tourism, at the link: www.mta.gov.dz

It is clear from the previous table:

- The number of tourism projects under construction increased from 799 projects in 2018 to 889 projects in 2019. However, the number later decreased from 804 projects in 2020 to 674 projects in 2023, recording a negative growth rate of 3.75%, as a result of the effects of the Corona pandemic and the resulting economic crisis.
- The number of completed tourism projects fluctuated, rising from 67 projects in 2018 to 89 projects in 2023, although 2020 recorded a negative growth rate of 18.69%.
- The number of completed tourism projects fluctuated, rising from 67 projects in 2018 to 89 projects in 2023, although 2020 recorded a negative growth rate of 18.69%.
- The exploited tourism establishments witnessed a remarkable development during the same period, as the number of hotel establishments increased from 225 in 2018 to 241 in 2023. The number of tourism and travel agencies also increased from 200 agencies in 2018 to 258 agencies in 2023, while the number of thermal stations remained stable at 7 stations during the same period.

3.2.5. The tourism sector's contribution to employment:

The following table shows the employment shares and percentages in the tourism sector during the period from 2010 to 2019:

Table (11) :Employment shares in the tourism sector during the period 2010-2019 (Unit A).

Years	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Number of workers	213	220	224.028	256.775	261.28	265.803	270.317	300	308.027	320

Source: Official website of the Ministry of Tourism and Traditional Industry www.mta.gov

The table shows the growth of employment in the tourism sector in Algeria between 2010 and 2019 thanks to investments, but employment is still below the required level, which calls for strengthening efforts and increasing projects to create sustainable job opportunities.

3.3. SWOT analysis of the reality of sustainable tourism in Algeria:

SWOT analysis is a strategic tool for assessing four key elements: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. It was developed in the 1960s and adopted by companies to analyze their situations and evaluate their projects, and over time similar methods have emerged based on the same idea.

3.3.1. Strengths:

- Algeria has a strategic location in the heart of the Maghreb, and is a major gateway to Europe and the Mediterranean Sea with a coastline extending 1,200 kilometres.
- Algeria has 225 tourist expansion areas with an area of 56,472 hectares, 95% of which are distributed across 17 states.
- Algeria's tourist attractions are distributed over six main regions: the coast, the northern mountains, the Atlas, the high plateaus, the Saharan Atlas, the oases and the Sahara Desert.
- Algeria has a rich historical heritage thanks to the succession of multiple civilizations such as the Phoenician, Roman and Islamic, and includes thousands of historical sites, including 7 sites registered as UNESCO World Heritage Sites.
- Algeria's natural resources, especially thermal sources, provide ideal opportunities for developing health and medical tourism.

3.3.2. Weaknesses:

- In the 1960s and 1970s, socialist policies hindered investment in tourism in Algeria, as tourists were seen as a threat to security and social values, leading to the sector being neglected in favour of productive sectors such as industry.
- The lack of entertainment and necessary facilities has prompted many Algerians to spend their holidays in Tunisia, where its travel agencies offer programmes that suit the income of Algerian families.

- Lack of tourist accommodation capacity, deterioration of hotel infrastructure and catering services, in addition to the high cost of services compared to the local population, as the percentage of its facilities that meet international standards does not exceed 23%.
- The lack of awareness among the Algerian population about the importance of tourism hinders their support for the sector through projects or providing a safe environment for the tourist. The tourist must be viewed as a welcome guest and a positive impression must be made to encourage him to return.
- The lack of familiarity of travel agencies with modern technologies and their backwardness in electronic management methods, in addition to the poor qualification of workers in the sector, especially in hotels, affects the quality of the tourists' experience. In addition, foreign travel agencies dominate the reception of tourists in the southern regions and determine their destinations.
- Banking and financial services are inadequate, with a lack of modern payment methods in banks that receive tourists. The laws also do not support the localization of tourism operations, and the methods of financing tourism investment contradict the nature of the sector.
- Lack of qualified personnel to lead sustainable development plans, especially in the use of renewable energy in the infrastructure of the tourism sector.
- The absence of transportation for tourist delegations that provides comfort and safety is an obstacle to the development of the tourism sector.
- The concentration of tourist facilities in major cities raises the costs of services such as hotels, restaurants and cafes.

3.3.3. Opportunities:

- Lack of tourism data and the absence of an effective statistical system based on information and communication technology.
- Draw a sector vehicle should be stabled at a tourism format bank at a media system. Leave it to investors at the information you want.
- A strategy for investing in sustainable tourism must be adopted to benefit from the global growth in environmental and cultural tourism, as Algeria has suitable natural and cultural assets, including renewable and environmentally friendly energy resources.
- Strengthening partnership with the private sector will contribute to increasing investment in tourism infrastructure and improving the quality of services.
- Adopting modern technology, such as smartphone apps for bookings and tourist guides, can improve the tourist experience and attract more visitors.
- Exploiting Algeria's tourist markets could attract tourists from regions such as Asia and Latin America, which are beginning to discover new destinations.

3.3.4. Threats:

- Poor maintenance of tourist sites and their failure to fully exploit them, in addition to the absence of attractive and distinctive tourist materials.
- The tourism industry faces several challenges, such as the problem of tourist real estate,

complex procedures, bureaucracy, corruption, weak incentives for investment, and financing problems.

- Marketing plays an important role in promoting tourism through effective strategies, as it contributes to increasing the return from current sectors and attracting new markets. It depends on exploiting available opportunities and analyzing the gap between the current and future market using tools such as the Ansoff Matrix to achieve growth.
- Poor quality of facilities and services and lack or deficiency of basic facilities such as roads, electricity, communications, and sewage networks.
- Lack of tourism services and the lack of necessary facilities to receive tourists, due to the small number of airports, ports, hotels, restaurants and transportation companies.
- Lack of specialized educational institutions and poor qualification of workers, in addition to the lack of tourism training programs necessary to improve services and enhance the efficiency of the workforce.
- It is necessary to improve the performance of human resources in tourism institutions to meet current challenges, as investing in human resource development is more effective than material investment. This includes enhancing capabilities through education and training to improve workers' skills and achieve the best results.

conclusion:

Sustainable tourism aims to achieve a balance between tourism development and the preservation of the environment, society and the economy, thus contributing to local development without causing harm. The principles of sustainable development can be applied to all types of tourism, making it an essential part of responsible tourism.

Despite Algeria's efforts to boost the tourism sector and exploit its resources, the results are still below expectations due to the low quality of tourism products, poor marketing, and lack of experience in managing this strategic sector.

Tourism policy should be reviewed to make the most of natural resources and make the country a distinguished tourist destination. This requires creating an attractive environment for tourists, exploiting resources effectively, and enhancing community awareness of the importance of tourism to achieve sustainable development, while promoting tourism culture among individuals to support the desired goals.

Recommendations:

- Algeria needs to build tourist facilities to improve the quantity and quality of services available, as it suffers from a lack of infrastructure despite its natural potential and historical landmarks. Administrative and legislative obstacles that hinder investment in this sector must also be addressed.
- The goal is not only to adopt policies and strategies, but to implement them and transform them into tangible economic, social and environmental value. Sustainability of tourism requires first an appropriate thought and culture, so awareness and knowledge about

sustainable tourism must be enhanced, especially among those working in the sector, and its positive impact on society.

- Respecting cultural and traditional elements, such as the tent, carpet and traditional tea in desert tourism, is essential to providing an authentic experience that characterizes the region.
- Enhancing tourism components requires making the most of them, by following the experiences of leading countries, especially in exploiting renewable energy and environmentally friendly strategies.

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