



How to Influence the Native Environment Design on Ecotourism (Case Study: Aras Zone)

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Original Article:

Received 10 Oct. 2017 Accepted 10 Nov. 2017 Published 30 Nov. 2017

ABSTRACT

Aras free trade zone has a great potential in tourism industry development because of having specific economic situation, placement in zero boundary point, climate and natural varieties, various cultural-historical, natural, sport, industrial, and geographical tourism attractions along with commercial transactions with European countries and transit road to the northwest of the country. The existence of communicative infrastructures and having national electricity, water, gas, and telephone network, access paths quality have provided proper conditions to utilize this zone in tourism industry relatively. Nonetheless, lack of welfare-service facilities and tourism recreational designs are the facing problems of this industry in Aras free zone.

Therefore, features of this environment that can be effective based on the adapted designing principles with cultural and native elements were studied with sustainable architecture approach and considering sustainable development bases in rural areas, introduction of the present conditions regarding to the feasibility studies and identification of disadvantages and defects for tourism necessities in zone using natural present facilities in definition of application and identification of the present defects in space definition.¹

Keyword:

Sustainability,
sustainable
development,
sustainable
architecture, tourism

¹* This article is adopted from MSc thesis of Mr. Ebrahim Atazadeh is a design for tourism- residential collection in Aras free zone with sustainable architecture approach by supervision of Dr. Mahnaz Mahmoudi zarandi in Islamic Azad University, Tehran North branch

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Peer review under responsibility of **UCT Journal of Research in Science, Engineering and Technology**

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism industry, green industry, has a specific status in environmental sustainable development issues particularly in villages and protection of environment. The connection of this industry with the other sciences and fields is very close and mostly inseparable such as environmental design and architecture issues in various communicative and service issues. Although, this issue has weakened tourism role as a green industry and damaged environment and ecosystem attraction of the zone for some cases for lack of tourists familiarity with tourism customs and even commercial and instrumental view to this industry, protection and survival of various historical, cultural, religious, and natural tourist attractions, geology spirit and etc. beside development of infrastructures and utilization of them have been always focused and considered as the necessity for development and growth of this industry, because tourism will lose its applied concept and meaning without the existed attractions. Thus, performing ecological and aristocratic studies and familiarity with the natural, historical, and cultural environment will be necessity and requirement before entering to tourism issues in each zone and providing growing condition and developing infrastructures and even defining recreational, welfare, and service design. Steps can be taken in sustainable development path in interaction with the zone people as native participation designs by drawing these actions and natural-geographical and cultural status of this zone using the existed potentials in it.

This issue will be very important and essential to establish tourist complexes. What is mentioned in tourism attraction issues significantly is making environments with essential conditions for human adjacency with nature with make and hold tourism complexes based on tourism and ecosystem issues in designing residence, recreational, and tourism spaces besides adaptation aspects with natural environment and climate using native element and materials leaning on the present tourism potential of this zone. By this view, architecture and tourism used the same rural tissue to develop it and provide the prerequisites of environmental sustainable development along with each other in sustainability issues beside infrastructures development through making small local economies in rural environments. Using native materials, architecture tissues, and spaces definition based on common plans, using pure energies, using natural elements in definition of applied energies. Emphasis on using native and local productions, companion to the natural environment and attractions in a village to make health villages and eco-museums are some of these cases.

Architecture and tourism view was used to design such complexes based on the mentioned issues and considering lack of service- residential, recreational, and tourism facilities in Aras free zone for having various capacities in various tourism parts with aim of designing complex in this zone after studying the facing problems in Aras free zone by introducing tourism concepts and bases and sustainable development and architecture problems, and the relationship between tourism industry tissues. Finally, site analysis and all-aspect introduction of infrastructures, talents, capabilities, defects, lack, and necessary prerequisites are introduced to offer design.

Objectives and Questions

Although, development and extension of tourism industry has many advantages, its environmental damages can't be neglected. Therefore, all environmental aspects of walkways mustn't be neglected to flourish tourism industry and attention to tourism environmental consequences to use advantages and benefits of this industry as much as possible to grow and develop the country (Wall, 1997). In this regard, environmental consequences and challenges were studied around walkways and camping establishment in Arasbaran zone in this research, and the main hypothesis of this research is designing and constructing a touristic-residential complex in Aras free zone that is necessary to provide essential facilities and space for the traders and tourists. Now, the main question of this research is how can help to tourism development by environment design regarding to the mentioned objectives?

