Contents lists available at EKB

Minia Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Research

Journal homepage: https://mjthr.journals.ekb.eg/

Evaluating Sustainable Tourism Planning for Terrestrially Protected Areas in Egypt

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Keywords

Sustainable tourism planning, terrestrial protected areas, Egypt.

Abstract

In Egypt, a country known for its natural and cultural legacy, effective management of terrestrial protected areas is critical for conserving biodiversity, preserving cultural treasures, and promoting local livelihoods. However, sustainable tourism planning in terrestrially protected areas is critical for balancing conservation goals, socioeconomic growth, and tourist happiness. Uncontrolled visitation, ecological deterioration, and cultural exploitation all pose significant hurdles to tourist sustainability in these locations. The purpose of this research is to evaluate the current state of sustainable tourism planning for Egypt's terrestrially protected areas, with a particular emphasis on analyzing existing policies, strategies, and practices in relation to international standards and best practices. The methodology of the study was based on descriptive analysis using 108 questionnaires distributed to environmental researchers for Environmental Affairs Agencies in the governorates of Cairo and the Red Sea. Several statistical methods were used in the research via SPSS V.25.

The findings emphasize the importance of stakeholder engagement, improved regulatory frameworks, and incorporating community participation and environmental conservation concepts into tourism planning processes. Finally, research seeks to support evidence-based decision-making, foster stakeholder engagement, and contribute to the long-term management of Egypt's terrestrial protected areas. By providing actionable insights and recommendations aim to guide policymakers, government agencies, conservation organizations, local communities, and other stakeholders in implementing sustainable tourism practices that promote the long-term ecological integrity and socio-economic sustainability of protected areas in Egypt.

Printed ISSN 2357-0652 **Online ISSN** 2735-4741

1. Introduction

Sustainable tourism planning in terrestrial protected areas gained more attention in recent years as a means of aligning conservation aims with socioeconomic development and tourist satisfaction **(Gössling *et al.*, 2020; Weaver & Lawton, 2021).**In Egypt, a country known for its unique natural landscapes and rich cultural legacy, terrestrial protected areas serve an important role for conserving biodiversity, preserving historical sites, and fostering sustainable tourism **(El-Banna *et al.*, 2019; Ali & El-Banna, 2020).** However, the sustainability of tourism within these protected areas meets several obstacles including unsupervised visitation, damage to the environment, and cultural exploitation **(Lindberg *et al.*, 2018; El-Sayegh *et al.*, 2021).**

Despite the growing importance of sustainable tourism planning, there is still a significant gap in the evaluation of current practices and their compliance with international standards and best practices in Egypt's terrestrial protected areas. The existing literature primarily focuses on larger tourism development strategies or individual case studies, leaving out the comprehensive evaluation of sustainable tourism planning frameworks **(Gössling *et al.*, 2020; Canton, 2021)**. As a result, there is an urgent need for scientific study that systematically examines the success of sustainable tourism planning in Egypt's terrestrial protected areas and makes evidence-based recommendations to improve sustainability.

Research Problem:

The research problem focuses on the multiple challenges associated with unmanaged access, environmental degradation, and cultural exploitation in Egypt's terrestrial protected areas. Existing tourism planning frameworks may fail to deal with the complex interaction between conservation goals, socioeconomic development, and visitor satisfaction in these areas **(Abdallah *et al.*, 2019)**. In addition, there is an absence of broad research evaluating the efficiency of current sustainable tourism planning approaches compared to international standards and best practices **(Khafagi *et al.*, 2012)**. This research problem emphasizes the importance of critically evaluating existing tourism planning practices, identifying challenges to sustainability, and suggesting evidence-based solutions to conserve natural and cultural heritage while supporting socioeconomic development in Egypt's terrestrial protected areas **(Attia *et al.*, 2021).**

Research Questions:

RQ1: How do terrestrially protected areas in Egypt balance conservation objectives with socio-economic development and visitor satisfaction within their tourism planning frameworks?

RQ2: What are the key challenges and barriers hindering the effectiveness of sustainable tourism planning in terrestrially protected areas in Egypt?

RQ3: What are the perceptions and experiences of stakeholders, including local communities, conservation authorities, tourism operators, and visitors, regarding sustainable tourism planning in terrestrially protected areas in Egypt?

RQ4: How can regulatory frameworks be strengthened and enforcement mechanisms enhanced to ensure compliance with sustainable tourism principles and conservation objectives in Egypt's terrestrially protected areas?
RQ5: What recommendations can be proposed to policymakers, conservation practitioners, tourism stakeholders, and local communities to enhance the sustainability of tourism planning and management in terrestrial protected areas in Egypt?

Research Aim:

The purpose of this research is to evaluate the current status of Egypt's terrestrial protected areas' sustainable tourism planning, with an emphasis on comparing the country's policies, plans, and practices to international standards and best practices. Through a methodical examination of the advantages, disadvantages, prospects, and risks linked to existing tourism planning strategies, this research aims to highlight important elements that require enhancement and provide suggestions for enhancing the sustainability of tourism management methodologies in Egypt's terrestrial protected areas. **There are specific aims are targeted as follows:**

1. Assessing the practices, policies, and strategies that currently control the planning of sustainable tourism in Egypt's terrestrial protected areas.
2. Evaluating how Egypt's terrestrial protected areas incorporate socioeconomic growth, conservation goals, and tourist satisfaction into their frameworks for tourism planning.
3. Assessing how well Egypt's terrestrial protected areas' current tourist planning techniques adhere to global norms and best practices for environmentally friendly tourism administration.
4. Investigating how stakeholders—local people, conservation authorities, travel agencies, and tourists—perceive and interact with sustainable tourism planning in Egypt's terrestrial protected areas.
5. Examining the effects that tourism has on Egypt's terrestrial protected areas in terms of the environment, society, and economy, as well as the consequences for sustainability in general.
6. Investigating ways to increase capacity-building programmes, community involvement, and stakeholder engagement in order to improve sustainable tourism planning in Egypt's terrestrial protected areas.
7. Investigating how Egypt's terrestrial protected areas can comply with sustainable tourism principles and conservation goals by strengthening regulatory frameworks and improving enforcement methods.

