

Evaluation of Natural and Cultural Resources for Protection-Oriented Tourism: The Case of Ürünlü İbradı

Duygu DOĞAN^{1*}, Şükran ŞAHİN²

¹Landscape Architecture Department, Faculty of Architecture and Design, Pamukkale University, Pamukkale, Denizli, Türkiye.

² Faculty of Agriculture, Department of Landscape Architecture, T.C. Ankara University, Keçiören, Ankara Türkiye.

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* Corresponding Author

E-mail: duygudogan@pau.edu.tr

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2865-0569>

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3730-2534>

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Abstract

In recent years, alternative tourism types have emerged with the changes in the tourist profile, the inability of mass tourism to meet the increasing demands and the demand of societies for different tourism options from the sea-sun-sand trio. While alternative tourism resources enable tourists to meet different cultures and nature, they also provide economic support to the people of the region. Therefore, alternative tourism supports natural, cultural, social and economic sustainability.

In this study, protection-oriented sustainable tourism types were determined on the basis of the landscape characteristics of Ürünlü Neighbourhood of İbradı district of Antalya province and its immediate surroundings. For this purpose, firstly, the potential of the region for sustainable development within the scope of the tourism sector with its historical, cultural and natural values has been revealed. As a result, highland tourism, cave tourism, trekking, agritourism and cultural tourism activities have been proposed. Basing tourism policies on unique landscape resources can contribute to the protection of natural and cultural features. Designing the necessary administrative framework, financial infrastructure and human resources for the applicability and sustainability of such a contribution together with local potentials is fundamental for local rural development.

INTRODUCTION

Especially with the environmental protection movements that started to gain momentum in the 1970s and accelerated in the 1980s, and with the increase in the negative consequences caused by mass tourism, new solutions have been directed to new tourism planning. With the realization that the negative effects of tourism activities on natural and cultural resources jeopardize the future of tourism itself and also with the changing tourist profile, an alternative eco-tourism approach that considers nature has emerged. Following that,

the idea of sustainability was reflected in tourism and the issue of 'sustainable tourism' came to the agenda (Erdoğan and Erdoğan 2005).

Sustainable tourism, in its most ideal form, is defined as tourism development that meets the needs of tourists and host regions while preserving and developing opportunities for the future on the basis of sustainable development principles (Weaver 1999; Leung et al. 2001; Erdoğan and Erdoğan 2005). According to Ceballos-Lascurain (1996), sustainable tourism ensures the longevity of tourism activities through development and management patterns. The fact that tourism products are

related to the continuation of protected heritage resources supports the natural and cultural promotion of tourism. Sustainable tourism covers all types of tourism that will contribute to sustainable development by meeting current needs without jeopardizing future generations (Abidin 1999; Polat 2006).

Tourism can be seen as a universal activity that provides services to the labor force sector with income and general economic effects, and generally this can be called mass tourism. However, in recent years, many types of tourism have developed as an alternative to economy-oriented mass tourism and these are called alternative tourism (Polat 2006).

Alternative tourism is divided into two, according to the orientation of the activity: nature-based alternative tourism or socio-cultural alternative tourism oriented towards cultural resources. Nature-based alternative tourism is called eco-tourism. Alternative tourism is seen as an ideal form of tourism as opposed to mass tourism, which provides positive economic effects while causing very few negative effects (Priskin 2003; Erdoğan and Erdoğan 2005). For this reason, in order to ensure cultural and economic sustainability within the scope of the study area, eco-tourism activities, one of the alternative tourism types focused on protection, have been oriented. It is one of the important responsibilities to ensure the national and international recognition of

sustainable and natural tourism approaches by preserving the inherent and cultural values of the region as well as transferring of their symbolic values to future generations (Sandal Erzurumlu and Yıldız 2020).

Ormana was voted the best tourist village by Un Tourism in 2024 (<https://tourism-villages.unwto.org/en/villages/ormana-turkiye/>, 2025). Ürünlü is an area that should be evaluated in terms of tourism due to its cultural and natural elements as well as being one of the settlements of Ormana. The aim of the study is to determine the landscape elements of the area, focusing on Ürünlü neighbourhood, by evaluating the area together with its immediate surroundings and to determine the possible ecotourism types and landscape development strategies by evaluating these elements.