Theoretical bases and definitions

The term "tourism" is adopted from the French term "tour" mean circulation, passing, and traveling (Babaei and Jangju, 2013), and various equivalents have been considered for it such as tourism, glob trotting, recreation, travel, and even Iran trotting that each on has its specific meaning, and this issue shows the interdisciplinary properties of tourism and its varied and different attitudes. Based on the definition of the world tourism organization, tourism equals to the accurate meaning of "tourism" that is called to the all individual activities for who travel to the external space than the ordinal one for spending leisure time, working, or other objectives for a shorter-than-one-year time. Therefore, this definition of tourism doesn't go further than spending vacation or several leisure days to visit relatives and friends from attractive spaces (Farajirad and Aghajani, 2009).

Consequently, tourism a collection of interactions in attraction and hosting process among tourists, travel organizations, origin governments, host governments, and local people (Soleymanpour, 2006).

Eco-tourism or rural tourism

By many economic experts' ideas, tourism development is a solution for many problems in villages and modification of these areas (Monshizadeh, 2001) that increases economic power, existing possibility in further areas, as a new motive for resettlements lives, and also improves life conditions in rural communities (Briendenhann, 2004). Attention to the rural tourism has developed since 1950s and has been mentioned for local communities and farmers in 1960s and 1970s. Rural tourism has two important aspects: one is a global development and another is its role on local and regional policies that may be an obstacle against an acceptable and public definitions of these tourism types (Ghaderi, 2003).

In an extensive meaning, rural tourism contains a range of activities, related services to recreation and peace of tourists by farmers and rural people to attract tourists to their locations for earning and consequently services such as accommodation, catering, facilities and amusement and entertainment facilities, the organization of celebrations and local events, the production and sale of handicrafts and agricultural products, etc. to tourists (Sharifzadeh, 2002). This type of tourism is conducted with different motives such as unique ecological coordinates, special adventure

opportunities, cultural attractions, or the quality of space and rural environments. Thus, rural tourism can be divided to five classes based on varied objectives and motives in this part of tourism industry (table (1)).

Table (1) – all rural tourism types (Ashtari Mehrjerdi, 2004)

Natural tourism	It is in interaction with ecological attractions
Cultural tourism	It is related to the culture, history, cultural heritage, and historical heritage of rural dwellers.
Native tourism	It is type of tourism relating to life and people social norms itself that is in interaction with the mentioned natural attractions beside natural attractions (such as river, mountain, etc.)
Village tourism	Tourists live in village houses and participate in social and economic activities of village in this tourism type.
Agriculture tourism	Tourists interact with host zones ecosystems with traditional agricultural activities or participate in it without making negative consequences.

Based on the mentioned definitions, ecotourism or rural tourism is a new approach in rural dimensions with various social and economic aspects in rural areas (Monshizadeh, 2001). Therefore, the only growth and development way of these zones is tourism development based on any experts' idea which is the principal element of movement toward survival or reconstruction of rural zones (Ghaderi, 2003).

Rural tourism or eco-tourism complexes

The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) suggested a comprehensive definition for ecotourism:

"Ecotourism is a responsible travel to the natural places where environment, protection, and people welfare are emphasized."

Demand statistics for ecotourism and related branches to it such as rural tourism, agro-tourism, etc. have increased by tourism industry growth. World Tourism Organization estimates demand growth for natural tourism 10-30% annually, while annual growth demand for tourism is totally 3-4%.

Eco-tourism from WTO has four characteristics as following:

Be dependent on nature.

Be sustainable ecologically.

Training and interpretation of site values be its most important part.

Host local societies participate in it.

Therefore, according to the mentioned characteristics, localization and selection of a tourism complex happens based on specific factors and criterions which will be explained later:

Location: locating near tourism attractions such as beaches, coastal lines, lakes, and skiing trails, major historical, or archaeological points. Development mustn't influence on but must happen near them.

Climate condition: relationship of a facilities types of a specific climate, local climate conditions from place to place have significant differences, and selection of the mentioned development points must be studied.

Location development: enough and extensible land that is developing and accessible affordably with no more

important considered application for it economically, protectively, or other issues.

Access to resources: potential access or the proper resources from tourism gates to the zones and from one zone to the other attraction of area.