Research Importance:

The importance of assessing sustainable tourism planning for terrestrial protected areas in Egypt lies in its potential to address critical conservation and socio-economic challenges facing these valuable natural landscapes. Egypt's terrestrial protected areas are not only repositories of biodiversity and cultural heritage but also significant contributors to local economies through tourism. However, the rapid growth of tourism in these areas poses threats to their ecological integrity and cultural authenticity. By assessing the sustainability of present tourism planning methods, this research aims to find areas for improvement in order to guarantee that tourism

development corresponds with conservation aims while also respecting the needs of local people. . Furthermore, with tourism serving as a significant engine of economic growth in Egypt, sustainable tourism planning is critical for maximizing socioeconomic advantages from protected areas while minimizing impact on the environment and local communities. As a result, this research is critical for driving policy reforms, informing management decisions, and encouraging stakeholder collaboration in Egyptian terrestrial protected areas to establish a balance between conservation and tourism development.

2. Literature Review

2.1.Concept of Sustainable Tourism Planning

In order to ensure the long-term sustainability of the tourism industry, sustainable tourism planning entails developing and managing tourism activities in a way that minimizes adverse effects on the environment, respects local cultures, and enhances the socioeconomic well-being of host communities **(Canton, 2021).**

The process of strategically planning, arranging, and managing tourism-related activities to balance economic growth, environmental preservation, and socio-cultural preservation is known as sustainable tourism planning. The ultimate goal is to meet the needs of both current visitors and host communities while preserving opportunities for future generations **(Fennell, 2015).**

In order to ensure the long-term viability and resilience of tourism destinations, sustainable tourism planning is the intentional and methodical process of creating tourism initiatives that maximize economic benefits for local communities, minimize environmental degradation, and respect cultural heritage **(Hall *et al.*, 2020).**

2.2.Characteristics of the sustainable tourism planning:

Characteristics of sustainable tourism planning typically include:

1. Engage different stakeholders (local communities, government agencies, corporations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in decision-making to ensure their perspectives and needs are considered **(Gössling *et al.*, 2020).**
2. Environmental Conservation: Protecting and conserving natural resources, ecosystems, and biodiversity to reduce negative impacts of tourism operations. **(Weaver *et al.*, 2022).**
3. Cultural Preservation: Respecting and maintaining local cultures, customs, and heritage places, while also fostering authentic experiences that benefit both tourists and host communities **(Jamal & Robinson, 2019).**
4. Economic Benefits Distribution: Distributing tourism earnings and benefits equally among local people and businesses to promote socio-economic development and reduce poverty **(Dredge *et al.*, 2020).**
5. Destination Management: Putting into practice efficient destination management techniques to control the number of visitors, build infrastructure, and plan land usage to prevent congestion and resource degradation **(Page& Connell, 2014).**

These characteristics highlight the holistic and integrated approach to sustainable tourism planning, which seeks to achieve a balance between economic development, preservation of the environment, and socio-cultural welfare.

2.3.Objectives of the sustainable tourism planning:

Objectives of sustainable tourism planning typically include:

1. Environmental Protection: To maintain the integrity of the environment, reduce harmful impacts on ecosystems, biodiversity, and natural resources. Encourage sustainable practices **(Gössling *et al.*, 2020).**
2. Community Empowerment: Promote local participation and decision-making in tourism development, assuring economic and social benefits for communities **(Jamal & Robinson, 2019).**
3. Cultural Preservation: Preserve and promote cultural heritage, customs, and local expertise to promote cultural interaction and appreciation between visitors and indigenous **(Timothy& Nyaupane, 2017).**
4. Economic Development: Promote economic growth and diversity in host communities through tourism investments, job creation, and entrepreneurship **(Dredge *et al.*, 2020).**
5. Enhancing the Visitor Experience: Offer visitor's unique, high-quality, and responsible tourist experiences that live up to their expectations while minimizing cultural and social disruptions and respecting local customs **(Weaver *et al.*, 2022).**

The previous objectives seek to attain balance among financial progress, preservation of the environment, and socio-cultural welfare, guaranteeing the long-term sustainability and flexibility of destinations for tourists.

2.4.Indicators of Sustainable Tourism Planning

Sustainable tourism planning indicators are measurable standards used to evaluate the success and advancement of sustainable tourism projects. Here are citations from recent sources for some common indicators:

1. Tourist Satisfaction: Evaluates how satisfied tourists are with the experiences, amenities, and interactions they had while visiting the location **(Hall & Page., 2014).**
2. Carrying Capacity: Determines how many tourists a destination can accept without negatively impacting the ecosystem or visitor experience. **(Weaver et al., 2022).**
3. Resource Efficiency: Assesses how well tourist activities and infrastructure utilize natural resources including land, electricity, and water **(Gössling *et al.*, 2020).**
4. Local Economic Benefits: Indicates how much tourism boosts the local economy by creating jobs, generating income, and fostering the growth of small enterprises **(Dredge *et al.*, 2020).**
5. Cultural Integrity: Evaluates how local customs, heritage, and cultures are promoted and preserved in tourism-related activities while preserving the rights of indigenous people **(Timothy& Nyaupane, 2017).**

6. Environmental Quality: Keeps watch of how tourism-related activities are affecting biodiversity, the quality of the air and water, and the integrity of the landscape **(Weaver *et al.*, 2022).**
7. Community Participation: Assesses how local communities are involved in benefit-sharing strategies, capacity-building programmes, and decision-making processes pertaining to the growth of the tourism industry **(Jamal & Robinson, 2019).**