Materials and Methods

Ürünlü neighbourhood is located in the northeast of Antalya city centre. It is 9 km to İbradı, 50 km to Manavgat and 180 km to Antalya (Şimşek 2007). The boundary of the study area is Ürünlü Village of Antalya Province, İbradı District Municipality and its immediate surroundings (Figure 1). The study scale was considered as 1/25.000 (Anonymous 2008).

Within the scope of the study, data on natural and cultural features and protected areas were obtained by digitizing from the 1/100.000

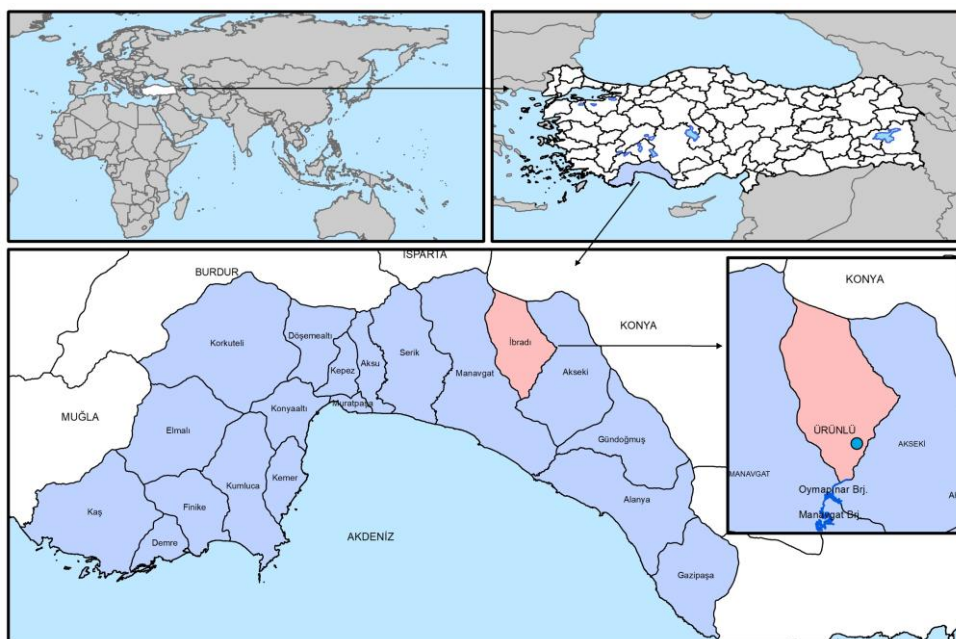


Figure 1. Location of the working area

Scale Environmental Plan of Antalya-Burdur-Isparta Planning Region (<https://mpgm.csb.gov.tr/antalya-burdur-isparta-planlama-bolgesi-i-82219>, 2024). In the study, CORINE Land Use/Land Cover (<http://land.copernicus.eu/> 2022) and river (<https://doi.org/10.2909/393359a7-7ebd-4a52-80ac-1a18d5f3db9c>, 2024) data were used. The CORINE 2018 data used in this study is the data prepared under the ownership of the European Commission. The highway data used for determining the zones were obtained from geofabric (<https://download.geofabrik.de/europe.html>, 2023). The slope, aspect and elevation data were obtained from ASTERGDEM produced by Nasa (<https://search.earthdata.nasa.gov/> 2024).

Within the scope of the study, the natural and cultural characteristics of the area were revealed and natural and cultural landscape elements with high protection value were identified. Possible ecotourism types were determined for each identified landscape element. By interpreting both evaluations

together, ecotourism visit points and travel routes of the area were revealed (Figure 2).