Access to installments: accessibility or feasibility of proper infrastructures development, water, electricity, and wastewater supplement, garbage removal, telecommunication with acceptable costs mostly after transportation matter, and proper water supplement are the most important infrastructures.

Air pollution: proper public place for walkways regarding to the proportion of surrounding areas application free from intensive air pollutions and environmental sound pollution. If development is planned and managed well, the probability of resulted problems from walkaways establishment won't appear about natural environments.

Native residents: existence of positive attitude about the surrounding residents about tourism development plans and their intention to work in tourism industry. If some tract is used, there will be no probability for resulted new social, cultural, or economic problems from tourism development." (Sadeghi Sudjani et al. 2003).

Rural residential complexes

Regulations and standards of construction, grading, and supervision on ecotourism hotels performance are suggested as following by referring to Article 3 of the Code of Ethics of Nature approved in 2005 of councils of ministers and also article 1 Code, making, modification, complement, grading, and rating tourism installments, and supervision on their activities approved in 1989, and next modifications and based on the importance of making proper bed for ecotourism sustainable development all over the Islamic Republic of Iran:

Ecotourism hotels are accommodations for tourists with the following characteristics based on obeying dominant principles on hoteling industry and providing services with specific and acceptable quality for guests in natural environments:

-Input the minimum damage to the environment both natural and cultural ones.

-Input the mini mum effect while construction on natural environment.

-Be proper and coordinate with physical and cultural tissue of the zone and was made regarding to the local shape, appearance, color, and architecture.

-Use sustainable technics to obtain the consumed amount of water and reduce it.

-Efficient system for wastewaters and wastes removal.

-Use alternative energy as much as possible by obeying sustainable principles.

-Try along with cooperation with local committees.

-Hold training plans about natural cultural and regional cultural environments for clerks and tourists.

-Help to sustainable development by participation in research plans.

Based on the mentioned cases, ecotourism hotels are the ones in natural environments by obeying the highest level of possible environmental regulations in adaptation with native architecture and natural face of the established zone and provide presence and habitat with defined and acceptable quality in natural environments besides the maximum interaction with local society.

Obviously, ecotourism hotels will be built in smaller scale than the same rank hotels according to the dominant principles on ecotourism sustainable development, and specific intention to the ecotourism sustainable development seems necessary beside attention to the hoteling principles.

Environmental and tourism designing

Tourism development with its specific sophistications includes positive and negative effect and different results that can be studied in three environmental, economic, and social-cultural fields. Tourism can have positive effects in tourism field such as:

Protection and maintenance of extinct specific animal and plant species, more attention to natural resources such as mountains, forests, beaches and seas, increased environmental activities of stakeholder groups.

Economists introduce the positive effects and tourism consequences in economy field in issues such as employment, foreign exchange earnings, regional development assistance, and even public sector assistance (Shamsoddini et al., 2011). In addition, some useful effects in social-cultural field can be summarized as following:

The increase of employment, the regeneration of poor or non-industrial areas, the revival of arts and local techniques and traditional cultural activities, the improvement of the social and cultural life of the local society, the renewal of the architectural traditions of the place and the need to protect the wonderful and beautiful regions which have aesthetic and cultural value (Saedipour and Nesaari, 2011).

The main principals of sustainable development are human and environment based on the mentioned issues and definition that are considered as a part of live element of nature cycle. It means both tourism and architecture designing principles are based on life and living. An accurate cognition about the physical characteristics of city, region, and intrinsic potentials can be obtained and combine tourist attraction principle with engineering designing principle along with obtaining sustainable development by emphasis on this principle as the most effective principle of sustainable development accomplishment, because architecture has two main role and performance regarding to tourism view:

1-Architecture as a requisite 2- architecture as an attraction

In architecture as a requisite, tourism development prerequisite is establishments and infrastructures of tourism. Tourism development needs infrastructure, and resistance in non-popular residential place of that person is considered as a tourism basis based on definition. Thus, providing vehicles and residential facilities are the main elements of tourism development (Williams, 2009). Tourists are attracted to a zone through the tourism attractions, and tourism infrastructures are accountable for passengers' needs. After need assessment, localization, performance definition and many other factors in geography and tourism field are proposed as designing and construction of these installments. Here, architecture helps to tourism industry like the other sectors and paly its role as well as possible for these buildings application and construction. Feasibility study is essential for project objectives by owner(s) by a specialist group and cooperation with a hoteling counselor after localization of a land to build a hotel. An architect prepares a schematic map of the proper spaces and gives it

to the entrepreneur after essential counselling. Making a unique concept can have a specific effect in making a hotel special in designing (Shiva, 2011). There are other factors besides tourism and hoteling regulations which obeying guide to the idea designing.

