

Tourism and Sustainable Development

The Role of Local Government in Sustainable Development

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Abstract: Depending where one looks you will find various definitions aimed at describing 'sustainability'. In last years the notion of sustainable tourism must be regarded as one of the great success stories of tourism research and knowledge transfer. It has become the first topic discourse in academic research, business fields and governance. The government takes responsibility for the social and economic development of the country. The government through the laws, programs, plans, and strategies oriented people to choose the tools in economy's branches and to walk in sustainable development without afraid for the future. One of the economic branches, that is qualified as friend of sustainable development is tourism. But tourism cannot develop in chaos by self without a strategy or a plan confirmed by specialist, who works in different sectors of public administrate in government. While, big or central government is occupied with macro-problem and macro-policies, local government is nearest community and it know better than anyone, their human and natural resources. The purpose of this article is to analyze the role of local governance systems for sustainable tourism. So, local government can be the first promoting and encouraging tourism development, and helping the community for sustainable tourism.

Keywords: local government; sustainable development; strategy and development plan; social-economic development

JEL Classification: Q01

1. Introduction

Tourism is advocated as a way for rural regions to build and diversify their economies (Thorn, 1994). In 1988 the OMT (*Word Organization of Tourism*), assuming the "sustainable development" approach defined in the previous year by WCED (World Commission on Environment and Development), proposed a discriminative value that hardly cannot be shared as for its extreme clearness: "*Tourist activities are sustainable when develop in order to maintain themselves as*

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vital as possible in a tourist area for a limitless period of time, and also when they don't modify the environment and don't obstruct or inhibit the development of other social and economical activities”.

Tourists bring ‘fresh money’ into a host economy (McIntyre, 1993), and this initial spending by tourists has a multiplier effect, providing increased income and employment for residents as tourism operators spend their earnings. Tourism also provides employment. As a service industry, tourism is labour intensive and, as with income generation, has similar multiplier effects on employment (Lim, 1991a).

Local government can be directly and indirectly involved in sustainable tourism.

a. Direct involvement absolute necessity in: Laws, Regulations, Provide infrastructure, Security - safe environment (tourists & locals), attract crime, anti - terrorism, stability, crossing international borders - tourists,, transport, Limit tourism - VISAS/ entry (nationality, volume), Laws on the use & renovation of heritage sites & buildings;

b. Indirect involvement: Providing supports to the private sectors (hotel), Providing incentives to the private sectors to develop in locality (tax relief), Encourage proper use, appreciation of heritage sites and culture.

Enabling visitor growth and tourism development have not been traditional functions of local government, who have often seen their role as limited to providing the utilities and amenities required and administering necessary planning and development processes (Kearsley, 1997). But time pass and in all the structure of governance was understanding that local governance can have power not only in sustainable development but also in sustainable tourism development. Local governance get fast information's about the problems that have the community. Also local governance know with details natural resources and human capital so through the careful assessment it can plan the future to help the community in employments, local business, infrastructures etc.

2. Literature Review

Sustainable development was defined by the *United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development in the 1987 Brundtland Report* as “those paths of social, economic and political progress that meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” In 1993 – a year after the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro – the World Congress of Architects defined sustainability for the architectural fraternity as follows: “*Sustainability means meeting our needs today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*”

UIA/AIA World Congress of Architects, June 1993, A more recent – and broader – definition is the following of 1996: The concept of sustainability relates to the maintenance and enhancement of environmental, social and economic resources, in order to meet the needs of current and future generations. The three components of sustainability are:

- Environmental sustainability – which requires that natural capital remains intact. This means that the source and sink functions of the environment should not be degraded. Therefore, the extraction of renewable resources should not exceed the rate at which they are renewed, and the absorptive capacity to the environment to assimilate wastes should not be exceeded. Furthermore, the extraction of non-renewable resources should be minimised and should not exceed agreed minimum strategic levels.
- Social sustainability – which requires that the cohesion of society and its ability to work towards common goals be maintained. Individual needs, such as those for health and well-being, nutrition, shelter, education and cultural expression should be met.
- Economic sustainability – which occurs when development, which moves towards social and environmental sustainability, is financially feasible.

