

### **Urban Ecotourism and Strategic Action Plan Approach; Isparta City Example\***

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#### **Abstract**

*The concept of urban ecotourism is accepted as an important component in order to increase the tourism potential and diversity of cities, to spread tourism activities over 12 months, to protect and sustain existing natural and cultural values, to increase awareness of nature and environmental protection, and to increase local income sources. Isparta city and its surroundings have rich ecotourism potential in terms of natural and cultural resource values. The aim of the study is to examine the concept of urban ecotourism conceptually, to take an inventory of the natural and cultural values of the city of Isparta and its surroundings, to create a SWOT analysis and strategic action plan for urban ecotourism. As a result, two main goals and nine different aims and many actions have been proposed in terms of urban ecotourism in Isparta.*

**Keywords:** *Urban ecotourism, action plan, strategy, natural and cultural values, Isparta City*

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\*This study is not included in the study group that requires TR Index ethics committee approval.

## 1. Introduction

Today, the tourism sector is one of the fastest growing and diversifying sectors (Ashworth & Page, 2011). Today's multifaceted changes (especially the pandemic process and economic crises) have significantly changed tourism approaches and activities. In addition to the local ownership of the tourism development in a place; The use of local products and services, integration with the local economy, and contribution to the local have also become extremely important. At this point, it becomes important what makes a touristic destination different from the others, and what are the authentic elements specific to it; These are local landscapes and diversity in land uses, natural and cultural heritage, virgin / untouched areas (villages / small towns), diversity in traditional life, local hospitality, local products and experiences based on these resources (Güneş, 2015). As a result of the discussion of the importance of the relationship between tourism and the environment and sustainability, the concept of ecotourism has come to the fore.

The change in international tourism demands has increased the demand for ecotourism and made it a steadily growing part of the natural tourism sector (Kaypak, 2012; Üzümcü & Koç, 2017; Ankaya et al., 2018). Ecotourism is accepted as a sustainable tourism component based on the principles of development and protection of environmental heritage by local people and communities participating in the development of tourism (Mahravan, 2012). Although ecotourism activities are generally known as nature tourism activities, they have become ubiquitous in urban and rural areas.

According to Gül and Özaltın (2007b), the accepted basic components of ecotourism are as follows:

- Being nature-based, especially an effort to understand natural and cultural values and tending to transform this effort into protection,
- Conservation of biological diversity,
- Ensuring the active participation of local people,
- Providing socio-economic benefits to the region and increasing the level of life,
- Minimizing negative environmental and socio-cultural impacts
- Responsibility and sensitivity of ecotourists and local people in ecotourism activities
- Carrying out ecotourism activities in small groups or individually,
- Increasing sensitivity and awareness towards existing natural and cultural values,
- Keeping artificial elements and physical facilities strictly to a minimum and building these facilities of simple type, in harmony with the natural environment and local architecture,
- It can be summarized as a responsible, acceptable, and rational natural tourism activity that respects nature and the environment.

Ecotourism activities, it is aimed to explore nature, contribute to nature and learn as much as the excitement of adventure or the idea of achieving physical success (Akkuş & Gül, 2020b).

Considering the conceptual and basic characteristics of ecotourism activities to be carried out in a natural or cultural environment; Wildlife observation and examination, plant observation and examination, observation and examination of geomorphological formations (caves, canyons, fairy chimneys, waterfalls, etc.), examination of historical, archaeological, religious and traditional cultural objects and areas, ecotourism-based nature sports are grouped as (Gül & Özaltın, 2007a; Gül & Özaltın, 2008).

Ecotourism activities have positive and negative aspects in terms of environmental, economic, and social aspects (Gündüz, 2004; Gül & Özaltın, 2008). However, today, it is seen that natural areas and resource values are generally adversely affected because ecotourism practices in natural areas, together with general tourism activities, are not carried out following their purpose (Gül & Özaltın, 2008).

The "urban ecotourism" approach has come to the fore to minimize these negativities, not negatively affect the local people and visitors, and encourage and develop urban tourism (Paskaleva, 2001). It is an accepted approach that ecotourism activities are more rational, especially in and around urban areas (Akkuş & Gül, 2020a).

To contribute to the sustainable and versatile development of cities, importance is given to the evaluation, development, and diversification of tourism potential (European Commission, 2000).

In addition, urban tourism activities have become an important phenomenon that provides added value to the city and its people by concentrating on the architectural, monumental, historical, and cultural places and values of the cities.

Tourism values of a city mainly consist of four dimensions: physical characteristics of the city, elements of urban society, management (supply-oriented), and marketing (visitor-oriented) (Paskaleva-Shapira, 2007).

In this context. European sustainable urban tourism initiatives can be defined by 6 elements (Paskaleva, 2001).

- Allowing tourism access to existing infrastructures, attractions, parks, and other green spaces.
- To support the strengthening of the cultural and social vitality of the local community.
- To protect the mutual rights of residents and visitors.
- Ensuring economic vitality (providing long-term development and high-quality employment opportunities).
- Planning by arranging transportation and minimizing ecological damage.
- Not to allow unsustainable consumption patterns.

Efforts to develop, enrich and diversify the potential of urban tourism, especially to increase urban ecotourism activities, are increasing day by day. Considering that the world has limited land and most cultural facilities are located in urban areas, many studies have emphasized the importance of exploring and developing the urban ecotourism potential (Gibson, Dodd, Joppe & Jamieson, 2003; Green Tourism Association, 2006; Higham & Luck, 2002; Kastelein, 2004; Wu & Wang, 2007; Akkus & Gül, 2020a).

Although cultural values for economic and social development are at the forefront of urban tourism, urban ecotourism appears as an important component to ensure the environmental (ecological), social and economic development of cities (Wright, Hall & Lew, 1998; Wu, Wang & Ho, 2010). While urban tourism mostly gives importance to cultural aspects to support the urban economy (Douglas, 2001; Law, 1996), urban ecotourism gives importance to both natural and cultural aspects.

Although urban ecotourism is an emerging concept, its content is still not clearly defined and the differences between urban ecotourism and traditional ecotourism are still being discussed (Lawton & Weaver, 2001).

This study: Examination of the conceptual framework of the concept of urban ecotourism, natural (climate, geology, geomorphology, biodiversity, hydrology, soil structure, etc.) and cultural (historical and archaeological remains and artifacts, registered monumental architectural structures, registered buildings, and objects, etc.) values, and to create an urban ecotourism strategic action plan at the city scale of Isparta.