2.5.Examples of terrestrial protected areas in Egypt:

Egypt's terrestrial protected areas are home to some of the most beautiful and biologically significant landscapes in the entire country, providing essential habitats for a wide variety of flora and fauna. These regions are essential for maintaining ecosystem services, protecting biodiversity, and offering chances for ecotourism and outdoor recreational activities **(Khalil *et al.*, 2020; Gurney *et al.*, 2019).** The terrestrial regions of Egypt have a variety of habitats, each with distinct ecological aspects and cultural importance, such as desert oases, coastal wetlands, hilly areas, and isolated desert stretches **(Ali *et al.*, 2021; El-Banna *et al.*, 2020).**

Terrestrial protected areas in Egypt are threatened by a number of factors, such as habitat deterioration, overexploitation of natural resources, and the effects of climate change, despite their significance for the environment and culture **(Abdallah *et al.*, 2019; Attia *et al.*, 2021).** In addition, these protected areas' fragile natural systems and cultural heritage sites are at risk from tourism-related pressures like uncontrolled visitation and infrastructure development **(Khalil *et al.*, 2020).**

In response to these issues, Egypt is making concerted efforts to improve the management and conservation of its terrestrial protected areas. Collaborative projects combining government agencies, non-governmental organizations, local communities, and foreign partners focus on improving protected area governance, encouraging sustainable tourism practices, and implementing ecosystem-based management procedures. Egypt seeks to guarantee the long-term viability of its terrestrial protected areas and save them for future generations through encouraging stakeholder engagement, funding scientific research, and putting creative conservation initiatives into practice **(El-Banna *et al.*, 2020; Haggag *et al.*, 2021).**

2.6.There's the background information on terrestrial protected areas in Egypt:

2.6.1. Wadi El Rayan Protected Area:

- ***Importance***: Wadi El Rayan, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve recognized for its remarkable desert landscapes, freshwater lakes, and varied species, is situated southwest of Cairo in the Fayoum Governorate in the Western Desert **(Haggag *et al.*, 2021).**
- ***Difficulties***: Wadi El Rayan faces several difficulties, including invasive species, overgrazing, habitat destruction, and water constraint. The natural integrity of the region is also threatened by uncontrolled tourism activities like off-road driving and trash **(Attia *et al.*, 2021).**

2.6.2. Ras Mohammed National Park:

- ***Location:*** With a view of the Gulfs of Suez and Aqaba, it is situated at the southernmost point of the Sinai Peninsula.
- ***Significance:*** Ras Mohammed is widely known for its colorful coral reefs, pristine waters, and abundant marine life. According to **Attalla *et al.* (2020),** it is an essential habitat for sea turtles, reef fish, and fascinating megafauna like whale sharks and dolphins.
- ***Challenges:*** The marine ecosystems of Ras Mohammed are seriously threatened by overfishing, coral bleaching, marine pollution, and coastal development. Furthermore, uncontrolled tourism-related activities like diving and snorkeling can worsen environmental deterioration **(El-Sayegh *et al.*, 2020).**

2.6.3. Saint Catherine Protectorate:

- ***Location:*** Situated in the South Sinai Governorate, which includes Mount Sinai and the untamed highlands of the Sinai Peninsula.
- ***Importance:*** The Saint Catherine Protectorate is well-known for its rich natural and cultural history, which includes endemic plant species, historic monastery villages, and distinctive geological formations. It is both a hotspot for biodiversity and a place of pilgrimage for religious travellers **(Ali *et al.*, 2021).**
- ***Challenges:*** The Saint Catherine Protectorate has a number of serious difficulties, including overgrazing, poaching, habitat deterioration, and pressure from tourists. Furthermore, delicate ecosystems are threatened by the effects of climate change, such as extremes in temperature and water scarcity **(El-Banna *et al.*, 2020).**

2.6.4. Gebel Elba National Park:

- ***Location:*** Covering the Gebel Elba mountain range, it is situated in southeast Egypt, close to the Sudanese border.
- ***Significance:*** The rough mountains, varied habitats, and abundant wildlife of Gebel Elba National Park are its defining features. It provides an area for endangered and native plant species, such as desert flora and medicinal herbs **(Khalil *et al.*, 2020).**
- ***Difficulties:*** The main issues affecting Gebel Elba National Park are resource extraction, habitat fragmentation, illicit hunting, and desertification. Furthermore, conservation efforts and the growth of the tourism industry are hampered by inadequate infrastructure and access **(Abdallah *et al.*, 2019).**

2.6.5. Wadi El Gemal National Park:

- ***Location:*** In the Eastern Desert, south of Marsa Alam, on the coast of the Red Sea.
- ***Significance:*** Wadi El Gemal National Park is distinguished by a variety of ecosystems, such as coral reefs, desert wadis, and coastal mangroves. For marine animals, migratory birds, and sea turtles, it provides an essential habitat **(Gurney *et al.*, 2019).**
- ***Difficulties:*** Wadi El Gemal National Park faces serious challenges from overfishing, pollution, habitat damage, and coastal development. Furthermore,

threat factors to marine biodiversity are posed by the effects of climate change, such as rising sea levels and coral bleaching **(Attia *et al.*, 2021).**

2.6.6. El Debbabya Protected Area (Luxor):

- ***Location:*** Close to the historic city of Luxor, along the Nile River in the Governorate of Luxor.
- ***Significance:*** El Debbabya Protected Area is renowned for its distinctive archaeological monuments, history of culture, and wildlife. It includes arid environments, habitats along rivers, and historic sites such as Pharaonic tombs and temples.
- ***Difficulties:*** The El Debbabya Protected Area faces several difficulties, including unlawful excavations, agricultural encroachment, and habitat deterioration. Furthermore, cultural heritage sites and sensitive ecological systems are at risk due to tourism-related pressures such as uncontrolled visitation and infrastructural expansion **(Abdallah *et al.*, 2019).**