Sustainable tourism presents a paradox. At one level sustainable tourism is a success given the concept's diffusion among industry, government, academics and policy actors. Yet, it is simultaneously a policy failure given the continued growth in the environmental impacts of tourism in absolute terms (C. Michael Hall, 2011).

One important study—by the Board on Sustainable Development of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences. In its report, *Our Common Journey: “A Transition toward Sustainability*, the board focused on the seemingly inherent distinction between what advocates and analysts sought to sustain and what they sought to develop, the relationship between the two, and the time horizon of the future

According to Wilkinson (1997b, p. 14), the pattern of tourism development in a particular receiving destination cannot be understood without an examination of that destination's plans and policies for resources and the environment in general

3. Some Critical Issues

Local Governance and Laws

An influx of visitors can have social impacts on host communities, such as congestion or increased crime rates, biophysical impacts through increased waste production and damage to sensitive natural areas, and economic impacts, such as increased seasonal fluctuations. The growing contribution of tourism to

environmental change while it is simultaneously being promoted as a means of economic growth suggests that sustainable tourism development is a significant policy problem and that policy making is a significant part of the governance process. That is, 'a sub-issue, issue or suite of issues perceived to require resolution in some way' (Dovers, 1995, p. 95), that poses the governance challenge of selecting an optimum set of policy actions and their associated implementation. Tourism development also has social impacts, for example, tourist hotels influencing young people to consume more alcohol, and biophysical impacts through discharge to water and soil (PCE, 1997).

The activities and responsibilities of territorial authorities have the greatest direct influence on management of tourism's adverse social and biophysical impacts. But to have the control on the territory local government needs laws. In case that some laws doesn't exist, or they the actual laws need some change local government can transmit, the request as a proposal to central government. Only with laws and rules, local government can have control in the territory and be successful in governance. All actors in local government must know very well the natural resources and their economic value. In this way, through the laws they give the direction to habitants or all the others that are interested to invest and to have a regular activity, which, over all to be in full compliance with long-term development plans.

Local Governance and Plan for Development

Tourism has positive economic impact and creates opportunities, on employment, on gross income and production, but it may also have negative effects, particularly on the environment. The role of tourism on environmental and human development is necessarily ambiguous (Serdoura, Moreira & Almeida, 2009). On the one hand, while being an integrated economic activity, it is dependent on the changes of the territory and population, as it needs environmental and socio-economic quality to be viable (CTP, 2005). Unplanned and uncontrolled tourism growth can result in such a deterioration of the environment that tourist growth can be compromised. To develop a theoretical framework for tourism sustainability, we will assess the impacts of tourism development to environmental balance, accessibility, socioeconomic dynamics, territorial and social justice and equality on job opportunities. Tourism provides a major economic development opportunity for many countries and a means of improving the livelihoods of its residents. Both the public and private sectors involved in tourism depend on planning to achieve sustainable tourism development that respects the local community, creates appropriate employment, maintains the natural environment, and delivers a quality visitor experience. However, many tourism destinations have pursued development without proper planning and without considering the many impacts such development will bring to the community. While tourism does enable economic

development, many authors are quick to point out that, unless properly managed, the costs of tourism can exceed its benefits (Elliot, 1997; PCE, 1997; Kearsley, 1997; Lim, 1991a; Simmons, 1988). Local government can play a significant part in supporting and encouraging sustainable tourism development. Local or community level- Tourism planning at the local level involves subregions, cities, towns, villages, resorts, rural areas and some tourist attractions. This level of planning may focus on tourism area plans, land use planning for resorts, and planning for other tourism facilities and attractions. Tourism planning is important because it provides a common vision, direction and commitment for tourism which are the result of participation of many representatives. The process of tourism planning includes:

- Assessing the possible impacts of development and the resource problems which will be faced;
- Analyzing the competitive status of a destination and its ability to respond to changes in the travel market;
- Providing a level of stability and predictability in the progress of the overall development of tourism in a given area.