## **2. The Concept of Ecotourism and Its Activities**

Urban ecotourism was first proposed by Blackstone Corporation (1996) and accepted as sustainable travel to urban areas. In the conference named "Urban Ecotourism Conference" held in Canada in 2004, Urban ecotourism has been defined as activities for the protection of cities and a nature trip to cities (Wu et al., 2010). The first studies on urban ecotourism started with the application of ecotourism principles in the city as green tourism (Joppe & Dodds, 1998).

Urban ecotourism is a tourism approach that respects the natural ecosystem of the city and is perceived as exploring and visiting the natural and cultural resource values of the city. It also includes the focus of relevant stakeholders on the preservation and restoration of natural and cultural heritage in the urban environment. Urban ecotourism is a tourism approach that respects the city's natural ecosystem and is

perceived as exploring and visiting the natural and cultural resource values of the city (Akkuş & Gül, 2020a).

Urban ecotourism has 4 main purposes (Urban Ecotourism Declaration (UED), 2006):

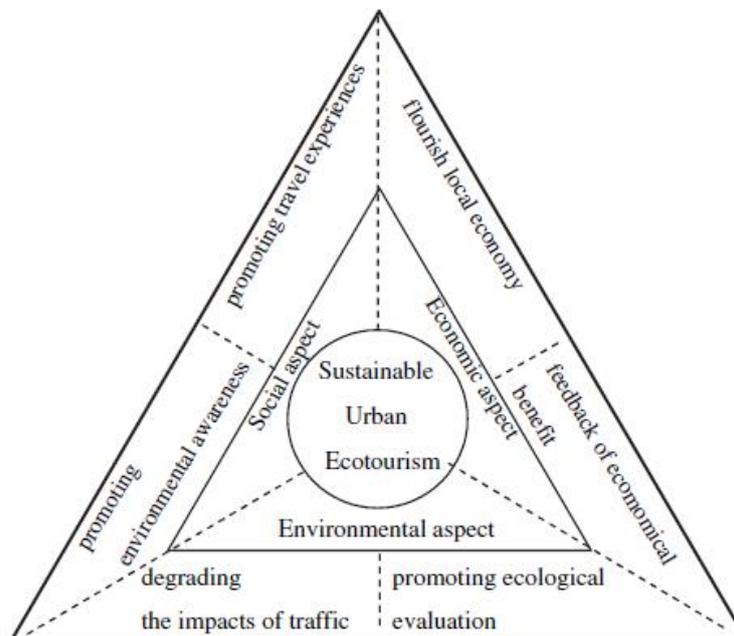
- To protect and renew the natural and cultural heritage (natural landscape, biodiversity, local culture),
- Maximizing local benefits, helping local people meet guests' accommodation needs and guiding them,
- To increase and raise awareness of city people and visitors on environmental issues, historical heritage values, and sustainability,
- To reduce ecological footprints.

The Toronto Green Tourism Association (2006) characterized Urban Ecotourism as urban green tourism and stated that it is travel and exploration in and around a city that enables visitors and residents to gain a greater appreciation of the city's natural and cultural resources.

The concept of urban ecotourism recognizes the significance of ecotourism in facilitating cultural exchange, environmental protection, and sustainable urban development (Jegdić & Gradinac, 2016).

Some characteristics of urban ecotourism, identified by Dodds and Marion (2003), also contribute to the harmonic development of the cities: ecologic responsibility, local economic vitality, cultural sensitivity, and wealth of experience through the active, personal and meaningful participation and inclusion of nature, people, places and cultures.

Sustainable urban ecotourism has three main goals: social, economic, and environmental. (Wu, Wang & Ho, 2010) (Figure 1).



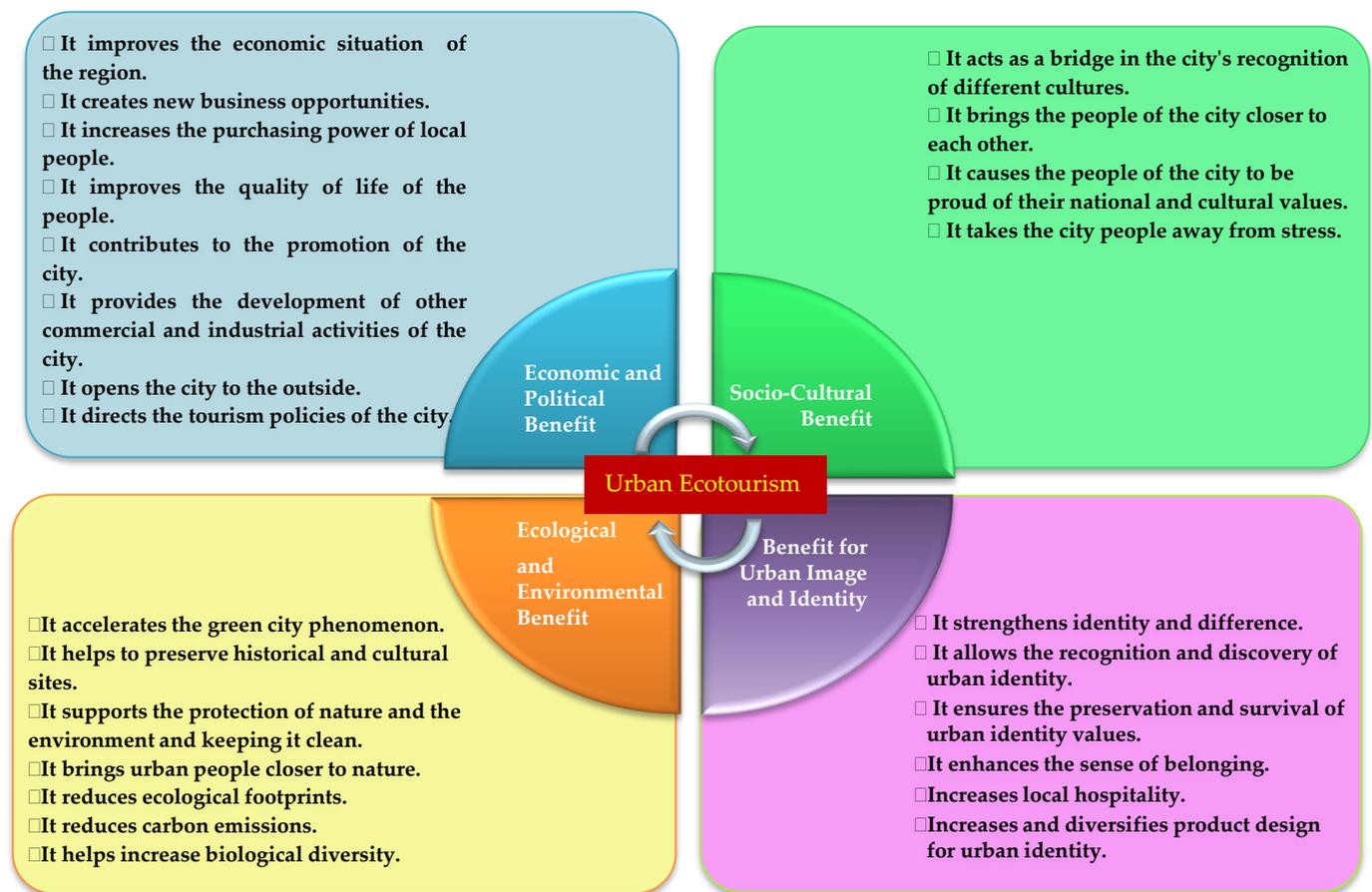
**Figure 1.** Tri-Dimensional Targeting Model of Sustainability (Wu, Wang & Ho, 2010).