Results and Discussion

Since the İbradı district, where Ürünlü neighbourhood is located, has hosted many cultures from the early ages to the present day, there are many historical and cultural resources in the neighbourhood and its immediate vicinity (Figure 3). In the district, there are ruins of Erymna (Ormana), Unulla (Ürünlü), ancient city ruins, the Çukurviran Cemetery and Katrancı Hill (Üstün 2000, Gedik 2008). In and around İbradı, there are Eynif Tol Inn, Koca Oluk Inn from the Seljuk period (Bakkal 2019), Dalkatıran, Tepsili, and İbradı inns from the Ottoman period (Bakkal and Teber, 2019). There are three urban sites, namely İbradı, Ormana and Ürünlü settlements, and four 1st degree archaeological sites in the district. There is also Maşata Plateau Tourism Centre / Culture and Tourism Development Zone (<https://mpgm.csb.gov.tr/antalya-burdur-isparta-planlama-bolgesi-i-82219>, 2024). The most

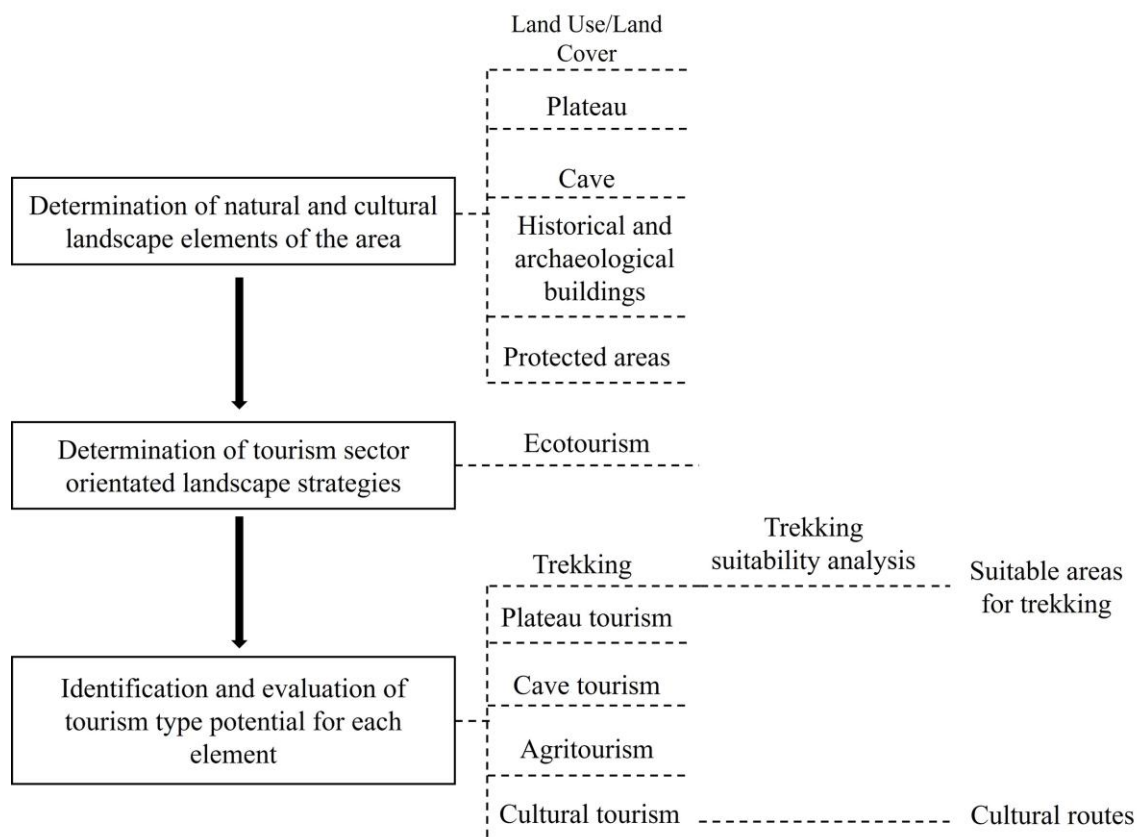


Figure 2. Method flow chart

LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS

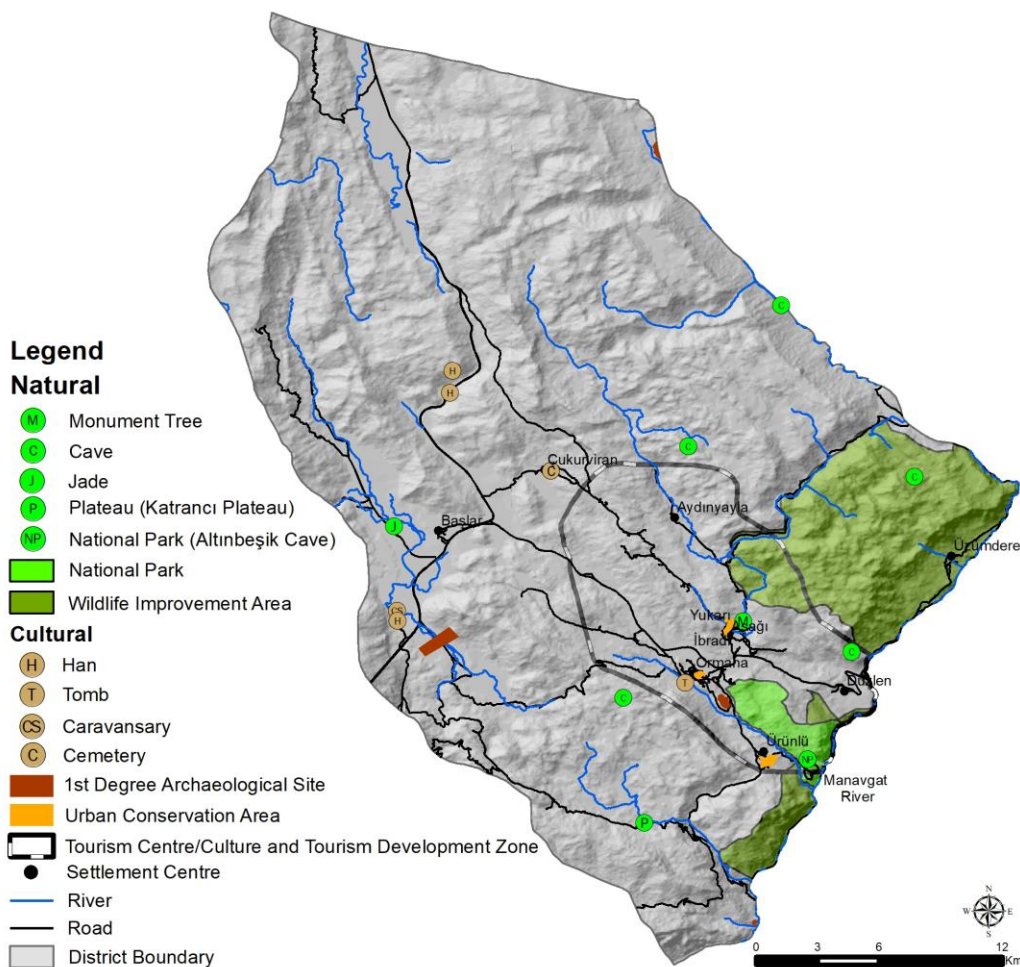


Figure 3. Natural and cultural elements in İbradı district

important tourism asset in the neighbourhood is Altınbeşik Cave, the third largest underwater cave in the world, which has been declared as a national park (Gedik 2008, Anonymous 2014a, Anonymous 2014b). In addition, Altınbeşik Cave National Park and Üzümdere Wildlife Development Area (WDA) are located within the borders of the neighbourhood (<https://mpgm.csb.gov.tr/antalya-burdur-isparta-planlama-bolgesi-i-82219>, 2024). There are 22 mammal species (wild cat, brown bear, wolf, lynx and black ear species, porcupine and Anatolian squirrel, pig, rabbit, wild goats (*Capra aegagrus*)), 144 bird species (especially the European population of the Fish Owl (*Ketupa zeylonensis*) is limited to Türkiye) the reptiles (two species of lizards, four species of snakes and one species of turtles), amphibians (two species), fish (mountain trout (*Salmo trutta macrostigma*