Destination planning involves a number of steps and activities that include designing, financing, developing, and marketing of a destination to attract the visitors. It requires cooperation and commitment of a number of different segments including government and community leaders, architects, engineers, investors, economists, environmentalists, and others to ensure the sustainability of a destination (Uni. Hawai TO 490, Tourism Destination Planning). Government's planning role is important to the success of tourism and resort development. Good planning requires that all levels of government are active in the management of a balanced growth approach.

Local Governance and Infrastructure

An important role of the public sector is to monitor tourism activities and development to secure a reliable source of information. This information can then be used to develop strategies and plans for sustainable tourism development. To have tourism development, although the lows and plans of development, local government must do concrete work as fast as they can in infrastructure improve. Tourists like the nature, environmental, landscape, and cultural heritage, but also they need some condition to go around in one area. To go in one place and to spend money, they want qualitative conditions. So, when we talk about the infrastructure, local government must do invest to improve the quality of all needed infrastructure for tourists and tourism development like roads, water, electricity, waste

management etc. investing in infrastructure is one important concrete way that local government can help local businesses in tourism services.

Local Government and Private Sector of Economy

The role of tourism on environmental and human development is necessarily ambiguous (Serdoura, Moreira & Almeida, 2009). Local authorities enable sustainable tourism development by encouraging and facilitating private sector investment in development activities via development plans and strategies, the annual planning process. The economic effects of tourism include changing work and consumption patterns, standards of living, and social roles and practices. For the private sector, financial risk and profitability are the primary concerns including the sources of capital for the planned project, extent of foreign ownership or control, wage rates for the local labor force, and availability of private sector funds for investment (www.tim.hawaii.edu/dl). So local government have support role for local economy giving them flexibility in taxes and financial aid. Also local government can give them information about news in agriculture, tourism services, ICT, other technologies, and encourage them to prove them. One important thing is that local government needs to take the balance in economic support and to help all the kind of businesses so the area will not have mono-economy, because in tourism everything is interest for someone. And tourists go to visit one area if they have many kind services, with different costs for them.

Local Government and Education

Development Education is a necessity in the age of globalization and the knowledge society. Today's society asks a lot of us. The world has become smaller and yet more complex, we have access to more information than ever before and yet we are left with the feeling that we are drowning in information gasping for knowledge (idea: supporting and advancing development education). If we speak all the time for development, we can't have the development without education. It is needed to understand that when we talk for education, it means, that in education scheme, must include all the actors. We need to work effectively with others in very challenging environments at work and in our private life and we need to be good communicators in and between different cultural settings both at home and abroad. Tourism can't develop without education. So, encouraging tourism education is one of the things that local government can do. To have a qualified services in tourism for tourists need qualified personnel, well educated people in different fields, like tourism marketing, economic tourism, communication, foreign language, etc. Local governance can plan different support schemes for all youth, which study in tourism education, have good results, and turn back, in their

birthplace. Learning is an integral part of the public policy process and consequently indicator of sustainable development.

Local Government and Promo Marketing

In the last decade the tourism industry has been marked by a strong internationalization of its markets with new competitors entering and old ones leaving on a day-to-day basis. This has forced actors of the tourist market to seek for global business strategies and to achieve effective cross-border integration, coordination and control of activities in order to generate a sustainable competitive advantage. Tourism needs a strong marketing and promo. Local government is one important actor to organize different events for promo marketing in tourism. Encourage proper use & appreciation of heritage sites & culture. “Event tourism” is an activity in which territorial authorities are becoming increasingly interested due to its potential to: stimulate the development of new facilities, to promote the host area, and the significant economic benefits it can bring to an area, such as increased employment (Fry, 1993; Kean, 1993).

There are many ways that local government can do this.