Table (2): suggested principles for architecture coordination with environment (Das Will, 2009)

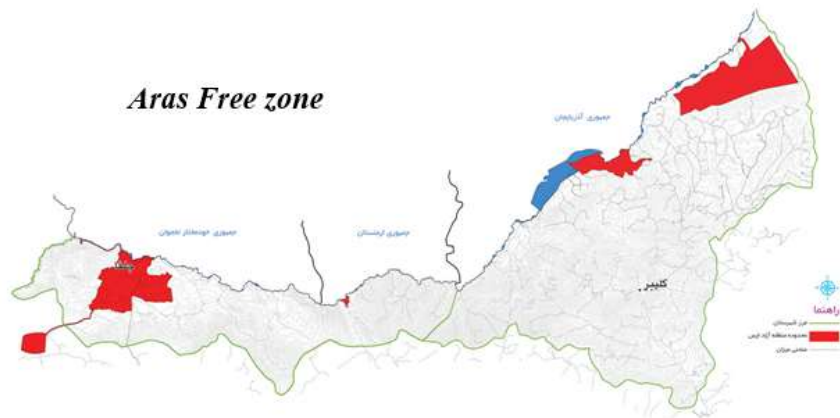
<i>row</i>	<i>Description</i>
1	Respect to the soul of place. Buildings must be in adaptation with its surrounding. Development must be in coordination with the location culture and environment.
2	Renovate old buildings but respect to their old and initial application. They must be moderated and adapted if necessary and protect its integration and consistency anyway.
3	Only let build high buildings when they are along with the general concept of development and adapted with local density standards.
4	Keep green scene, animals nest, and intact and healthy
5	Protect trees wherever possible
6	Not limit scenes and landscapes by construction.

However it must be claimed about attraction in architecture subject that these group is actually considered in material or artificial- cultural attractions including historical places, historical buildings, religious buildings, cultural-recreational centers, ancient places, and residential centers. In other words, a specific architecture style of a state or region or a specific period of time and also the related buildings and works are the main elements of cultural attraction (Zahedi et al., 2008). Therefore, what supplicates the importance of architecture is any place and time that tourism occurs need to have constructions to make installments and infrastructures. Consequently, architecture and tourism are interacted in any space, and tourism can be classified in place, and its relation with the region architecture can be studied. Therefore, tourism can be classified in any place. Cities, villages, and surrounding natures are the most important places that are separable from architecture characteristics view (Farajirad and Eftekharian, 2012) (Table (2)).

Environmental ecotourism capacities in Aras free zone

One of the unique and highly capacity place of Iran in rural tourism field with various potential and facilities in tourism attraction without any manipulation is Aras free zone.

Map (1)



Map (1): geographical region of Aras Free zone (www.bargozideha.com)

Jolfa city is considered as a part of Aras free zone for its specific and strategic position in connection point between Iran and Europe and the global line, and specific infrastructural facilities and installments. Some

characteristics such as Jolfa adjacency around Aras River, placement in Iran and Republic of Azerbaijan and Armenia boundaries, and placement in a commercial zone have made this city as one of the most important commercial pole of Iran.



Map (2): covered cities and areas by Aras Free zone (www.bargozideha.com)

Aras is considered as a specific index of this region of proper climate condition and placement near Aras River, great amounts of minerals water and resources, natural beautiful scenes around Aras River for residence and making walkways from Arasbaran zone up to Aras River lines (formal website of Aras free zone)

Tourism

Varieties of cultural-historical, natural, and geographical attractions in Aras free zone shows the high potential of this zone in tourism industry and an effective step will be taken along with sustainable development and environment and culture protection of the covered cities of this zone besides industrial growth of this zone only if comprehensive design is prepared for utilization from the mentioned potentials. This matter will be effective regarding to the transit status of Jolfa and traffic statistics and air and land transportation particularly in peak seasons to attract domestic and foreign tourists, and increasing their residence time in the mentioned cities as one of the specific objectives and goal to visit varied tourism attractions.