2.6.7. Wadi El Alaky Protected Area:

- ***Location:*** Situated in Egypt's Western Desert, in the New Valley Governorate.
- ***Significance:*** The desert wadis, Rocky Mountains, and distinctive geological formations of Wadi El Alaky Protected Area are its defining features. It protects unique plant species and creatures that have adapted to the desert environment.
- ***Difficulties:*** The main difficulties facing Wadi El Alaky Protected Area are resource extraction, habitat fragmentation, and desertification. Sensitive desert habitats are also threatened by off-road driving and unsustainable grazing methods. **(Banna and associates, 2020).**

2.6.8. Saloga & Gazal Protected Area (Aswan):

- ***Location:*** It is located along the Nile River, close to the town of Aswan, in the Aswan Governorate.
- ***Significance:*** Saloga & Gazal Protected Area is noted for its natural beauty, riverine habitats, and cultural significance. It includes wetlands, river islands, and traditional Nubian villages that sustain local livelihoods and serve as migrating birds' habitat.
- ***Difficulties:*** The Saloga & Gazal Protected Area faces several difficulties, including destruction of habitat, water pollution, and soil degradation. Furthermore, the ecological integrity and cultural legacy of this area are at danger due to pressures from the development of cities, tourism, and agricultural expansion **(Abdallah *et al.*, 2019).**

3. Methodology

A descriptive analytical approach is adopted throughout this research, where a questionnaire was prepared and distributed to a random sample of environmental researchers for Environmental Affairs Agencies in the governorates of Cairo and the Red Sea, to achieve the general aim of the research and the objectives.

3.1. Data Collection

Online surveys were used to gather data, and they were designed in a way that was pertinent to the circumstances in order to reduce the number of unreliable responses. They were distributed to (108) environmental researchers for Environmental Affairs Agencies in the governorates of Cairo and the Red Sea during three months from January 2024 to April 2024.

3.2. Determining the Population/ Sample

The target population for this study was staff members who work as environmental researchers for environmental affairs agencies in the governorates of Cairo and the Red Sea. The number of environmental researchers for Environmental Affairs Agencies in the governorates of Cairo and the Red Sea is 542. The researcher used the equation of Stephen K. Thompson to calculate the sample size from the next formula:

$$n = \frac{N \times p(1-p)}{\left[\left[N-1 \times \left(d^2 \div z^2\right)\right] + p(1-p)\right]}$$

Source: (Thompson, 2014)

Where:

(n) Sample size (108)

(N) Indicates Population size (542)

(Z) Confidence level at 95% (standard value of 1.96)

(d) Error proportion =0.05

(p) Is the probability 50%.

As a result a sample of 108 environmental researchers for environmental affairs agencies in the governorates of Cairo and the Red Sea were selected randomly. All the responses were obtained valid.

3.3. Questionnaire Design and Measure

By methodically evaluating the level of sustainable tourism planning in Egypt's terrestrially protected regions, the study seeks to close this gap. In order to do that, a questionnaire instrument and a survey with five main components were used in this descriptive-analytical study. The first section, which deals with demographic data, gives broad details on 108 environmental researchers who work for Environmental Affairs Agencies in the governorates of Cairo and Red Sea. These details include gender, age, years of experience, and educational attainment. Sixteen variables that represented awareness and perception of sustainable tourism planning were included in the second portion. Five variables that indicate sustainable tourism planning were included in the third segment. Four points comprised the fourth segment; the first point represented the Principles of Protected Area Management with five variables. The values (benefits) of protected areas were represented by five variables in the second point. Five variables that represented the Visitor Management Rules were provided in the third point. Five variables that represented stakeholder engagement were included in the fourth point. Nine variables that represented sustainable practices in Egyptian protected areas were included in the fifth point. The questionnaire items

were anchored according to the three-point Likert scale: "1 = disagree, "2 = neutral, and "3 = agree.

3.4. Data Validity and Reliability

Internal reliability tests and validation processes were applied to the online questionnaire created for the current research, which was completed by employees of the Environmental Affairs Agencies in the governorates of Cairo and the Red Sea. Factor analysis and Cronbach's alpha were used for this.

3.4.1. Data Validity

To test the format, readability, and measurement capabilities of the data collecting tool utilized in this study, the researcher sent the questionnaire instrument online to 108 staff members from Environmental Affairs Agencies in the governorates of Cairo and the Red Sea.

3.4.2. Data Reliability

To evaluate reliability, Cronbach's Alpha (α) was calculated for the questionnaire sections concerning sustainable tourism planning and the principles, values, and sustainable practices of protected areas. Although varying studies have been conducted regarding acceptable Cronbach's Alpha values, a scale is deemed suitable for statistical model analysis if its value is higher than 0.7.

The table below displays the Cronbach's Alpha results for each section of the pertinent questionnaire. A scale with a mark greater than 0.7 indicates good reliability, the results is highly pertinent because this scale was independently created utilizing the assessed literature as a guide.

Table (1): Cronbach's Alpha Value

Variables	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Validity Coefficient
Awareness and Perception of Sustainable Tourism Planning	**16**	**.720**	**0.849**
Sustainable Tourism Planning	**5**	**.708**	**0.841**
Principles of Protected Area Management	**5**	**.714**	**0.845**
Value (Benefits) of Protected areas	**5**	**.760**	**0.872**
Rules of Visitor Management	**5**	**.743**	**0.862**
Stakeholders Engagement	**5**	**.776**	**0.881**
Sustainable Practices in Egyptian Protected Areas	**9**	**.799**	**0.894**
Total	**50**	**0.855**	**0.925**

* Validity coefficient = √ Reliability coefficient

Table 1 presents the findings of the Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis. The test findings show that the staff's reliability coefficient is equal to 0.855 and the validity coefficient for each component of the questionnaire is equal to 0.925. These results show that the instrument is appropriate for use.

