

Coastal Implications of Tourism on the Turkish Mediterranean

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Abstract

This paper is a re-evaluation of government incentives on tourism sector from 1963 onwards. It tries to show whether official initiatives have achieved certain goals on tourism or not. For the purpose of this paper, statistics of the Turkish Ministry of Tourism has been considered and data related to licensed accommodation establishments especially between 1993-1997 have been manipulated and interpreted. In Turkey, major efforts towards the promotion of tourism dates back to 1963 with the establishment of the Ministry of Tourism and the sector has been encouraged through policies, laws and legislation, foreign capital investments and Tourism Master Plans. Total number of beds in licensed accommodation units increased from 79,000 in 1977 to 550,000 in 1997. In the same year number of licensed accommodation establishments reached to 3335 and yacht companies to 170. Between 1993-1997, foreign arrivals more than doubled (9.4 million in 1997). However between 1981-1995 a total of 175 tourist facilities have had foreign investment and 74% of these were made in accommodation. Moreover balance of payments in tourism sector reached to US\$3,455,000 in 1994. As main destinations of the Turkish Mediterranean, arrivals to Antalya and Muğla increased by three times between 1993 and 1997, and reached to 3.5 million, while arrivals to Muğla more than doubled (1.4 million). Hotels attracted the highest number of visitors, followed by holiday villages and boarding houses. At present there are 694 licensed accommodation establishments in Antalya and Muğla providing a total of 290.000 bed capacity. Although there is a serious concern to diversify tourism activities, Turkish Mediterranean still offers greater opportunities for tourism.