In general, the basic principles of Urban Ecotourism are as follows (Akkuş, 2020; Akkuş & Gül, 2020a).

- It is natural and culturally based.
- It ensures the preservation and survival of the natural and cultural values of the city.
- Contributes to the ecological sustainability of the city.
- It encourages the holistic participation of all the stakeholders of the city (Local government and administrators, planners, decision-makers, NGOs, official institutions and organizations, etc.) in all processes of urban ecotourism.
- Provides stakeholder cooperation and coordination.

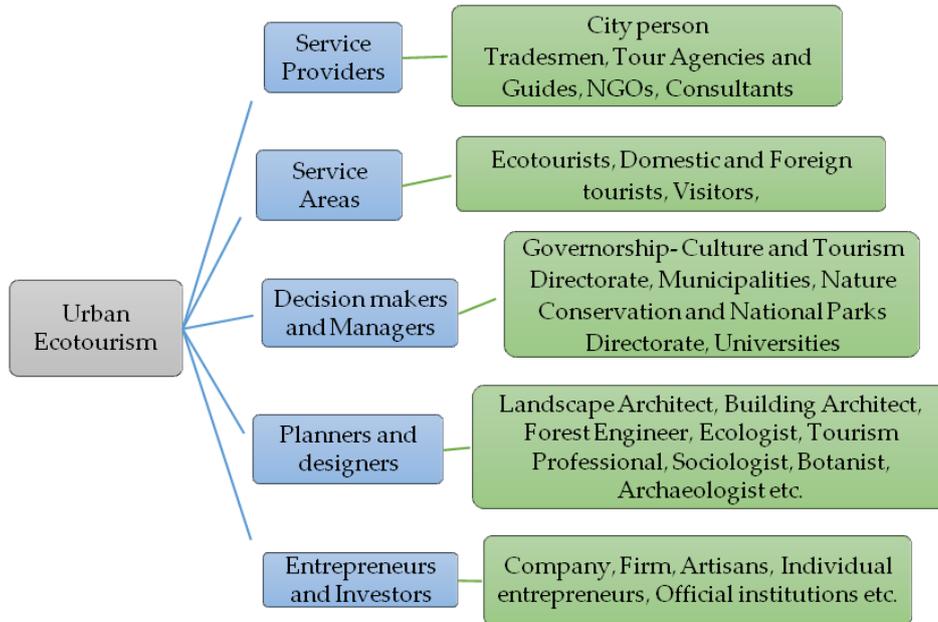
- It develops discovery, learning, experience, and a sense of belonging for urban people and ecotourists.
- It develops the sense of belonging of the urban people.
- It prioritizes the local identity and values of the city.
- Nature and environmental protection increase awareness.
- It provides ecological, social, and economic benefits to the city locality.
- It encourages and revitalizes the local economy and recycling of the city.
- It keeps the carbon emission and energy use of the city at a minimum level.
- It increases the responsibility, appreciation, and satisfaction level of urban people and ecotourists.
- It directs the city's management policies.
- It ensures that ecotourism investments are made and encouraged mostly by local and small businesses at the city scale.
- Ecotourism routes, planning/design, and management processes to be created in the context of urban ecotourism are organized holistically.

Urban ecotourism is a multifaceted tourism activity that is responsible, conservationist, participatory, ecological, flexible, and action-oriented. Urban ecotourism has 4 main benefits. 1. Economic and Political Benefit, 2. Socio-Cultural Benefit, 3. Ecological and Environmental Benefit 4. Urban Image and Benefit for Identity (Figure 2).



**Figure 2.** Benefits of Urban Ecotourism (Created by Akkuş & Gül)

Urban ecotourism can be summarized as service providers, service recipients, decision-makers and managers, planners and designers, entrepreneurs and investors (Figure 3) (Akkus, 2020).



**Figure 3.** Stakeholders of Urban Ecotourism (Akkus, 2020)

### 3. Method and Methodology

The first name was Baris, and later named Sabarta, Isparta is also known as the city of roses of the Pisidia region in ancient times. When the city has been chosen as a residential area since the early ages, it is thought that the city should have fertile soils from which good crops can be obtained, suitable climatic conditions, and most importantly water. This city came under the rule of Hittites, Phrygia, Lydians, Iranians, Macedonians, Romans, Arabs, Crusaders, Seljuks, Hamitoğulları, and Ottomans over time. With the proclamation of the Republic of Turkey, Isparta became a province in 1923 (Anonymous, 1997).

The economic life that dominates the city is based on agriculture, trade, and service sectors. The tendency to take a share from the developments in the tourism sector in Antalya is high. For these reasons, the service sector has a dynamic structure.

This study was produced from the Ph.D. The thesis titled "Urban Ecotourism and Isparta Urban Ecotourism Action Plan" was completed in 2020 by Akkuş. Inventory and analysis data obtained in the study were used. In addition, domestic and foreign sources related to the subject were examined and the information was updated and evaluated. In this article, the natural and cultural values of the ecotourism potential of the city were examined and an inventory was prepared. In addition, within the scope of the Ph.D. Thesis made by Akkuş (2020); The demands and tendencies of the urban people of Isparta regarding urban ecotourism and the results of the r- SWOT analysis made to the experts (n:50) using the Likert technique were taken into account. Using these data, Isparta urban ecotourism strategic action plan framework was determined. Thus, within the scope of the strategic action plan, basic targets for the future, sub-targets to reach the targets, and some activities/actions to reach each target are foreseen. The timeline and responsible stakeholders for these actions are proposed.