Aras free zone has a significant economic- historical background, proper climate, rich water resources, and jungle

storages, tourism development capabilities in historical, cultural, natural, and international sport fields with high growth potential and industrial, mineral, agricultural, service provision, science, and education development, and it has a significant role about twenty-year landscape potentially.

This zone can have a sensitive role by twenty-year landscape for its adjacency to Tabriz city, close administrative and economic relationship, possibility of scientific and educational interactions with the neighbor countries, and presence of efficient and specialized human force in various fields to obtain advanced knowledge to produce the emphasized technology and science.

Tabriz metropolis specific situation provides a condition that not only Aras has health, welfare, food safety, and desirable environment, but also it has the potential to change into an international health and medical center for prior service centers in national and meta-national levels for free zone, valuable protected ecological areas, and valuable support for agricultural development. Presence of rich mines (construction-metal, and non-metal materials), provision of utilization development by them, making dependent industries, and adjacency to the infrastructural networks such as gas and oil lines, railway lines, and

telecommunication networks, electricity transfer, main communicative lanes, and airport being established with transnational performance and providing the ground for the development of new technologies (biotechnology, nanotechnology and IT) provide condition for presence in national era for highly accelerated and permanent economic growth and obtaining the first economic, scientific, and technology rank in zone as it was written in document of twenty-year landscape. This happens while natural gas transition pipes from this area and its surroundings have brought a specific strategic value for this zone. In addition, the intact nature of this zone and the beautiful Aras River, especially the existence of the Church of St. Stephen as a unique source of religious tourism with the other sightseeing places are considered as advantages of this zone in tourism industry and economic development of this industry.

Topological characteristics, tourism lands capacities and dependent industries

The movements of all existed flows to Caucasus, Russia, and Eastern Europe are relatively guided to this vector

Table (3) – climate and geographical characteristics of Jolfa station (Zolfaghari, 2010)

<i>station</i>	<i>Height (m)</i>	<i>Annual mean temperature</i>	<i>Maximum absolute temp.</i>	<i>Minimum absolute temp.</i>	<i>Minimum mean temp.</i>	<i>Maximum mean temp.</i>	<i>Number of icy days annually</i>
Jolfa	704	15.2	44	-20	9.1	20.3	73

Jolfa city has had synoptic station since many years ago and is located in 704m altitude of free seas; therefore, it has the minimum height among cities of east Azerbaijan (except two small cities of Siah Rud and Nowjeh Mehr hat are also placed in east of Jolfa city). In other words, it can be stated that Jolfa city and Aras free zone in this province locates in the lowest part of province. This height situation totally moderates its temperature than the same latitudes in Azerbaijan in spite of Jolfa as the northernmost region of the country in 38° latitude and 45 min. lower highest totally increase temperature in Jolfa city and also Golfaraj plain than mountainous surrounding areas and high places. Table (3) shows the various annual temperature characteristics of Jolfa city in 23-year period.

This table shows the general changing of temperature annually in Jolfa. In spite of its mean annual temperature that is 15.2°C, its annual temperature can fluctuate to more than 60°C and it is possible in summer to have temperature increase to 44°C because of low height of region and in winter reduces to -20°C. Although, this extreme temperature spectrum was accident and happens in rate days of the year, but its occurrence is completely possible in any condition for Jolfa city in hot and cold seasons.

Raining is another determinant and important climate factor in each area, raining amount and its starting timer can give a specific climate characteristics. Based on statistics in Jolfa,

completely based on topology of Iran northwest for the exceptional fracture among Qaraja-dagh mountains of north of western Azerbaijan province and creation of Jolfa plain. Generally, this advantage is topological characteristics product of Jolfa region (Center for Urban Planning and Architecture of Iran, 2006) which has useful macroeconomic and geo-economical values for zone and Iran for the presence of Daradiz valley strategic throttle and current communication networks in it.

Furthermore, there are significant mineral resources near Aras free zone and adjacent cities of Kaleybar, Varzaghan, and Maran whose transportation to the zone is affordable with acceptable economic cost.

Climate and weather condition and ecotourism

The total climate of Aras free zone id semi-dry and cold and only the small part of its heights and Aras River lines have dry and cold climate. Annual raining is 225-400 mm. the mean annual temperature is 15°C in Aras River lines in variation to 5°C in heights. Number of icy days in Jolfa is 80 days that increase to 140 days in heights (Table (3)).

annual raining amount was a little more than 220mm. the minimum annual raining was about 113 mm during statistical period. Generally, annual raining happens in 42 days of year. The mean snowing is 17 days in year.