4. Methodology

The purpose of the article was realized as follows:

- *Searching method:* review the literature, connected to the role of government promoting and supporting sustainable tourism development. We have review in international literatures, many projects and studies for some places.
- *Analyze methods:* This review provided an understanding of local government’s functions and responsibilities for tourism planning. We have analyzed different literature about the role of local government in tourism
- *Questionnaires and Interviews* with local government staff and different specialist: This was used to give us the information about the concept of sustainable tourism development that exists in the local government in Albania. To gain an understanding of current tourism plans and strategies, those are working the staff in local government. We have chosen 40 communes/municipalities to make interviews. The questionnaire had different questions which consist in tourism plan and sustainable development.
- Also past of the interviews in terrain was discusses with local habitants and business. During the *free conversation* they have told us about their goals for investments in tourism services and all the obstacles that exist. They have express that they want from local government. Chosen the “free or no formal

conversations” with them, had the aim to make them feel better and free during the conversation.

5. Analysis of Case Study: Tourism in Albania and Local Government

In Albania after 1990, along with significant changes occurring in the economy, political and social life, the local government was subjected to significant change based on the law that gives legal rights and access to local government. Based on the law, the basic unit of local government are *communes and municipalities*. *Commune* represents an administrative-territorial unity and community residents, as rule in rural areas and in special cases in urban areas. Commune subdivisions called villages and cities in particular cases. *Municipality* represents an administrative-territorial unity and community residents mainly in urban areas and in special cases include the rural areas. Scope territorial and municipal name specified by law. Municipal subdivisions in urban areas called neighborhood. *Region* is the second level unit of local government. Region represents an administrative-territorial unity, composed of several municipalities and municipalities with geographical, traditional, economic, social and common interests. Of the region boundaries coincide with the boundaries of communes and municipalities that comprise it. *District center* located in one of the municipalities involved. Territorial scope, name and district centers are defined by law. Subdivision of county is the district. Public management efficiency and effectiveness, has been a concern constant for all politicians and public administrators all levels of government for many decades in Western countries, but the recently with a reflection on the rise to states in developing, including Albania. Increasing public demand for more accountability and efficiency in managing public goods and performance of high quality services based on a fair cost-benefit has challenging traditional ways of governance aiming at tangible results in public management. Even the fact that Albania is later than some other places of region in tourism development there is a big progress in tourism numbering and their nationality. At the first years tourism was something unknown for investors (what economic activity), for habitants (how can they profit economically) and specially for local governance (which is our role). With the passing of the years have changes many thing and now local government has a power role in local economy and local development. Many local governments in Albania like, Municipality of Vlora, Himara, Saranda, Lezha, Shkodra, Durresi, etc and Commune like Margegaj, Voskopoje, Lukove, Ksamil, etc have construct their strategy of development based on sustainable tourism development. Those local units have taken have taken measures to control the territory, and control of businesses or activities that take place within the administrative unit. Also, importance is given to the type of activity sequencing of areas in the municipality or municipalities. it

consists in fact of assistance to tourism economies, which in particular should be environmentally friendly and in harmony with the landscape

6. Further Implication

This article will have an impact on all stakeholders' sustainable tourism development. Besides the presentation of ideas that will treat theoretical concepts, analysis of the present case study, the article will affect, in further recognition of being an incentive in local government that development plans include tourism as a powerful indicator of sustainable development. Through the fact of tourism development the local government can construct the theory and plans for sustainable development tourism in Albania. Also this article can serve as start for all them local governments that haven't include yet tourism in their development plan.

7. Recommendations

Tourism is one of the best sustainable economies. All the local government must take knowledge about the sustainable development. It is very important to know and to construct strategy and plans with view of sustainable development.

At first local government must know all the resources in their area, and give them an economic value. And then according to the laws and plan of development habitants can use them for local economies.

Tourism improves the life of local habitants and has a large contribute in social and economical development.

Only the transformation of traditional buildings into hotels proposed by the last Development Laws may be compatible with the aim of protection of the environment and attraction of alternative forms of tourism since such establishments target small numbers of low impact tourists. This mean that local governments have to become careful with constructs permissions.