### 4. Findings

The findings of the study are explained in the following headings.

#### 4.1. Resource Inventory and Analysis of Urban Ecotourism in Isparta City

Resource Inventory and Analysis of Urban Ecotourism in Isparta City are discussed under this heading.

#### 4.1.1. Religious and Ethnic Structure/Object/Events

Religious and Ethnic Structure/Object/Events are discussed under this heading.

##### 4.1.1.1.Historical Mosques and Masjids

There are 9 mosques with historical value in the city center of Isparta. These; Dalboyunoğlu Mosque, Ali Efendi Mosque, Kavaklı Mosque, Mimar Sinan Mosque, Tabakhane Mosque, Muhiddin Masjid, Kutlu Bey (Ulu Mosque), İplikçi Mosque, Hızırbey Mosque (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Historical Mosques and Masjids in The City Center of Isparta

Historical Mosques and Masjids	General Description	Picture
<b>İplikçi Mosque</b>	It is located in Çelebiler District. It was named İplikçi Mosque because İplik Pazarı was established in the place where the mosque is located (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Kutlu Bey Mosque</b>	It is located in Gazi Kemal Neighborhood. The Ulu Mosque was named after Kutlubey, an Ottoman commander who lived during the reign of Murad I and showed usefulness. Kutlubey Mosque (Ulu Mosque) (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020). is one of the oldest mosques in the city center.	
<b>Dalboyunoglu Mosque</b>	It is a rectangular planned mosque with a hipped roof and tile cover, built-in 1709 from rubble stone in the center of Sav Town, Central District of Isparta Province (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Ali Efendi Mosque</b>	The date 1947 is written on the inscription of the square planned single-story mosque located at 1308 Street in Gazi Kemal District (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Kavaklı Mosque</b>	It is understood from the dates 1196 on the marble stone on the mihrab and 1197 on the inscription on the door that this mosque, near the Çelebiler District Kaymakkapı Square, was built between H. 1196-97 (M/1782, 1783) (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Mimar Sinan Mosque</b>	Which is among the oldest mosques in Isparta in the vicinity of the Kutlubey District Grape Bazaar, was built by the Governor of Isparta, Firdevs Pasha, in the style of Mimar Sinan, during the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Tannery Mosque</b>	Which is located in İskender District Çayboyu Street and was built in masonry with a square plan, and has a single minaret (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	

<b>Muhiddin Masjid</b>	In Emre District, it is a single-story building with wooden vineyard walls, and a hipped roof covered with Turkish-style tiles, although it appears as a prayer room in the land registry, no mihrab detail can be found (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Hızırbey Mosque (Cami-i Kebir)</b>	Located in Keçeci District, this mosque was built in the name of Hızırbey, the son of the founder of the Hamidoğulları State, Feleküddin Dünder Bey, who succeeded him after his death (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	

#### 4.1.1.2. Historical Churches

There are 4 churches with historical value in the city center of Isparta. These; Aya Yorgi Church, Sav Church Ruins, Aya Payana Church, Kirse Başı Mevki Church Ruins are listed ( Böcüzade, 1983) (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Churches in The City Center of Isparta

Churches	General Description	Picture
<b>Aya Yorgi Church (Aya Ishotya Church)</b>	It is located in Doğanca Neighborhood. The main axis of the building is east and west. The corners are large and smooth limestone, and on the other side are small cut stones of the same type. On another note, the date of construction of the building is 1794. Different stones and colored marbles are used for doors, window arches, sides, and columns. The giant arched entrance to the west has three directions. At the same time, on the left and right sides of this entrance, the mezzanine and the bell tower can be reached by two stairs (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Aya Payana Church (Aya Baniya Church)</b>	Turan District, one of the old settlements of Isparta, is located on 2213 Street. It is estimated that it was built around 1750 (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	

#### 4.1.1.3. Tombs, Cemeteries, Martyrdoms

In the city center of Isparta, there are a total of 6 tombs, cemeteries, and martyrdoms with historical value. Pir Sultan Tomb, İncirli Sergeant Tomb, Yakaören Tomb, Hacı Sultani Tomb, Alaaddin Efendi Lodge, Martyrdom are listed (Table 3).

**Table 3.** Tombs, Cemeteries, and Martyrdoms in The City Center of Isparta

Names	General Description	Picture
<b>Pir Sultan Tomb</b>	The tomb, which has a reinforced concrete structure among the trees, is located 100-150 meters from the place that separates Gökçay Sandere road (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>İncirli Sergeant Tomb</b>	Town of Sav, this Tomb is made of stone and has an octagonal body with four arches on each side and one arch on each side. There are also four openings, one of which extends to the floor, and three of which are built as windows (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Yakaoren Tomb,</b>	In Yakaören village, the octagonal cupola is octagonal with a dome drum and a dome inside and out. The dome is lead-plated. At the entrance of the cupola, the crown door has a pointed arch and the edges are grooved. The door is rectangular and round-arched. Köfke laying around the cupola (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Hacei Sultani Tomb</b>	In Hisar Neighborhood, next to the obelisk in the place known as "Uyuoğlu Lodge", was originally from Isparta and served Mevla Ali Tusi, one of the scholars of the time of Murad I, and received some ranks and civil servants. Then he died of illness, and it was called Hacı -i Sultanî to distinguish his name (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Alaaddin Efendi Lodge ( Aldan Dede)</b>	It is located in the Gülcü District of Isparta, east of Hergele Square. It is a square planned structure and is covered with a single dome from the inside and a hipped roof with Marseille tiles on the outside (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Martyrdom</b>	The martyrdom where the first martyr was buried in Karaağaç Neighborhood in 1940 was registered in 1981 and the construction of a monument and ceremonial area was started. The cemetery was restored in 2001 (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	

#### 4.1.1.4. Historical Baths

There are a total of 4 baths with historical value in the city center of Isparta. They are listed as Cumhuriyet Bath, Dalboyunoğlu Bath, Bey Bath, Aliköy Bath (Table 4).