DUMERIL and *Oncorhynchus mykiss* WALBAUM)) were identified. 412 plant species were identified in the area and 59 of them (*Taurus Fir* (*Abies cilicica* subsp. *isaurica*)) are endemic (<https://ekotaban.tarimorman.gov.tr/alan/515>, 2024). In addition to Altınbeşik Cave, there are five caves, a tomb, (<https://mpgm.csb.gov.tr/antalya-burdur-isparta-planlama-bolgesi-i-82219>, 2024) and a monumental tree (Arapastı Chestnut) in the district (Özoğul and Bulut 2021). In addition, Eynif Plain is home to Yılkı horses (Özoğul and Bulut 2021) (Figure 4). There are Maşata - Sütleğen - Elma tree - Söğütbeli - Sülek - Kovaalanı - Katrancı- Plateaus in the district (Anonymous 2017). Among these, Katrancı Plateau is 15 km away from Ürünlü neighbourhood (Anonymous 2017).

Ürünlü neighborhood has a diversity in terms of agricultural landscape. All crops are grown except citrus fruits. Due to the topographical structure of the region, agricultural areas are located near the center of village (Figure 4). In addition, andiz molasses is produced from the juniper (*Juniperus drupacea* Labill.) in the region.

Altınbeşik Cave Culture and Tourism Festival (Özoğul and Bulut 2021) is held in the neighbourhood. In the Ürünlü neighbourhood, there are rare examples of civil architecture that have survived from the past to the present with its historical texture intact. 'Button houses' built with wood and dry stone walls without the use of binding mortar are unique to the region (Şimşek 2007) (Figure 5).

Landscape protection and development strategies were determined in the planning study

by taking landscape elements into consideration.

Within the scope of landscape development strategies, ecotourism activities have been identified among the tourism types because they are nature-based and sustainable. The principle of ecotourism is to offer the differences and safety of local environments to tourists rather than five-star comfort. Ecotourism is a set of programmed activities that help to protect natural and cultural values, introduce visitors to the unique and different natural resources of the local environment, thus supporting development by protecting valuable ecosystems (Şahin et al. 2001). For this purpose, the tourism types determined based on the landscape elements in the area are trekking/nature walking, plateau tourism, cave tourism, agritourism and cultural tourism.



Figure 4. Agricultural areas



Figure 5. Button houses

1. Suggested Tourism Development Focus: Trekking

Trekking is defined as the general name of walks that have various features according to their difficulty levels and appeal to different age groups in line with natural conditions (Yalçın 2007; Tekin 2017). Trekking time can be from one day to one month (Erdoğan 2003).

The height of the mountains varies according to the regions. Trekking can be done at heights of activity (Durmuş, et al. 2007; Tekin 2017). The difficulty level selected for the area is first and second degree. At these difficulty levels, the walking incline is low, and the ascent is minimal. The ascents range between 100-300 meters. The trails are wide and the total walking time is between 2 - 3.5 hours (Durmuş et al. 2007;

Tekin 2017). Within the scope of the study, suitable areas for trekking were determined. While determining suitable areas, data on transport, river, land cover/land use (CORINE 18), protected area, slope, aspect, elevation were used (Table 1). While determining the evaluation factors and their weights, the studies of Mansuroğlu and Baytekin (2011), Kaptan Ayhan et al. (2020) and Uzun Şengül (2021) and the characteristics of the area were taken into consideration. The sub-criteria were classified as very suitable (3), moderately suitable (2), not suitable (1) (Table 1, Figure 6) As a result of the analysis, most of the area is moderately suitable. The most suitable area for trekking in and around Ürünlü neighbourhood is Katrancı Plateau.

Table 1. Trekking suitability criteria, sub-criteria and their weights and resistance layer values

Trekking Suitability			
Criteria	Sub-criteria	Score	Weight
Slope (%)	0-6	3	21
	6-20	2	
	>20	1	
Aspect	South (SE, SW), East, Flat	3	10
	North (NE, NW), West	2	
Elevation (m)	< 1000	2	21
	1000-1800	3	
	>1800	1	
Proximity to water (m)	0-200	3	10
	200-500	2	
	>500	1	
Proximity to transportation (m)	< 1000	2	11
	1000-3000	3	
	>3000	1	
Land use/land cover	Settlement	1	27
	Mineral extraction sites	1	
	Agricultural areas	1	
	Forests, Transitional Woodland/Shrub	3	
	Pastures, natural grassland, Sparsely vegetated areas	2	
	Bare rock, Sclerophyllous vegetation	1	