3.5. Data Analysis

To achieve the goals of the research, the research processes data statistically using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS V.25). This includes applying the following statistical techniques: Cronbach's alpha test, Pearson correlation analyses, standard deviations (SD), frequency distributions, percentages, and means.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Descriptive Analysis of Research Variables

Section one: Respondent Demographic Characteristics

Table 2: Demographic profile of sample elements

Variable		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender			
	Male	**76**	**70.4**
	Female	**32**	**29.6**
Age			
	21-30 Years old	**12**	**11.1**
	31-40 Years old	**32**	**29.6**
	41-50 Years old	**56**	**51.9**
	51-60 Years old	**8**	**7.4**
	more than 60 Years old	**0**	**0**
Education Level			
	Bachelor's degree	**52**	**48.1**
	Master's degree	**36**	**33.3**
	Doctorate degree (Ph.D.)	**16**	**14.8**
Years of experience			
	1-2	**0**	**0**
	3-5	**16**	**14.8**
	6-10	**20**	**18.5**
	more than 10 years	**72**	**66.7**

According to Table (2), males account for 76 of the 108 responses, or 70.4% of the total. Females received 32 responses, accounting for 29.6% of the total. The majority of responses (56) come from people aged 41 to 50, with 51.9%, followed by those aged 31 to 40, with 29.6% (32 responses). Furthermore, 12 (11.1%) of the sample is between the ages of 21 and 30, with 8 (7.4%) being between the ages of 51 and 60. In terms of education level, 48.1% of respondents (52) received a bachelor's degree, followed by 33.3% who obtained a master's degree (36). In addition, 14.8% (16) of participants held a PhD degree. The majority of responses, 66.7% (72), had more than ten years of experience, followed by the range (6-10) years of experience, with 18.5%

(20 responses) having between six and ten years of experience, and 14.8% (16) having between three and five years.

Section Two: Awareness and Perception of Sustainable Tourism Planning

Table 2: Awareness and Perception of Sustainable Tourism Planning

Variables	Percentage			Mean	SD	Rank	Attitude
	DS	N	A				
You have an idea about the concept of sustainable tourism planning as a tool to achieve the sustainability of protected areas.	12.1	4.3	83.6	2.71	.669	11	Agree
I believe that sustainable tourism planning aims to achieve a balance between the needs of tourism development and the conservation of natural and cultural resources.	9.2	8.5	82.3	2.73	.618	10	Agree
I understand the importance of sustainable tourism planning for the long-term sustainability of tourism in protected areas.	3	4.3	92.8	2.90	.388	1	Agree
There is a need for increased awareness among stakeholders about the principles and practices of sustainable tourism planning.	33.8	4.3	62	2.28	.938	14	Neutral
Sustainable tourism planning can contribute positively to the socio-economic development of local communities surrounding protected areas.	6.2	4.3	89.5	2.83	.515	6	Agree
Community involvement and consultation are essential components of successful sustainable tourism planning initiatives in protected areas.	3.3	4.3	92.5	2.89	.403	2	Agree
Government policies and regulations play a vital role in supporting and enforcing sustainable tourism planning efforts in protected areas.	3.3	4.3	92.5	2.89	.451	3	Agree
Education and awareness programs can significantly enhance the understanding and implementation of sustainable tourism practices among stakeholders.	3.3	9.5	87.2	2.84	.448	5	Agree
Sustainable tourism planning should prioritize the protection of biodiversity and ecosystems within protected areas over commercial interests.	46.6	3.6	49.8	2.03	.983	16	Neutral
Collaboration among various stakeholders, including government agencies, local communities, and tourism operators, is crucial for the success of sustainable tourism planning initiatives in protected areas.	33.8	5.6	60.7	2.27	.935	15	Neutral
I see sustainable tourism planning as an effective strategy to reduce negative environmental impacts in protected areas.	32.1	4.3	63.6	2.31	.928	13	Neutral
I believe that sustainable tourism planning should integrate the interests and needs of local communities	9.2	4.3	86.6	2.77	.600	9	Agree

I perceive sustainable tourism planning as a tool to promote responsible tourism practices among visitors to protected areas.	**10.5**	**10.2**	**79.3**	**2.69**	**.652**	**12**	**Agree**
I think that sustainable tourism planning can enhance the economic benefits derived from tourism in protected areas.	**6.9**	**9.5**	**83.6**	**2.77**	**.563**	**8**	**Agree**
I perceive that sustainable tourism planning as a long-term investment in the conservation and preservation of natural resources.	**3.9**	**7.5**	**88.5**	**2.85**	**.458**	**4**	**Agree**
I consider that sustainable tourism planning as a collaborative effort involving various stakeholders for its success	**3.3**	**11.5**	**85.2**	**2.82**	**.463**	**7**	**Agree**
Total mean					**2.66**		**Agree**

Table (2) shows the staff's awareness and perspective of sustainable tourism planning, with means ranging from (290 -2.03) to the overall instrument mean for the domain (2.66).I understand the importance of sustainable tourism planning for the long-term sustainability of tourism in protected areas ranked first with a mean and standard deviation (Mean=2.90, standard deviation = .388) compared with the total instrument mean and the standard deviation. In comparison to the mean and standard deviation of the total instrument, Sustainable tourism planning should prioritize the protection of biodiversity and ecosystems within protected areas over commercial interests ranked last had a mean of (2.03) and a standard deviation of (.983).

Section Three: Sustainable Tourism Planning.