**Table 4.** Historical Baths in The City Center of Isparta

Names	General Description	Picture
<b>Republic Bath</b>	Emre Neighborhood Hammam consists of two parts, male and female. It has been reflecting the traditional bath culture since its first day with its changing rooms, entertainment baths, and nature-friendly hygienic service concept (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Dalboyunoglu Hamam</b>	Located in Kutlubey District, it is the largest and most important of the baths in Isparta. Two baths, a male and a female bath, are adjacent (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Bey's Bath</b>	On the condition that the water used in the bath in Gazi Kemal Neighborhood Külhan Street was separated from the tea water in the first preparation and collected in a fountain and taken from this fountain, and then some of the water was brought by a woman named Amine Hatun from the Andık Creek, on the condition that the bath owners take care of and repair the water channels before the bath. (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Aliköy Turkish Bath</b>	Aliköyü Hamam is located in the northeast of Isparta, connected to Isparta and 8 km from the city center. away from Aliköy, a small village. The bath, which has been maintained by the villagers until today, is located in the Hatip Dede Tomb (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	

#### 4.1.1.5. Historical Bedestens and Bazaars

There are 2 bazaars with historical value in the city center of Isparta. They are listed as Bedesten (Firdevs Bey Bedesten) and Old Grape Bazaar (Table 5).

**Table 5.** Historical Covered Bazaars and Bazaars in The City Center of Isparta

Bedesten and Bazaars	General Description	Picture
<b>Firdevs Bey Bedesten</b>	It was built by Isparta Governor Firdevs Bey in 1561 to provide income for Mimar Sinan Mosque in Kutlubey District (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Old Grape Bazaar</b>	Kutlubey District, Çarsı is a bazaar belonging to the Ottoman Period, known to have been built by the Governor of Isparta, Firdevs Bey (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	

#### 4.1.2. Traditional and Special Architectural Structure and Objects

Traditional and Special Architectural Structure and Objects are discussed under this heading.

##### 4.1.2.1. Historical Isparta Houses

In the city center of Isparta, there are a total of 4 kinds of historical houses with historical value. They are classified as First Type Turkish Houses (Aga Houses), Second Type Turkish Houses ( Hanaylı Houses), Acem Houses, and Greek Houses (Ecnebi Houses). Isparta The traditional housing structure was wooden roof houses covered with earthen roofs since its first establishment. It is seen that the kitchen does not have a fixed position in traditional Isparta houses. While the kitchen is located on the ground floor in many houses, it is sometimes located on the upper floor in houses with two floors and usually an interior sofa. It is frequently seen that the kitchen is located on the upper floor and between the rooms in the houses with interior sofas. It is generally opposite the stair landing and has approximately the same dimensions (Demirci, 2010) (Table 6).

**Table 6.** Historical Isparta Houses in The City Center of Isparta

Historical Isparta Houses	General Description	Picture
<b>First Type Turkish House (Aga Houses)</b>	Tahtani and Fevkani (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Second Type Turkish Houses ( Hanaylı Houses)</b>	Hanayli houses also consist of two parts. In the lower inn, at the bottom of the upper inn, there are the stables and the doors to the lower house (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Persian Houses</b>	Çayboyu, Sümerbank, and Kestaneli streets, towards the end of the 17th century, when about 300 Armenian citizens settled in Isparta from the Caucasus, they brought their unique architecture with them (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Greek Houses (Foreign Houses)</b>	In the houses built by the Greeks who settled in Isparta, they created a new type of building, influenced by the Armenian houses, by the closed architecture (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Isparta Historical Factory Chimneys</b>	On the creek road, 4 factory chimneys made of red brick in an upwardly narrowing cylindrical form are located by the creek (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	

#### 4.1.2.2. Historical Schools

There were 3 schools in the city center of Isparta during the Ottoman period. These; are listed as Gazi Primary School, Cumhuriyet Primary School, and Former High Commercial School (Table 7).

**Table 7.** Historical Schools in The City Center of Isparta

Historic Old Schools	General Description	Picture
<b>Governor's Building</b>	It is located in Kutlubey Neighborhood. When the first two-story wooden building became unusable, it was expropriated from Nasuhzade Süleyman Ağa, one of the heirs of the Isparta Governor Çelik Mehmet Pasha, and started to be used as the Government House (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Cumhuriyet Primary School</b>	Cumhuriyet Primary School is in Çelebiler District. The entrance is symmetrical in the middle axis of the building (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Gazi Primary School</b>	The building has a square plan, the lower floor is made of smooth-cut stone and the upper floor is Bagdadi. Smooth cut stones are Kofke stones. Mortar was used between the stones. The entrance door is single and is on the south side and in the middle. The entrance door is a double leaf. At the entrance, there is a semicircular 4-step staircase (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Former Higher Trade School</b>	6 Mart Street in Kepeci District, was built in a rectangular plan. At the entrance, there is a cihannüma (tower-shaped glass room) with a hipped roof and balcony, supported by four stone columns (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	

#### 4.1.2.3. Historical Fountains

There are a total of 2 fountains with historical value in the city center of Isparta. It is listed as the Yılkıran (Pit) Fountain and the Snowflake Fountain. The large fountain, called the Watermelon Fountain, with taps in four directions, was built by Kepeci Hacı Mustafa Ağa, who brought water to Isparta, in the name of Halil Hamid Pasha ( Böcüzade, 1983) (Table 8).

**Table 8.** Historical Baths in The City Center of Isparta

Historical Fountains	General Description	Picture
<b>Yılankıran (Pit) Fountain</b>	Sülübey neighborhood of Isparta. It is an Ottoman-era fountain. It is the oldest known historical fountain in the province (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Watermelon Fountain</b>	It was built by Keçeci Hacı Mustafa Ağa, who brought water to Isparta, located in Kutlubey District, in the name of Halil Hamid Pasha (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	

#### 4.1.2.4. Museums

There are 2 museums in the city center of Isparta. These; are listed as Isparta Museum and Isparta Ethnography Carpet and Rug Museum (Table 9).

**Table 9.** Museums in The City Center of Isparta

Museums	General Description	Picture
<b>Isparta Museum</b>	It is located in Istiklal District. The first museum studies in Isparta started with the opening of the Community Center in 1933. The foundation of the museum building was laid in 1971. The construction of the museum was completed in 1984 (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Ethnography Carpet and Rug Museum</b>	Located at Gökçay Junction. In our museum, which was put into service by Isparta Municipality in 2013, approximately 3,500 carpets, rugs, and ethnographic products used by Turks in Anatolian Geography are exhibited (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	

#### 4.1.2.5. Historical Train Stations

Stations in the city center of Isparta. These; Isparta Train Station is listed as Kuleönü Train Station (Table 10).