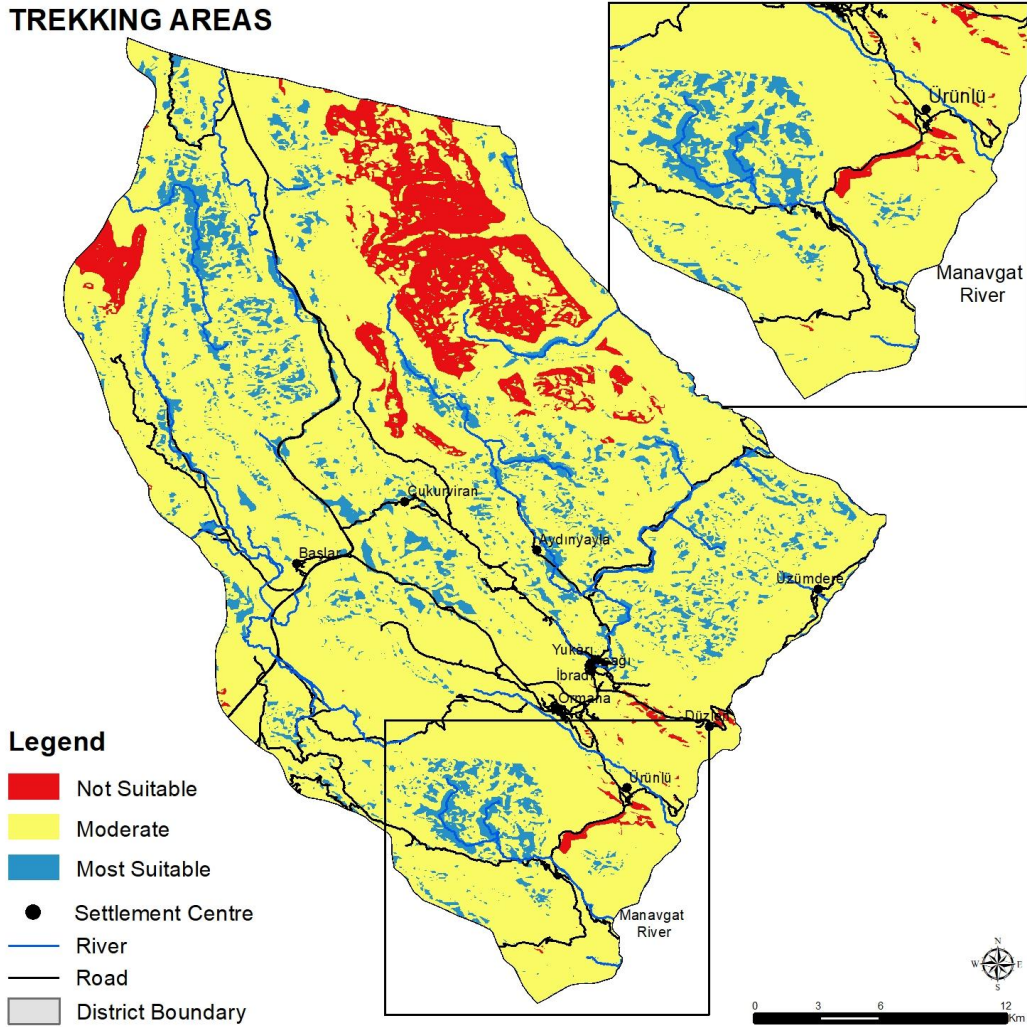


Figure 6. Trekking areas

2. Suggested Tourism Development Focus: Plateau tourism

Plateau tourism is tourism activities carried out by people who love nature, enjoy being in nature, or adventure lovers in high altitude places for daily or short-term accommodation (Düşmezkalender et al. 2019). Plateau tourism is an alternative type of tourism that is opposite to coastal tourism in terms of location, climate and recreational activities. The main recreational activity of plateau tourism is trekking (Doğaner 2001; Çalık et al. 2021). Creating the equipment that will benefit tourists in plateau tourism areas requires investments in infrastructure and superstructure. For this reason, regional accommodation areas should be selected at points with existing infrastructure facilities close to attraction points (Bilici and Işık

2018). Katrancı Plateau is suitable for plateau tourism both in terms of meeting the infrastructure and superstructure requirements due to its location near Ürünü neighbourhood and in terms of creating a trekking route (Figure 7).