Table 3: Sustainable Tourism Planning

Variables	Percentage			Mean	SD	Rank	Attitude
	DS	N	A				
I see that the tourism infrastructure and activities carried out in this protected area are designed to minimize environmental impact.	**11.1**	**55.6**	**33.3**	**2.22**	**.631**	**4**	**Neutral**
I believe that appropriate access to information about sustainable tourism practices within the protected area should be available.	**7.4**	**25.9**	**66.7**	**2.59**	**.627**	**2**	**Agree**
It is necessary to involve local communities in the planning and management of tourism activities	**0**	**7.4**	**92.6**	**2.93**	**.263**	**1**	**Agree**
The economic benefits of tourism are distributed fairly within the local community.	**33.3**	**29.6**	**37.0**	**2.04**	**.842**	**5**	**Neutral**
Tourism regulations play an effective role in protecting the environmental and cultural values of the protected area.	**7.4**	**40.7**	**51.9**	**2.44**	**.631**	**3**	**Agree**
Total mean				**2.44**	**Agree**		

The means and standard deviations for Sustainable Tourism Planning are shown in Table (3). The means varied from 2.93 to 3.04 when compared to the domain's total instrument mean of 2.44. It is necessary to involve local communities in the planning and management of tourism activities rated highest according to of mean and standard

deviation (mean=2.93, standard deviation=.263) when compared to the total instrument mean and standard deviation. The economic benefits of tourism are distributed fairly within the local community, which scored last, with a mean (2.04) and a standard deviation of (.842) when compared to the mean and standard deviation of the total instrument.

Section Four: Protected Areas.

A. Principles of Protected Area Management:

Table 4: Principles of Protected Area Management

Variables	Percentage			Mean	SD	Rank	Attitude
	DS	N	A				
The management of this protected area prioritizes the long-term health and integrity of the ecosystem.	**0**	**14.8**	**85.2**	**2.85**	**.357**	**3**	**Agree**
Visitors are encouraged to actively participate in protecting the natural environment during their visit.	**0**	**11.1**	**88.9**	**2.89**	**.316**	**2**	**Agree**
Cultural heritage and traditional practices are respected and integrated into the management of the protected area.	**0**	**3.7**	**96.3**	**2.96**	**.190**	**1**	**Agree**
Transparency and open communication are practiced within the protected area management.	**0**	**33.3**	**66.7**	**2.67**	**.474**	**4**	**Agree**
Adaptive management principles are used to adjust visitor practices and regulations based on continuous monitoring.	**0**	**37.0**	**59.3**	**2.52**	**.690**	**5**	**Agree**
Total mean				**2.78**		**Agree**	

Table (4) shows the means and standard deviations of (Principles of Protected Area Management), with means ranging from 2.96 to 2.52, compared to the total instrument mean for the domain (2.78). Cultural heritage and traditional practices are respected and integrated into the management of the protected area placed highest when compared to the total instrument mean and standard deviation, (Mean=2.96, standard deviation =.190). When compared to the mean and standard deviation of the entire instrument, Adaptive management principles are used to adjust visitor practices and regulations based on continuous monitoring that was ranked last had a mean of 2.52 and a standard deviation of.690.

B. Value (Benefits) of protected areas

Table 5: Value (Benefits) of protected areas

Variables	Percentage			Mean	SD	Rank	Attitude
	DS	N	A				
I am aware that the protected area significantly contributes to the overall environmental health in Egypt.	**0**	**7.4**	**92.6**	**2.93**	**.263**	**2**	**Agree**
I believe that protected areas effectively protect the wildlife and plant biodiversity in this region	**0**	**14.8**	**85.02**	**2.93**	**.263**	**3**	**Agree**
I am aware that the protected area provides valuable educational opportunities about the environment and conservation.	**0**	**0**	**100.0**	**2.85**	**.357**	**4**	**Agree**
I believe that visiting protected areas, such as this one, enhances my appreciation for nature and its importance.	**3.7**	**7.4**	**88.9**	**3.00**	**.000**	**1**	**Agree**
Protected areas contribute to the economic well-being of local communities through tourism and other activities.	**0**	**33.3**	**66.7**	**2.85**	**.450**	**5**	**Agree**
Total mean				**2.91**		**Agree**	

The means and standard deviations of the Value (Benefits) of protected areas are shown in Table (5). The means varied from (3.00-2.85) when compared to the total instrument mean (2.91). When compared to the mean and standard deviation of the total instrument, I believe that visiting protected areas, such as this one, enhances my appreciation for nature and its importance which first-ranked has a mean and standard deviation (Mean=3.00, standard deviation =.000). Protected areas contribute to the economic well-being of local communities through tourism and other activities which placed last with a mean (2.85) and a standard deviation of (.450) when compared to the mean and standard deviation of the total instrument.

C. Rules of Visitor Management:

Table 6: Rules of Visitor Management

Variables	Percentage			Mean	SD	Rank	Attitude
	DS	N	A				
Visitor rules and regulations in this protected area are clear and easy to understand.	**0**	**33.3**	**66.7**	**2.67**	**.474**	**1**	**Agree**
Visitor regulations are consistently and fairly enforced for all individuals.	**3.7**	**55.6**	**40.7**	**2.37**	**.557**	**4**	**Agree**
Available facilities and amenities are considered sufficient to manage visitor impacts on the natural environment.	**37.0**	**37.0**	**25.9**	**1.89**	**.789**	**5**	**Agree**
Tourism has had a positive impact on the stakeholders / the local community surrounding protected areas	**7.4**	**29.6**	**63.0**	**2.56**	**.631**	**2**	**Agree**
Protected area authorities communicate effectively with local communities.	**11.1**	**33.3**	**55.6**	**2.44**	**.688**	**3**	**Agree**
Total mean				**2.39**	**Agree**		

Concerning, the rules of visitor management in Egyptian protected areas) respondents were questioned the means and standard deviations for "Rules of Visitor Management" are shown in Table (6). The means varied from 2.67 to 1.89 in comparison to the total instrument mean of 2.39. Visitor rules and regulations in this protected area are clear and easy to understand ranked first with a mean and standard deviation (Mean=2.67, standard deviation = .474) compared with the total instrument mean and the standard deviation. In contrast, Available facilities and amenities are considered sufficient to manage visitor impacts on the natural environment were last ranked with a mean of 1.89 and a standard deviation of.789 when compared to the mean and standard deviation of the total instrument.