**Table 10.** Historical Train Stations in The City Center of Isparta

Historical Train Stations	General Description	Picture
<b>Isparta Train Station</b>	It is in Istiklal District. Isparta Train Station is a railway station connected to the city center of Isparta. The historical train station in Isparta was built in 1919. It is possible to easily reach many places from the station located in the city center. The station is just walking distance from many hotels. The station belongs to the Republic of Turkey State Railways; In addition to regional trains, it serves the Lakes Express train between Isparta and Izmir. There are travel card sales points and areas suitable for disabled access at the station (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Kuleonu Train Station</b>	It is located in Kuleönü Town. It consists of the main service building, lodging, warehouse, weighbridge, and WC. The main service building consists of single-story rectangular sections adjacent to the two-story rectangular building. The lower floor windows have wooden shutters. This station has a special feature as it is the station Atatürk used to come to Antalya (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	

#### 4.1.2.6. Gulbirlık Facilities

Oil rose (*Rose damascana*) and rose oil production has been carried out in the Isparta region for over 100 years. With this feature, Isparta is called the “Land of Roses” (Table 11).

**Table 11.** Gülbirlık Facilities Are Located in The City Center of Isparta

Rose Plants	General Description	Picture
<b>Gulbirlık Facility</b>	Gulbirlık was established in 1954 as the Union of Cooperatives, formed by 9 founding unit cooperatives. Gulbirlık currently has 6 unit cooperatives, 8000 producer partners, 7 units of rose oil plants established in 5 different places, and 1 unit of the rose concrete plant (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	

#### 4.1.3. Archaeological values

There are 4 ancient cities in the city center of Isparta. These are Beldibi Locality Building Ruins, Aliköy which is listed as Netropol Area, Bademli 3rd Degree Archaeological Site, and Devayeri Remains. There are 3 mounds and burial chambers in the city center of Isparta. These; are Gündürle Mound, Tavukçu Sırtı Tombs, and Rock Tombs They are listed as Tekke Mevki Rock Tombs (Table 12).

**Table 12.** Archaeological Values of The City of Isparta and Its Surroundings

Archaeological values	General Description	Picture
<b>Beldibi Locality Building Ruins,</b>	It is in the Dere District. As a result of the Rescue Excavation carried out in the area on 09.-13.11.2010, the remains of a 'U' shaped structure were revealed. This structure should be a structure designed for passengers, connected with ancient roads and milestones (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Deveyeri District Ruins</b>	Our city, Center, about 2 km from Sav Town. south of Antalya-Isparta highway, about 500 meters west of "Deveyeri ". The area in question has the appearance of a mound at a height of 2-3 meters from the surrounding land. There are orchards on it (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Göndürle Mound</b>	The mound; is located at the beginning of the plain to the south of the hills where Göndürle Village is located. The mound measures 100x150 m (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Tavukçu Sırtı Location rock tombs</b>	Rock Tombs is located in the northwest of Bozanönü Village, 10 km north of Isparta city center (Ataseven et al., 2019).	
<b>Tekke Mevki Rock Tombs</b>	The Merkez Yazısöğüt Village of Isparta province. The tomb, which is dated to the Roman period, was carved into a leveled rock on a large rock near the ground level. Its entrance is rectangular and narrow, and its interior is wide. The interior is in the form of a room (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	

#### 4.1.4. Spatial values

Spatial values are discussed under this heading.

##### 4.1.4.1. Urban Open and Green Spaces

City parks (Ayazmana Historical Recreation Park, Gökçay Park), many neighborhood parks, Milas recreational area, Gölcük Nature Park, Çaylength green belt, Süleyman Demirel botanical garden, SDU campus, urban forests, agricultural areas and green areas such as rose gardens, apple, and cherry orchards are open and green areas that can be evaluated in terms of urban ecotourism (Table 13).

**Table 13.** Urban Open and Green Spaces in The City Center of Isparta

Spatial values	General Description	Picture
<b>Historical Ayazmana Park</b>	Ayazmana promenade is in the southeast of the central district and is connected to the district by an asphalt road (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Milas Location</b>	You can have a picnic in the shade of pine trees, in the area where bird sounds are mixed, and eat fresh trout in trout production facilities (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Gökçay Urban Park</b>	It is a picnic place on the slopes of Hisartepe, with a bird's eye view of Isparta, surrounded by vineyards and gardens, and with restaurants (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Golcuk Nature Park</b>	The lake is surrounded by volcanic ash peaks up to 150-300 m (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Basın ( Industry) Park</b>	Sanayi Neighbourhood There is Basın Park at 104. Street, Isparta 32200 (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020). There are red pine and ash trees.	
<b>Rose Garden Park</b>	Sanayi, 154. Street, 32200 Merkez/Isparta (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>City Center Square</b>	Kutlubey District. Kutlubey neighbourhood is located at latitude 37.765415 and longitude 30.555698 (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Damgaci Street</b>	It is Çelebiler neighbourhood Damgacı street, which reflects the historical texture of Isparta with all its beauties (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Çay Boyu Green Belt</b>	Çay boyu green belt is on Gökçay road 32000/Isparta road (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Isparta Municipality Stray Animal Care and Rehabilitation Center</b>	There is a Stray Animal Care and Rehabilitation Center established by the Municipality of Isparta on the Koçtepe Village road (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	

<b>Süleyman Demirel Botanical Garden</b>	Botanical garden; It is a scientific open-air museum where plants of the world and Turkey are grown and exhibited (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Çünür Hill Picnic Areas</b>	Çünür District. The prestige center of Isparta is Çünür Tepesi. There are mausoleums of 3 saints such as Eyüp Dede, Yakup Dede and Incili Baba (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>SDU Campus</b>	Süleyman Demirel University is a state university established in Isparta in 1992. Named after the 9th President of Isparta, Süleyman Demirel, the university has two campuses, approximately 10 km from the city center of Isparta and on both sides of the D 685 highway, the East Campus and the West Campus (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Monumental Trees (Sycamore)</b>	Sycamore tree: The sycamore tree, located in Sülübey neighbourhood, Çay Neighborhood, must probably be the sycamore of the conquest, planted on the date of the conquest of Isparta. The trunk of the large sycamore tree is carved due to natural reasons (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
	Chestnut Tree: It is located at the corner of 117th Street in Yenice neighbourhood, on the Geçit Way. The trunk of the chestnut tree in Yenice neighbourhood is very large boxed (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Çünür Kırtape Marble Quarry</b>	Çünür Kırtape Marble Quarry is located in Çünür District.	
<b>Davraz Ski Center</b>	Davraz Mountain, with its 2635 m summit height, is one of the mountain masses rising between Eğirdir and Kovada Lakes in the Lakes Region of the Mediterranean Region and surrounding the Isparta Plain (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	

#### 4.1.5. Isparta City's Intangible Resource Values

Intangible Resource Values of Isparta City's are shown in Table 14.