3. Suggested Tourism Development Focus: Cave tourism

Caves are used for reasons such as storage (cold air, fuel storage, etc.), ripening and preservation of animal products, culture mushrooming, respiratory diseases, shelter, bat fertilizer production, placer mineral extraction (Arpacı et al. 2012). Caves are important tourism attraction areas for reasons such as historical traces they carry (used as places of worship and shelter etc. in the past), geological formations

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

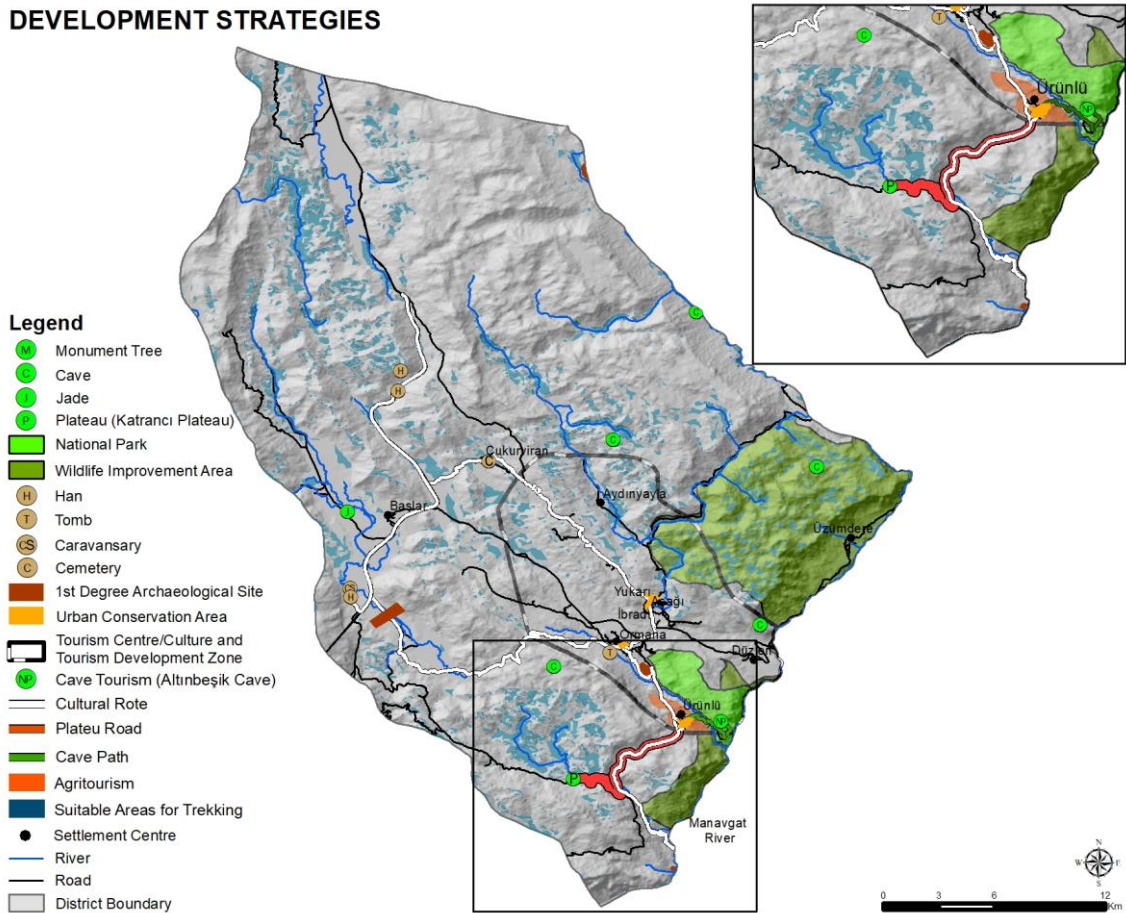


Figure 7. Development strategies

(stalactites, stalagmites, etc.) and animal assets (Doğanay and Zaman 2013; Zeybek et al. 2019). Speleology is a nature sport for the purpose of exploring and mapping caves. The characteristics of caves that can be used for tourism are as follows (Arpacı et al. 2012);

