Polytechnic University of Catalonia
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Proposal of master thesis

Base Plan for Ecotourism Development in Intermediate Cities
Case Study: Damavand, Iran

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Ecotourism is a type of tourism industry based on natural attractions could be a promoter for socio-economic growth for intermediate cities. Iran with 70 million people and 1,648,000 km² has a high potential of ecotourism with high amount of natural attractions in: Forest, beaches, mountains and desert. Damavand is an intermediate city which is located in east of Tehran with distance of 65 kilometers. It is the capital of Damavand country in the province of Tehran.
City Population: At the 2006 census, its central population was 36,433, in 10,279 families.

- Mount Damavand which is a potentially active volcano and the highest peak in Iran, has a special place in Persian mythology and folklore.
- City set in a closed-off and well-watered valley below the foothills of Mount Damavand.
- The origins of the town go back to the Sassanian (550 AD).
- The most important existing historic monument from 15th century.
- Structure of the city has 4 cores and neighborhoods.
- Current planning system of the city is general plan.
Aim:
preparing the base plan for an intermediate city so that main factors for ecotourism development be achieved.
The use of base plan towards ecotourism development could be a model for planning for this type of cities towards ecotourism development. Therefore capacity and potential of base plan with this purpose will be evaluated.

II. Objectives
- Definition the capacity of base plan towards the local development
- Showing that how base plan could act as a tool for long-term urban planning
- Presentation of base plan as a model for ecotourism development which shows how an object like ecotourism development could be involved in Base plan.
- Analytical evaluating of base plan capacity in line with subjective developments like ecotourism development.
- A comparison between current planning system and Base plan could be made.
  Focusing on base plan in comparison with previous method of planning in this city (general-master plan and comprehensive plan)
CHAPTER I. Introduction

CHAPTER II. Structure of Base Plan

In this chapter principles and structure of base plan will be reviewed.

CHAPTER III: Ecotourism Planning and Development

The physical facilities, promoting and managing policies for ecotourism planning will be reviewed.

CHAPTER IV: Case Study: Damavand

Statistical and quantitative elements of urban conditions of the city will be studied and based on basic structure of the base plan; map and related documents will be marked in this chapter.

Chapter V: Results

CHAPTER VI: Conclusions
1. Tourism an Ecotourism planning and development

Ecotourism is “a sector of tourism based on nature travel and including the principles of sustainability and responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the welfare of local people. (TIES, 2002) Ecotourism should have a positive impact on both natural areas and the local community”. It summarized the sustainability of tourism in “three main aspects: Environmentally, Socially - culturally and Economic. (TIES, 2002)

Ceballos in 1996 defined that “Once a government has made the decision to develop its country’s tourism, a basic planning process should be adopted that includes at least the following seven steps:

1. study preparation
2. determination of objectives
3. survey
4. analysis and synthesis
5. policy and plan formulation
6. recommendations
7. Implementation and monitoring
The carrying capacity of nature trails is a particularly important factor, and has biophysical, socio-cultural, psychological and managerial aspects.

Lew, in 2007, described the planner as an “agent of social change” and argues that “the more narrow area of tourism planning could be considered a subfield of urban and regional planning. In his research, one major shortcoming of tourism planning is an apparent lack of attention to the normative issues of “

(1) how planners should plan
(2) what issues planners should focus on their planning efforts”.
2. planning strategies of Intermediate cities

- Intermediate cities are medium size cities with population of 20,000 - 2,000,000.
- The most population of the world live in medium size cities

- “Pronounced rhythms of development in cities bear both positive and negative consequences, because the process of «global urbanization» is not only associated with increases in the size of the urban population, but also with a major movement of economic activity from the country to the city.” (Llop, 2002)

- program of UIA-CIMES, (intermediate city project in support of Union of International Architects) is defined for intermediate cities
- The strategy of CIMES for intermediate cities is **Base plan**.
- The main social and professional challenges lie in trying to discover new ways of affronting such problems as urbanization, housing, traffic and health care, as proved in the new contexts of intermediate cities
- Reviewing “Intermediate cities and world urbanization”, gives the structure of base plan and clears that “Base Plan will also enable the identification of the city’s main needs for the next 10 years”. 
“Intermediate cities do not exhibit many of environmental problems found in megacities by agglomeration and high amount of population. Also they are less competitive in economic terms than the metropolis and so they couldn’t attract higher level function. They have less access to the main source of information and capital”. (Llop, 1999).

“the ecological design, planning and development of intermediate cities calls for a very wide definition of sustainability, which may be understood as a philosophy for developing intermediate cities.

“sustainable development seeks to find a balance between human needs (rather than desires) and the resource capacities of intermediate cities. The philosophy of sustainable development may be conceived in terms of a series of principles and criteria that can be manifested in the following way:

a) Principles of sustainable development for intermediate cities
b) The criteria for sustainable development in intermediate cities”

(Bellet & Llop, 2002)
3. Eco city and sustainable urban forms

Kenworthy discussed that making existing cities and new urban development more ecologically based and livable is an urgent priority in the global push for sustainability.

“Ten critical responses to this issue and summarizes them in a simple conceptual model that places the nexus between transport and urban form at the heart of developing an eco-city.”
This involves compact, mixed-use urban form, well-defined higher-density, human-oriented centers, priority to the development of superior, public transport systems and conditions for non-motorized modes, with minimal road capacity increases, protection of the city's natural areas and food-producing capacity.”

Conceptual model of Eco city (Kenworthy, 2006)
Jabareen in 2006 made an analysis and identified seven design concepts related to sustainable urban forms:

- compactness
- sustainable transport
- density
- mixed land uses
- diversity
- passive solar design
- Greening

Moreover, it identifies four types of sustainable urban forms: the neo-traditional development, the urban containment, the compact city, and the eco-city.
1. Literature review
2. Review of existing plan of Damavand
3. Interviews with councilors, municipality members and professional urban architects
4. Collecting information of case study
5. Preparing the Base plan
A sample of Base plan
http://www.ceut.udl.cat/ciutats-mitjanes-i-intermedies/
Methodology of Base plan in general concludes some elements as the principals:

- Definition of city size and form
- City size and density
- City and its urban hinterland
- Network of services and infrastructure
- Network of free spaces and green areas
- Level of urban factors
- Government or territorial administration
- Annual municipal budget
- Type of intermediate city
- Economic activities
- Housing
- Definition of monuments or elements which are or make symbol for the city
## Base Plan for Ecotourism Development in Intermediate Cities

### 7. Timeline

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8. Conclusion

- Preparing a Base plan and assessment of its capacity for intermediate cities towards Ecotourism Development, is the main aim of this study.
- Methodology of base plan will be prepared for the case study of Damavand and principles and structure of base plan will be reviewed. On the other side, focusing on tourism and ecotourism, the potential of tourism and historical and natural attraction for this city will be listed. The physical facilities and promoting policies for tourism and ecotourism planning will be remarked.
- Important urban projects of Damavand from 10 years ago will be reviewed and highest priority projects for next 10 years will be predicted in the documentation of Base plan.
- The qualitative and quantitative factors related for plan of next 10 years will be evaluated.
- Finally the result of tourism facilities and guidelines will be shown on the map of base plan and its documents.
Gracias
Thank you

Happy Nowruz
(Persian New Year)