To have sustainable development they need to take care for environmental. Unorganized and unlimited tourism may have heavy negative impacts on the future of tourism. So although the fact to take care about the environment they must have control on territory for the tourists and for the local bossiness that serve in tourism economy.

Promoting as much as they can for their community is another important way for sustainable tourism development. This has another impact in the local community because it encourages them to work more and more. Local foods, local fests,

traditional values, historical places are some of the alternatives that local government can promote.

Local government can give them information about news in agriculture, tourism services, ICT, other technologies, and encourage them to prove them

Monitoring performance is an ongoing process of collecting and analyzing data to compare the implementation of a project, program or policy compared with the expected results. Through monitoring, local government can control development plans, keep control over the territory, and preserve natural resources. Also monitoring during the realize time plan, can discover weak points of the plan and the possibility to intervene in them and f to improve or to subsidize interest actors.

8. Conclusions

In the Albanian perspective, the EU integration process, sets requirements clear to all public sector in Albania, which in general can describe how requirements relating to issues of efficiency, transparency and accountability. Using a model based on results, within the EU integration is essential not only in the context of maximum utilization the pre-accession assistance, but also taking into account the whole process leading to EU membership and the need to improve capacity administrative and institutional capacities to absorb funds, manage the process and bring quality inputs for the EU today and in the future when we member. Chain results mean that, *“Inputs are required to perform activities, in order to manufacture products that will lead to achieving Short-term results and / or term which consequently lead to the attainment long-term impact”*. Sustainable development requires that both levels of governments to maintain their responsibilities and collaborate on development. Local government is closer to the community, and recognizes the closer their problems and needs. Sustainable development now is part of our life, our education, but specially an obligation for governance’s plans. Sustainable tourism has three interconnected aspects: environmental, socio-cultural, and economic. Tourism is an economic activity that if is well managed proceeding pursuant to the principles of sustainable development. Recent years in Albania is being paid great attention to Tourism development. From our past tourism was few development and was never seen as a economic profit. At first tourism was as important issues in development plans from central governance and now with the reforms in local governance, most local units have put tourism as a priority development. Economic evaluation of natural resource and referral possibilities for exploitation by development plans has begun to bring good opportunities for local development. Local government can have direct and indirect impact in sustainable tourism development. Yet local governments have no institutional role but simply a full function for the management of natural resources, by reducing the local economy in good profit

opportunities for residents. Although it lacks the infrastructure, or in tourism management and marketing, activation of local governments to promote tourism and its support, has given results in many local units, bringing economic benefits to businesses, and same, adding deposits, in the coffers of the taxes, the municipality or commune. Also these help for employments in community, and growth the desire for education at youth people in tourism study.

Annex with questionnaires analysis

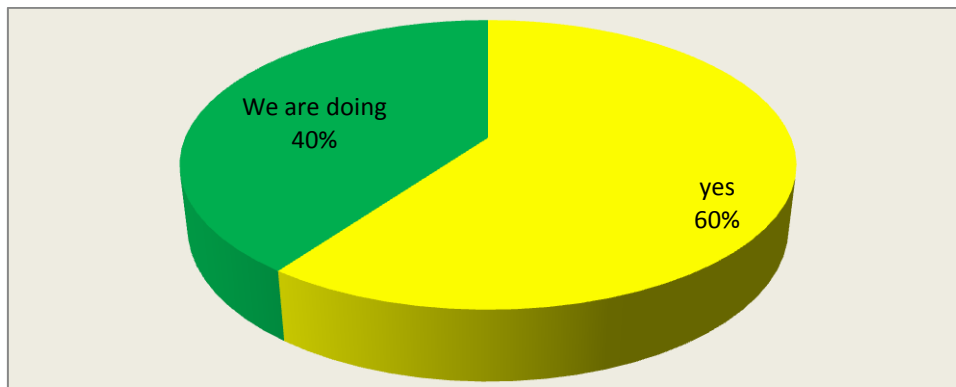
Questionnaires with staff of local governments in Albania

1. *Have your municipality/commune make the strategy of development?*

- Yes
- No
- We are doing

Yes	We are doing
24	16

Graphic 1



60% of administrative units have already drafted the development plan. 40% of them are working on the development plan. This shows that local governments are giving greater attention to development plans for communities from coming to the aid and improve socio-economic development. This is understood as an increase in the responsibility of local governments to precede road development. This is understood as an increase in the responsibility of local governments to precede road development.