- Absence of figures and living beings that need to be protected
- Not carrying risks that may jeopardize life safety
- No local and regional pollution arising from its use
- Having interesting cave shapes and structures
- The physical structure of the cave is in dimensions that will allow people to travel easily
- Close to main roads and major settlements
- Availability of sufficient land near the cave where support units can be built or landscaping can be done.

Altınbeşik Cave in the area is a suitable area for cave tourism due to its geological formations, the third largest underwater cave in the world, the plant and animal diversity around it and the features that can be used for tourism purposes (Figure 7).

4. Suggested Tourism Development Focus: Agritourism

Agritourism refers to agricultural tourism and is closely linked to agricultural activities in an agricultural environment (Li and Li 2021; Doğan et al. 2023). Agritourism includes many services related to agriculture such as on-farm gastronomy, lodging (staying on the farm), agricultural activities, farm tours (Hochuli et al. 2021), outdoor recreation, educational experiences (wine tasting, local cooking courses, etc.), entertainment (festivals), direct sales from the farm (Ecker et al. 2010), tree rental (Gökalp

and Yazgan 2013) (Doğan et al. 2023). When determining the agritourism potential of a place, factors such as the distance of agricultural areas from roads and settlements, settlement type, land cover/land use, events such as festivals, the presence of cultural assets in or near the area, the presence of local products and gastronomy should be taken into consideration (Doğan 2023). The study area is suitable for agritourism due to its proximity to the settlement, the suitability of climate and soil conditions for growing various product types, the presence of local products (andiz molasses), the presence of festivals and being a rural area. Agritourism, as a supporting sub-component of ecotourism, is considered as a local market that will provide a source of income for local people (Figure 7).

5. Suggested Tourism Development Focus: Cultural Tourism

The travels and stays of tourists to see and get to know different cultures are called 'cultural tourism' (Uygur and Baykan 2007). Ürünlü is a suitable area for cultural tourism with its local products, historical buildings, archaeological sites, festivals and civil architecture examples around the settlement and other nearby settlements. Cultural tourism routes were determined by considering the method determined by Doğan (2012) (Figure 7).

CONCLUSION

A number of measures should be taken to ensure that the determined tourism types can be realized without damaging the existing landscape. Carrying capacity analyses and protection degrees or usage restrictions should be analyzed and evaluated for the areas to be used in all tourism types (forests, plateaus, protected areas, national parks, etc.), and annual time schedules (ecological windows) should be created for flora and fauna (outside of flowering periods for flora and reproduction periods for fauna). Within the scope of the study, suitable areas for trekking have been identified. Routes suitable for all levels of difficulty should be determined to reach these areas. The designated routes (cultural routes, trekking routes etc.) should be changed from time to time and the areas should be protected from impacts such as soil compaction and damage to historical artefacts.

In order to protect the agritourism potential, the diversity of existing agricultural products should be preserved.

In order to produce character-based strategies for landscape protection, development and management, the information produced by landscape analysis should be evaluated according to certain criteria. Evaluation approaches are generally carried out based on criteria such as the value of the landscape (areas with high-moderate-low landscape value), quality, sensitivity to change or carrying capacity (Şahin et al. 2014). These strategies may be function-based or element-based. What is important here is to determine the area/elements to be protected and to take these areas/elements into consideration when determining protection-development strategies. These strategies will serve sectoral guides. Within the scope of the study, the area was studied with a focus on tourism, and the elements to be protected were determined while revealing the tourism potential of the area. The tourism type selected within the scope of the tourism sectoral guide is ecotourism, which is a nature-based alternative tourism activity. Thus, the area will be protected on the one hand and developed on the other.

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