Studying wind blowing in each area is important for several reasons in applied studies to make or develop walkaways: first, the dominant wind can be a proper guider to establish industries with pollution. In addition, it is essential in establishment of airports to know wind direction to build airport band path in correct direction for airplane landing and taking off. The second reason necessitating wind study is wind various effects in hot and cold reasons per year. Wind speed can have desirable effect on human convenience; in contrary, wind high speed make problems in human convenience and eventually registration of the fastest winds of each area is an important factor to design high voltage towers and building strength. There is relatively an old synoptic station in Jolfa city proving research on wind characteristic. Based on annual statistics, 50% of Jolfa doesn't have wind. In rest 50%, wind measurement was observed with different speeds. The main dominant wind in this station is in northeast direction whose mean speed is 4.7 m/s annually. The maximum wind blowing speed from the same direction is 16.5% of all total blowing frequency annually (Table (5)).



Jolfa and Arasbaran area are generally the main component of Europe-Siberian and its more secondary part is called Hyrcanian that continues from west to Arasbaran and from east to Golestan jungle, and its area containing Arasbaran jungles is 3 million hectare. This area is showered by rain and snow all seasons. Its heat fluctuations are high and its winter is usually intensive and cold. Although, it has more moderate and pleasant winter for adjacency to oceans and seas. Arasbaran jungles or Qarache-Dagh, placed in east Azerbaijan, it is one of the semi-humid forests that consists of the pine-tree community and its derivatives with dominant trees and hornbeam. Vegetation cover along river lines are relatively varied in Iran and Azerbaijan coastal lines. Vegetation cover includes canebrake, shrubs and in some areas covered with Gaze shrubs. Kiyamaki area will be explained in following to recognize all plant types of Jolfa city where it is full of vegetation covers:

Kiyamaki region is in northwest of East Azerbaijan and its significant part is in Jolfa city that is announced as protected Area by "Environmental Protection Agency". This region contains the great part of Qareh-Dagh mountainous area that is made by steppe sectors and high butte and heights. Its middle pastures has sagebrush beside grass pastures such as *Allium* SP, *Poa* SP, and *Thymus*, and various *Astragalus* species and other pillow species plants grow in its pastures. Other plants of this zone include taraxacum, anemone, euphorbia, yarrow, Alyssum, plantain, barely, yellow alfalfa, clover, Russian knapweed, *Fumaria officinalis*, [Sisymbrium Sophia](#), *Nasturtium*, *Fritillaria*, etc.

Map (3): map of historical tourism and historical attractions dispersion in Aras free zone. (www.arasfz.ir)

Aras ecotourism and tourism capacities

Mason or Mason village (Greek Lotus) is proposed and studied as objective of one of tourism sustainable development in this region regarding to the design objectives in sustainable development and providing sustainable architecture design long with development of Aras free zone (image (1)).

The significant reason of this selection can be for natural and present environmental facilities such as utilization from Arasbaran jungles landscapes, adjacency to Aras River, varieties of access paths, and middle-way situations of this village (image (2)), village's cultural richness, the dynamics of the village culture, including the prevalence of indigenous products and handicrafts, the proximity to historical and cultural attractions, the architecture-friendly

architecture of the environment and the use of indigenous materials because of river and wood stones (image (3)).

This village is located in Kaleybar city in the Arasbaran region at an altitude of 1000 meters above sea level and is limited from east to Ostabin village, west to Gulan village, north to Armenia, and south to Arasbaran jungles. Actually, this village is located in range and western hills of Arasbaran (image (4)). Time interval of this village from surrounding villages is about 15 min, and this is the only road by vehicle to Arasbaran jungles.



Image (1): general scene of Mason village and its situation than its surrounding

Total tissue of village is dense and most houses have porch, without walls, and long fence along with village path which is western range (Image (5)). Houses direction is toward eastern-western for coldness and cold winds blowing, and alleys give beautiful scene to village with low width among houses. Defined designs and application of these houses are in proportion with life style and village economy and include living room, bed room, kitchen, corral, forage warehouse, weaving workshop that were popular of course in the past. There is a small yard beside each house to cultivate vegetables in small portions, and Beam, cement, brick and aluminum in newer houses. There is disperse fruit gardens and unique Arasbaran jungle along Aras River that passes from 2km of village.

