

Identifying the most desirable locations for the construction of Marine Tourism Sites

Case study: Tonekabon

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

Marine tourism is one of the most attractive and most popular tourist branches that has flourished much in recent decades and has attracted a significant part of tourism economy. In the meantime, despite having extensive coastal borders in the north and south, Iran has not yet been able to provide tourists with desirable services in relation to marine tourism. The constructing of marine tourism sites in coastal areas is one of the measures that can be taken in this regard. In order to locate such sites, it is needed to take the following criteria into consideration: distance from the sea, view of the sea, exposing to the sun, land use, distance from natural hazards such as faults, floods, erosion, distance from the residential areas, distance from the rivers and lakes, distance from road networks, distance from protected areas and percentage of slope. In this regard, the present paper aims to determine the most appropriate places for the construction of marine tourism sites in the city of Tonekabon, considering the importance of quantitative and qualitative identification and assessment of the characteristics of the areas. It is hoped that managers and planners can provide the ground for developing marine tourism on the southern margin of the Caspian Sea in accordance with the available capacities, by assessing and analyzing this process in the coastal areas of this Sea. The present research seeks to answer the following question: Where are the most suitable places to build a marine tourism site in the city of Tonekabon?

Materials & Methods

The present research with descriptive-analytical method aims to identify the most desirable locations for the construction of marine tourism sites. The required information was collected by a library method. In order to weight the criteria under study, the opinions of 32 experts were surveyed and the AHP method was used. After determining the weight of each criterion, the information layers of each of the criteria were prepared in the GIS environment and finally, with overlaying of the information layers, the most suitable locations for the marine tourism sites were introduced.

Results & Discussion

According to the experts, the criteria of exposing to the sun, slope percentage, sea view, land use, severity of erosion in the area, and the criteria of distance from the sea, distance from the road networks, distance from the faults, distance from the protected areas, distance from the rivers, distance from the residential areas and distance from the areas subject to flood, were scored based on the distance (Table-1). Then, the information layers were created based on each of the criteria in the GIS environment and rated according to the weight of each criterion. Accordingly, four areas in the city of Tonekabon have been identified as more desirable compared to other points in order to locate the marine tourism sites.

Table 1: score of criterias

criteria	score	criteria	score
distance from roads	0.053	sun	0.056
distance from fault	0.176	slope percentage	0.029
distance from protected areas	0.037	view of sea	0.071
distance from the river and lake	0.026	land use	0.052
distance from the settlement	0.017	erosion	0.185
distance from the flood areas	0.199	distance from the sea	0.098

Conclusion

The correct location of the various land uses by using tools, techniques, and scientific models and in accordance with the principles and rules of planning can be efficient in solving land use problems. Therefore, proper planning for the creation of marine tourism sites in the proposed places, in order of priority, will provide sustainable tourism development and mutually the economic development of the region. Accordingly, based on the analyses and the results of the research, the following suggestions are presented for the construction of a marine tourism site in general:

- Accurate and complete identification of facilities and services available in neighboring settlements with the proposed location.
- A detailed study of the proposed location for the construction of a marine tourism site
- Investigation and feasibility of the deployment of activities related to the marine tourism in the proposed location.
- Studying and identifying the facilities needed by tourists visiting the sea within the desired range.
- Advertising and introducing the capabilities of marine tourism at national and regional levels.
- Encouraging investors and local people to invest in the construction of tourism sites.
- Allocating sufficient funds and credits to build the primary infrastructure.
- Strengthening and improving roads and communication paths to the proposed location
- Familiarizing people and authorities with the benefits of marine tourism and trying to attract their participation
- Improving and enhancing the safety and security conditions within areas of interest.

Keywords: Marine Tourism, Location, Caspian Sea, GIS, AHP.