**Table 14.** Isparta City's Intangible Resource Values

Intangible Values	General Description	Picture
<b>Isparta carpet weaving</b>	It has an ancient history. It is located in and around Isparta, which has had a very important Turkmen population since the 12th century (Özçelik, 2014).	
<b>Isparta Rose</b>	Oil rose ( <i>Rosa damascena</i> Mill .), plant kingdom It is included in the Rosales team, Rosaceae family, Rosa genus, from the Angiospermae (angiosperms) subdivision of the Spermatophyta ( plants with seeds) division (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Pulley Oak</b> ( <i>Quercus vulcanica</i> [ BOISS. ET HELDR. EX ] KOTSCH.	Pulley oak is an endemic species belonging to the Isparta region. Young shoots are reddish, first hairy, later bare (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Isparta Bread</b>	Isparta bread, Çünür bread, black oven bread, or stone oven bread, can keep its freshness for about 1 week at room temperature and about 1 month in the refrigerator (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	
<b>Isparta Kabune Rice</b>	Kabune ", which is unique with its cooking style, as well as a meal of dry beans with meat in collective events such as weddings, engagements, festivals, celebrations, and mawlid in Isparta province and its districts (Isparta Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2020).	

#### 4.2. Integrated Urban Ecotourism Strategic Action Plan

The ecotourism action plan of the city of Isparta has been prepared in this thesis by taking into account the results of the inventory and survey studies, the survey made to the city people, and the results of the SWOT analysis. In this context, two thematic objectives (axes) and objectives and activities for the realization of these objectives are envisaged. The Action Plan envisages 10 years (between 2020-and 2030). Relevant stakeholders and their responsibilities are defined in the realization of these actions. Accordingly, the list of stakeholders:

1. Isparta Governorate
2. Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism
3. Nature Conservation and National Parks Branch Office
4. Isparta Municipality
5. Suleymen Demirel University (SDU)
6. Isparta University of Applied Sciences (ISUBU)
7. Headmen's Offices
8. City Council
9. Provincial Directorate of Sports and Youth
10. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)
11. Directorate of National Education
12. Urban people

13. West Mediterranean Development Agency (BAKA)

14. Agriculture and Rural Development Support Institution (TKDK).

Ecotourism for Isparta city center and its surroundings. Two main objectives have been envisaged. (Table 15).

1. Main Objective: Ensuring the Sustainability of Isparta City Ecotourism Planning and Management Activities

2. Main Objective: Increasing National/International Promotion, Awareness, and Making It A Brand

**Table 15.** Integrated Urban Ecotourism Strategic Action Plan

<b>Main OBJECTIVE 1. Ensuring the Sustainability of Isparta City Ecotourism Planning and Management Activities</b>			
<b>Goal 1. Making holistic urban ecotourism management planning</b>			
<b>Activities/Actions</b>	<b>Detailed Description</b>	<b>Responsible Stakeholders</b>	<b>Time</b>
a. Carrying out a detailed natural and cultural inventory study	Natural and cultural data of the city of Isparta will be processed in a GIS environment.	1,2,5,6	2020-2030
b. Identifying and prioritizing target species/areas or values to be protected	The plant and animal species to be protected will be determined.	1,2,3	2020-2030
c. Determination of protection and use zones	Areas in the balance of protection and use will be created.	1,2,3	2020-2030
d. Making visitor management plans	Conducting surveys to measure the expectations of urban area visitors and their satisfaction with the services provided.	3,4	2020-2030
e. Making the field holistic management organization, determining the duties and responsibilities	To print promotional materials for urban areas and activities at local, national, and international levels.	3,4	2020-2030
f . Making holistic financial planning	Urban ecotourism activities and negotiating with the relevant institutions about the support that can be given for eco-tourism activities apart from these determined incentives.	2,4	2020-2030
g. Preparation of landscape and building architecture application and renovation projects in the usage zone and ecotourism route	A Tourism Management and Development Plan will be prepared to continue urban ecotourism activities on a healthy ground and in a sustainable way.	4,5,6	2020-2030

Goal 2. Determination of current and possible ecotourism activities in the area and routes for each activity			
a. Determining the most suitable areas for ecotourism activities according to the current conditions of the area	The areas where eco-tourism activities can be carried out and the features that can serve tourism will be determined.	4,5,6	2020-2030
b. Designing and implementing point or linear routes of each ecotourism activity	Creation of maps with routes for ecotourists	4,5,6	2020-2030
c. Making holistic and multi-purpose spatial use planning and designs that will ensure the use of the area in all seasons	And superstructure deficiencies on the determined eco-tour routes will be eliminated.	4,5,6	2020-2030
d. Carrying out small groups (approximately 15 people) of ecotourists who will participate in the ecotourism event	Small groups will be formed for ecotourism activity.	4,5,6	2020-2030
e. Determination and monitoring of bearing capacities of areas	The carrying capacities of eco-tourism areas will be scientifically demonstrated.	4,5,6	2020-2030
Goal 3. Development of local products specific to the area			
a. Selling local products in a way that will ensure the economic revival of the region and building sales stands in suitable places for this purpose.	Sales of products suitable for the region will be increased.	1,4	2020-2030
b. Creating job opportunities for local people, especially women and youth	It will be ensured that the interaction of the tourists who come to the region for eco-tourism activities with the local people will be increased.	1,4	2020-2030
Goal 4. Ensuring and developing coordination and cooperation among stakeholders			
a. Establishment of the holistic management unit specific to the area and creation of the organization chart (In this context, the creation of the outdoor sports or ecotourism unit)	Ensuring the protection and control of ecotourism areas	1,2,3,4	2020-2030
b. Ensuring the participation of relevant stakeholders and determining their duties and responsibilities	Training of guides with field knowledge	1,2,3,4	2020-2030
c. Making investments and priorities with relevant stakeholders	People in ecotourism activities	1,2,3,4	2020-2030
d. Creating options to increase the budget and financial resources	Preparation of regional tourism management and development plan	1,2,3,4	2020-2030
e. Providing site-specific resources and applications by preparing national and international projects	Increasing revenues by increasing product diversity	1,2,3,4	2020-2030

f. Preferring energy options compatible with nature	Making designs with energy options compatible with nature	1,2,3,4	2020-2030
g. There are cooperatives, associations, etc. that support the development of ecotourism in the region. A local organization provides the organization	It is the planning of rich content tours for special interests.	1,2,3,4	2020-2030
h. Training field guides for ecotourism activities	It is the training of guides and tour operators with field knowledge.	1,2,3,4	2020-2030