Accessibility to this village is through Varzaghan, Kaleybar, and Khodaafarin cities. In addition, there are two main roads to access Aras transit road that one of them is in mountain range used for transit cars, and another road is from river flood path that is dry today and paved with small and coarse river stones. Gardens are also in east and west of this path, and have made beautiful garden alleys.

Dairy and livestock products, natural honey, traditional foods, and clothes, in the unrivaled nature of the Arasbaran forests and the temperate air of the village, along with the beautiful texture of native architecture have made a specific scene in village and provided a calm place in the nature heart for tourists. The best time of travel to Mason is late in the last month of summer. The present village tissue has a unique architecture that can provide a pleasant condition for sustainable development of this zone with native society cooperation and institutionalization of belongings sense of natives to their ecosystems by making job opportunities for the dwellers of this place and native and local productions development

This approach not only will present village immigration and rural tissues deterioration, but also will prevent cultural richness of this zone by economic development increase in interaction with tourists in development years.



- Adjacency with transit routes and boundaries points.
- High middle-way passengers traffic with varied commercial, tourism, etc. objectives
- Adjacency with Aras River coastal line
- Adjacency with unique ecosystems including Arasbaran jungles
- Adjacency with various geo-sites including crushing mills
- Utilization from various attractions of cultural-historical tourism
- Utilization from religious attractions and having specific status for religious minorities
- Cultural richness, dynamics, and life of many native rituals and traditions and handicrafts.
- Various climates
- Proper condition of important infrastructures such as water supply network, gas, electricity and road network
- Animal and plant varieties

Disadvantages

- Lack of tourist, services-welfare, and accommodation facilities
- Lack of adopted facilities from zone ecosystem
- Lack of provided transparent image of the existed natural ecotourism in this zone

Opportunities:

- Using the resent native tissue of village and even abandoned villages, retrofitting and equipping villages as residential units.
- Utilizations from productive and service provision potentials of village and native societies to provide welfare services to tourists and increase their residence time in zone

such as dairy products production capacity, garden products, honey, etc. in organic form.

- Using environmental attractions in designing residual and recreational units such as Aras River coastal line and Arasbaran heights with goal of sustainable development without harming their natures.

- Using native materials and elements in designing and construction of residual and recreational units such as rock houses and caravansaries such as successful sample of rock hotel in Tabriz, Kandovan.

Explainable suggestions for Mason village tourism

It must be claimed that high potential along with ecotourism development leaning on native and environmental capacities will be as ecotourism welfare-residual complex as health village and also focus on middle-way welfare services or eco-wool can be proposed regarding to various geographical, historical, and communicative dimensions of Mason village and goal of the design of tourism sustainable development in Aras free zone.

The central core of this tourism complex will happen by emphasis on using the present abandoned architecture in village that is actually adopted from the initial principles of sustainable architecture which is composite materials, maximum adaptation to the environment and nature, and climate adaptation. Using the mentioned spaces as a residential centers f this complex will provide intact and impeccable moments for passing or residents travelers who want to spend times in the nature heart to be far from cities rumble in village body. In this regard, rehabilitation of village structures and tourism facilities must be mentioned with serious emphasis on sustainability principles. The suggested applied energies in this village can be mentioned as wind energy and also water energy, and in some cases solar energy.

This village has non-dense and disperse tissue whose most residential units are placed in mountain range and consequently geographical and natural structure in Arasbaran mountains range.

The main applied materials, river volcanic rocks, rocks in the foothills are in wood and dried picked sticks that were used in construction of doors and windows, roof cover, and fences.

Therefore, residential units of the villagers that are equipped and completed by materials and native elements in the design and interior plans can be used in definition of residential units. Sample of these plans can be observed in many rural houses or historical buildings. Using handicrafts and traditional tissues of this village give freshness to units' interior decoration, and reinforce rural families' economy besides protecting traditions and making handicrafts workshops, and prevent collapsing of some applied arts.