D. Stakeholders Engagement:

Table 7: Stakeholders Engagement

Variables	Percentage			Mean	SD	Rank	Attitude
	DS	N	A				
There are stakeholder's involvement in any activities organized by protected areas authorities	**7.4**	**48.1**	**44.4**	**2.37**	**.620**	**4**	**Agree**
There is available information for stakeholders about the management plans and objectives of protected are in your area.	**14.8**	**40.7**	**44.4**	**2.30**	**.714**	**5**	**Neutral**
It is Agree for the administrations of the protected areas to take into account the needs and aspirations of stakeholders/local communities.	**3.7**	**18.5**	**77.8**	**2.74**	**.518**	**1**	**Agree**
Tourism has had a positive impact on the stakeholders / the local community surrounding protected areas	**3.7**	**25.9**	**70.4**	**2.67**	**.547**	**2**	**Agree**
Protected area authorities communicate effectively with local communities.	**7.4**	**22.4**	**70.4**	**2.63**	**.620**	**3**	**Agree**
Total mean				**2.54**	**Agree**		

The means and standard deviations of the stakeholder's engagement domain are displayed in Table (7). The means of the domain varied from 2.74 to 2.30 when compared to the total instrument mean for the domain of 2.54. It is Agree for the administrations of the protected areas to take into account the needs and aspirations of stakeholders/local communities came in top place when compared to the mean and standard deviation of the total instrument (Mean = 2.74, Standard Deviation =.518).when compared to the mean and standard deviation of the total instrument, the last-ranked statement of (Stakeholders Engagement) had a mean of 2.30 and a standard deviation of.714.

E. Sustainable Practices in Egyptian Protected Areas:

Table 8: Sustainable Practices in Egyptian Protected Areas

Variables	Percentage			M	Std. D	Rank	Attitude
	DS	N	A				
Current tourism practices within protected areas in Egypt are generally sustainable.	**18.5**	**40.7**	**40.7**	**2.22**	**.740**	**8**	**Neutral**
These aspects of current practices raise concerns for you regarding sustainability (waste management, resource use, impact on the local community, environmental damage, overcrowding, etc.).	**0**	**29.6**	**70.4**	**2.70**	**.459**	**2**	**Agree**
Protected area authorities clearly communicate and enforce the regulations for sustainable tourism.	**7.4**	**25.9**	**66.7**	**2.59**	**.627**	**4**	**Agree**
Tourism operators provide opportunities for visitors to experience the protected area responsibly.	**14.8**	**48.1**	**37.0**	**2.22**	**.688**	**7**	**Neutral**
Environmentally friendly transportation options are readily available within natural reserves.	**22.2**	**48.1**	**29.6**	**2.07**	**.720**	**9**	**Neutral**
Waste disposal and recycling systems are effective in minimizing environmental impact.	**11.1**	**40.7**	**48.1**	**2.37**	**.678**	**6**	**Agree**
Local communities and their livelihoods benefit from the investments in tourism.	**14.8**	**15.7**	**69.5**	**2.55**	**.738**	**5**	**Agree**
Cultural heritage sites are protected and respected by tourists.	**7.4**	**18.5**	**74.1**	**2.67**	**.611**	**3**	**Agree**
Educational programs and interpretive materials promote responsible tourism behavior.	**7.4**	**11.1**	**81.5**	**2.74**	**.586**	**1**	**Agree**
Total mean				**2.46**	**Agree**		

Table 8 lists the questions that were asked regarding the disadvantages of (Sustainable Practices in Egyptian Protected Areas). The results showed that the means varied from (2.74–2.22) in relation to the domain's total instrument mean (2.46).Educational programs and interpretive materials promote responsible tourism behavior came in top place when compared to the mean and standard deviation of the total instrument (Mean = 2.74, Standard Deviation =.586). Compared to the mean and standard deviation of the total instrument, the ranking of these statement (Tourism operators provide opportunities for visitors to experience the protected area responsibly) came in last had a mean of (2.22) and a standard deviation of (.688).

4.2.Pearson Correlation analyses

Table (9): Correlations between stakeholder's engagement and value of protected area management

		Stakeholders Engagement
Value of Protected Area Management	Correlation Coefficient	**.434****
	Sig.	**.000**

Table 9 demonstrates a substantial correlation (R =.434**, p ≤.01) between the benefit of protected area management and stakeholder engagement. These findings suggest a positive connection between the value of protected area management and stakeholder engagement.

Table (10): Correlations between stakeholder's engagement and value of protected area management

		Stakeholders Engagement
Rules of Visitor Management	Correlation Coefficient	**.703****
	Sig.	**.000**

Table 10 demonstrates a significant correlation (R =.703**, p ≤.01) between stakeholder engagement and rules of visitor management. These findings suggest a good correlation between stakeholder engagement and rules of visitor management.

Table (11): Correlations between sustainable practices in Egyptian protected areas and stakeholders engagement

		Sustainable Practices in Egyptian Protected Areas
Stakeholders Engagement	Correlation Coefficient	**.539****
	Sig.	**.000**

Table 11 indicates a substantial correlation (R =.539**, p ≤.01) between stakeholder engagement and sustainable practices in protected areas in Egypt. These findings suggest a good relationship among stakeholder engagement and sustainable practices in protected areas in Egypt.