## Main OBJECTIVE 2.

### Increasing National/International Promotion, Awareness, and Making It A Brand

#### Goal 1. Developing the promotion and advertising activities of the area

Activities/Actions	Detailed Description	Responsible Stakeholders	Time
Carrying out promotional activities for ecotourism areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Production and announcement of written and visual promotional materials</li> <li>b. Ensuring participation in events such as national and international fairs and festivals</li> <li>c. Inviting tourism agencies, companies, and guides to the area and promoting them</li> <li>d. Making TV documentaries and movies</li> <li>e. Use of information and direction signs for the area</li> <li>f. Providing publicity in the field with various activities such as courses, training, competitions, and festivals.</li> <li>g. Preparing and activating the web page</li> </ul>	4,5,6,13,14	2020-2030
Establishment of Tourist Information Centers	Information centers will be established in favorite districts. These centers will be established by renting or restoring idle school buildings or village houses.	4,5,6,7	2020-2030
Field presentation to tour operators, foreign journalists, and television broadcasters	Ecotourism areas will be introduced to tour operators, foreign journalists, and television broadcasters, and the areas will be improved by taking their opinions and evaluations.	5,6	2020-2030

#### Goal 2. Ensuring the participation of the people of the region in ecotourism activities and the protection of ecotourism areas

Ecotourism education	Educating the local people about eco-tourism, and developing products that can be offered for ecotourism.	4,5,6	2020-2030
Nature education of local people	Education of local people to explain nature, also the education of children.	4,5,6	2020-2030
Establishment of the volunteer system	Selection and training of nature volunteers.	WWF, universities	2020-2030
ecological carrying capacities of eco-tourism areas	The carrying capacities of eco-tourism areas will be scientifically demonstrated.	4,5,6	2020-2030

<b>Goal 3. Increasing investments in the tourism sector in Isparta by providing incentives to implement tourism investment projects</b>				
Identifying ecotourism financing opportunities	Determining the incentives provided for tourism activities and negotiating with the relevant institutions about the supports that can be given for eco-tourism activities apart from these determined incentives.	4,5,6,8		2020-2030
Conducting feasibility studies for eco-tourism investments	Feasibility study support will be given to investors for eco-tourism investments.	4,5,6		2020-2030
<b>Goal 4. Ensuring revenue growth by increasing product diversity</b>				
inventory studies for eco-tourism areas	The areas where eco-tourism activities can be carried out and the features that can serve tourism will be determined.	4.7		2020-2030
Elimination of infrastructure deficiencies in eco-tourism areas	Infrastructure deficiencies in eco-tourism areas will be eliminated.	4		2020-2030
Carrying out promotional activities for eco-tourism areas	Efficient promotion of eco-tourism areas, whose infrastructure deficiencies are eliminated, will be carried out. In this regard, national and international competitions and festivals will be organized throughout the plan, and award-winning documentaries promoting eco-tourism areas will be prepared.	4,5,6,7,8		2020-2030
<b>Goal 5. Ensuring change in visitor behavior</b>				
Making visitor notifications	Tourists participating in eco-tourism activities will be briefed about the natural and historical background and features of eco-tourism areas, thereby minimizing visitor-induced environmental damage.	4,5,6		2020-2030
Increasing interaction with local people	It will be ensured that the interaction of the tourists who come to the region for eco-tourism activities with the local people will be increased. The participation of the tourists in the social organizations of the local people will be ensured and the organic products grown in the region will be promoted to the tourists.	Locals, Guides		2020-2030

## 5. Conclusion

Today's cities take innovative and competitive initiatives in the face of multifaceted problems experienced on a global scale. One of these approaches is considered an important savior of urban ecotourism to diversify the tourism sector, which is seen as the locomotive of the economic development of the cities.

Urban ecotourism is an important component to increase the tourism potential and diversity of cities, spreading tourism activities over 12 months, protecting and sustaining existing natural and cultural values, increasing awareness of nature and environmental protection, and increasing local income sources. In general, urban ecotourism activities are accepted as an approach that can affect the competition between cities in terms of tourism and produce results in favor of cities.

The increasing interest of the tourists coming to the city in nature, the desire to protect the urban green heritage, and to contribute voluntarily to its sustainable development have made urban ecotourism attractive (Ville de Lausanne, 2006; Andari 2016). The implementation of ecotourism principles in the city

encourages environmental behavior and positively changes the attitudes and value judgments of visitors (Butty et al., 2014).

Urban ecotourism helps entrepreneurs and the local community contribute to the economic and social development of the city, taking into account ecological sustainability standards. Tourists are looking for new ways to explore cities. For this reason, urban ecotourism plays an important role in the prospects for a better future vision and a sustainable city image.

Contrary to classic eco destinations, urban ecotourism is more acceptable considering the higher capacity of urban destinations and the potential to renovate locations that have been degraded by industrial, traffic, or other human activities. The experiences and examples from Europe and North America indicate that such projects significantly contribute to the sustainable ecological and social-economic development of many cities (Jegdic & Gradinac, 2016).

The city of Isparta has various natural and cultural ecotourism resources for ecotourism purposes. Within the scope of the above-mentioned strategic action plan for Isparta urban ecotourism, two main objectives and 9 goals have been envisaged and should be implemented in terms of discourse and action. Thus, as a result of the evaluation of the strategic action plan, it will make great contributions to the multi-faceted development of the city and make it an important eco-destination city.

In this context, Isparta's urban ecotourism approaches should be associated with the tourism strategic plan of the holistic city and an action plan should be created for each activity. The action plan of urban ecotourism activities can be done individually in spatial, route, and point dimensions, or it can be organized as routes that combine more than one activity.

These efforts will not only increase the awareness and activeness of the people of the city but also create an opportunity to attract more tourists and promote the city.

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