Image (3): using composite building materials in residential houses construction (author)



Image (4): village landscape from Arasbaran jungles and mountain of boundaries (author)



Image (5): Non-dense tissue of residential houses in the village (author)

An important step can be taken toward village life protection, population increase, village development, and finally people life quality promotion by this action and increasing passengers' residence time. The most important provided services in these walkways and ecotourism complex is using organic and native dairy products. Since the proper job of this village residents are animal husbandry, beekeeping and agriculture and horticulture, these organic products can be used for village residents. Handicraft workshops, while industrialization of these products and mass production of this group of products makes new job applications for dwellers that are small economic agencies with early return plans for investment and utilization. It can be claimed easily that the same residential or similar spaces can be used as an applied materials in holding handicrafts workshops not to harm village residents at all.

The most important breakthroughs of this village from native productions and handicrafts are prevention industrial

definition leading to village pollution. In addition, all production, packing, maintenance, and storage and supply processes of this product is done in its origin.

Since this village is placed in important cities communicative highways, provision of a model for middle-way services were considered based on feasibility study and needs assessment of tourists and lack of this group of facilities such as fuel station, public health services, deli stores, indigenous and handicraft stores and tourist information booth, as well as a medical emergency facility to attract audiences and tourists through the road to take important and principal steps.

The distance between them must be considered to provide convenience and peace for residents and have services and welfare facilities in access to prevent performance interruption of two complexes with each other than one has public application and another has residential application, whose convenience point is very important.

Studying advantages and disadvantages of Mason village tourism

Advantages:

- Adjacency with transit routes and boundaries points.
- High middle-way passengers traffic with varied commercial, tourism, etc. objectives
- Adjacency with Aras River coastal line
- Adjacency with unique ecosystems including Arasbaran jungles
- Adjacency with various geo-sites including crushing mills
- Utilization from various attractions of cultural-historical tourism
- Utilization from religious attractions and having specific status for religious minorities
- Cultural richness, dynamics, and life of many native rituals and traditions and handicrafts.
- Various climates
- Proper condition of important infrastructures such as water supply network, gas, electricity and road network
- Animal and plant varieties
- this plan alignment with objectives of Aras free zone about tourism development

Disadvantages

- Lack of tourist, services-welfare, and accommodation facilities
- Lack of adopted facilities from zone ecosystem
- Lack of provided transparent image of the existed natural ecotourism in this zone
- Lack of provided transparent image of ecotourism and natural tourism attractions in this zone

Opportunities

- Using the resent native tissue of village and even abandoned villages, retrofitting and equipping villages as residential units.
- Utilizations from productive and service provision potentials of village and native societies to provide welfare services to tourists and increase their residence time in zone such as dairy products production capacity, garden products, honey, etc. in organic form.
- Using environmental attractions in designing residual and recreational units such as Aras River coastal line and Arasbaran heights with goal of sustainable development without harming their natures.
- Using native materials and elements in designing and construction of residual and recreational units such as rock

houses and caravansaries such as successful sample of rock hotel in Tabriz, Kandovan.

Conclusion

Aras free zone has various potential in tourism field for its specific economic, cultural, and strategic status for its natural geography and utilization from natural varied capabilities such as adjacency to Aras River and unique Arasbaran jungles. That hasn't been mentioned unfortunately for transit route of this zone. According to the statistics provided by this issue, there is a shortage of recreational facilities in the area, high potential of passing travelers to this zone can increase besides increasing residence per capita if such complexes are established, and even defined new tourist destinations due to the diverse and unique talents of this region in different parts of the country, nature tourism, tourism land, commercial and industrial tourism. Jon opportunities can be provided for zone residents and also native and local products development by this objective and also using native facilities such as rural tissues which have unique architecture and provide a desirable condition for sustainable development of this zone with native societies' participation and institutionalization belonging sense to their nation.

This approach not only prevent total deterioration and immigration, but also reinforces rural tissues, economic development of zone, and increasing its culture in interaction with tourists to prevent forgetting its rich culture in development years.

Therefore, various cultural, natural-geographical, architectural, etc. in this village will lead to utilization from various ecotourism sectors. Natural tourism as definition of nature tours to visit unique landscapes of Arasbaran, Aras river coastal lines, beautiful Mason valleys, or Golgasht tours for sightseeing in mountains and hiking in nature, village tourism as definition of a health village based on rural life and using productive, architectural, and cultural capacities of Mason village to provide residential-food needs of tourists during residence in village, health tours for several days to use the healthy air of village, accompanying with rural life, and use native products from various aspects of heath tourism as rural and village tourism. Reinforcement of these life principles will return life to the village and reinforce living principles there.

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