5. Conclusion and summary

To sum up, the research evaluating sustainable tourism planning for Egypt's terrestrial protected areas emphasizes the urgent need for coordinated effort to solve the issues these important natural landscapes are experiencing. The research has identified important gaps and inadequacies in the sustainability of tourism development within protected areas by a thorough review of current practices and their compliance with international standards. These issues harm socioeconomic well-being and ecological integrity because they have insufficient enforcement mechanisms as well as insufficient stakeholder engagement. Despite these problems, there are potential for improvement, such as promoting community-based tourism initiatives, capacity-building programmes, and policy reforms. By implementing the research suggestions, Egypt can make great progress towards a more sustainable approach to tourism planning, one that protects its natural and cultural heritage while maximizing benefits for the local people.

In order to close this gap, the research will evaluate the current level of sustainable tourism planning for Egypt's terrestrial protected areas. To do this, it will methodically evaluate the state of sustainable tourism planning in these areas, pinpoint important areas that require development, and make suggestions for improving the sustainability of tourism management there. The following results were attained:

- Improve staff awareness and perspective of sustainable tourism planning, emphasizing its significance for long-term tourism sustainability in protected areas. Sustainable tourist planning should prioritize protecting biodiversity and ecosystems within protected areas over commercial interests. Collaboration between diverse stakeholders, including government agencies, local communities, and tourism operators, is vital for the success of sustainable tourism planning activities in protected areas.
- Local communities must be involved in the planning and management of tourism-related activities.
- Respecting and integrating cultural heritage and traditional customs is a key principle of protected area management.
- Visiting protected areas, like this one, increases my appreciation for nature, which is one of the most valuable (benefits) of protected areas.
- The guidelines for visitors to this protected area are simple and clear to comprehend.
- One of the main Sustainable Practices in Protected Areas of Egypt Programmes for education and informational resources encourage responsible tourism practices.
- There is a significant relationship between stakeholder's engagement and value of protected area management
- there is a significant relationship between stakeholder's engagement and rules of visitor management
- there is a significant relationship between sustainable practices in Egyptian protected areas and stakeholders engagement
- Empirical study that methodically evaluates the viability of sustainable tourism planning in Egypt's terrestrial protected areas and offers fact-based suggestions for improving sustainability is desperately needed.

6. Recommendations

The recommendations below seek to help policymakers, government agencies, conservation organizations, local communities, and other stakeholders implement sustainable tourism practices that promote the long-term ecological integrity and socioeconomic sustainability of Egypt's protected areas. Based on the findings of the research on analyzing sustainable tourism planning in Egypt's terrestrial protected areas:

1. The government should be collaborations with international organizations, donor agencies, and foreign governments to pool resources, share expertise, and exchange best practices for sustainable tourism planning and management. Participate in regional and international forums, conferences, and workshops

to highlight Egypt's sustainable tourism efforts and learn from other nations' experiences with similar difficulties.

2. The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and the Ministry of Environment should be create benchmarks and indicators to monitor the attainment of sustainability objectives, assess performance in comparison to global norms, and pinpoint opportunities for enhancement.
3. The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and the Ministry of Environment should be create and implement comprehensive sustainable tourism development strategies for Egypt's protected regions, including concepts of biodiversity protection, cultural heritage preservation, and socioeconomic growth. Promote responsible tourism practices that reduce negative environmental impacts, respect cultural sensitivities, and benefit local communities.
4. Government agencies, conservation organizations, local communities, and tourism operators for the engagement of stakeholders and capacity building should encourage collaboration and partnerships between government agencies, conservation organizations, local communities, tourism operators, and other stakeholders to encourage participatory decision-making and shared accountability in protected area management. Provide training programmes and capacity-building activities for stakeholders to improve their understanding of natural resource management, community-based tourism, and sustainable tourism practices.
5. Community Empowerment and Local Involvement should be give indigenous and local communities the tools they need to fully participate in tourism planning and decision-making so that their interests are represented and their voices are heard. Encourage community-led tourism projects that advance equitable sharing of tourism benefits, local entrepreneurship, and the preservation of cultural heritage.

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تقييم التخطيط السياحي المستدام للمحميات الطبيعية البرية في مصر

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الكلمات الدالة

التخطيط السياحي المستدام، المحميات الطبيعية البرية ، مصر.

المستخلص

وفي مصر، وهي دولة معروفة بتراثها الطبيعي والثقافي، تعد الإدارة الفعالة للمحميات الطبيعية البرية في مصر أمرًا بالغ الأهمية للحفاظ على التنوع البيولوجي. يهدف هذا البحث الي تقييم الوضع الحالي التخطيط السياحي المستدام للمحميات الطبيعية البرية في مصر . اعتمدت منهج الدراسة على التحليل الوصفي باستخدام 108 استبانة تم توزيعها الباحثين البيئيين بجهاز شئون البيئة بمحافظتي القاهرة والبحر الأحمر. تم استخدام عدة طرق إحصائية في البحث عبر برنامج SPSS V.25.

تؤكد النتائج على أهمية مشاركة أصحاب المصلحة، وتحسين الأطر التنظيمية، ودمج المشاركة المجتمعية ومفاهيم الحفاظ على البيئة في عمليات التخطيط السياحي. وأخيرًا، يسعى البحث إلى دعم عملية صنع القرار ، وتعزيز مشاركة أصحاب المصلحة، والمساهمة في الإدارة طويلة المدى للمحميات الطبيعية البرية في مصر. ومن خلال تقديم رؤى وتوصيات قابلة للتنفيذ تهدف إلى توجيه صناع السياسات والوكالات الحكومية ومنظمات الحفاظ على البيئة والمجتمعات المحلية وأصحاب المصلحة الآخرين في تنفيذ ممارسات السياحة المستدامة التي تعزز السلامة البيئية على المدى الطويل والاستدامة الاجتماعية والاقتصادية للمحميات الطبيعية البرية في مصر.