2. *Which is the main goal in the strategy?*

(Without alternative, they can answers as they want)

Through development strategies or plans to reach that aim to socio - economic development to manage the area, meet the requirements of the community by providing them with employment opportunities, social services, and private enterprises for the exploitation of natural resources found in their place of residence. They aim to build an environmentally friendly economy, a strong local economy, and above all be sustainable

3. *You are making a long term strategy?*

- Yes
- No

yes	no
40	0

When we asked about the period of the strategy, all response that is a long term strategy. And this is enough response to understand that they have plan a secure future and they are planning sustainable development. As they say, strategic long-term planning benefits a small business by allowing it to be proactive in its growth, rather than by simply reacting to market conditions. Long-term strategy allows them to budget over a longer period for new initiatives. Trying to fund a new product line or division with cash on hand may not be possible. Budgeting a portion of their revenues or profits over a period of several years allows you to properly fund new initiatives without weakening your current operations or financial position.

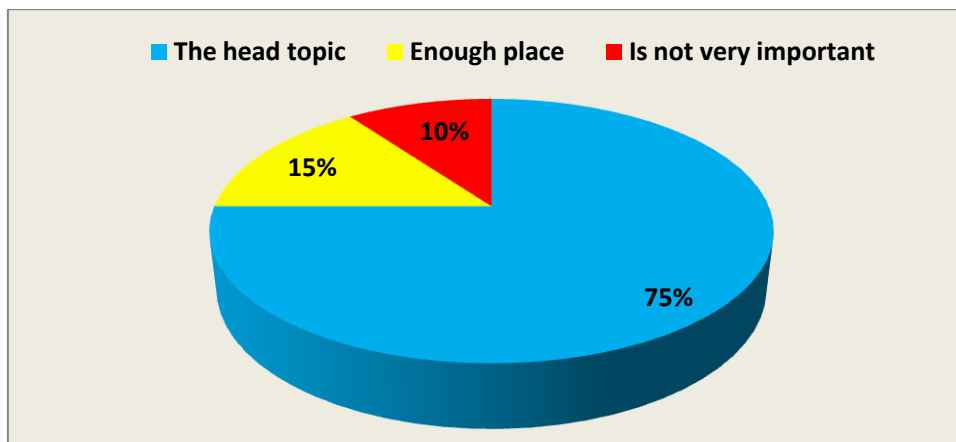
4. *Which is the relation of sustainable development with strategy/plan?*

Today it is impossible to govern without sustainable development. The entire legal framework and development policies have imposed, that every step or development plans, to be long term. So, all the strategies have the purpose that all the communities develop in sustainable secure way. Through the strategy and plans they oriented and give recommendations to local habitants and local businesses to be secure in their investments and to construct a strong local economy.

How much place takes tourism in your plan/strategy?

○ Topic	The head topic	Enough place	Is not very important
○ Enough place	30	6	4
○ Is not very important			

Graphic 2



75% of local government’s interviews had response that tourism is the head topic in the local development plan. Those are local units which have much time that in their territory has start tourism economy and they have profit from it, so they want now to go on in planning sustainable tourism development. But also are some communes in mountain areas that in last years has start to promote tourism development. This is connected with wonderful resources and the landscape that offers nature in their territory. Even the fact that they are new in tourism and without an organizing marketing, local habitants have profit enough from tourism development. 15% of local units have give tourism enough place in the strategy of developments. From a general point of view this are small municipalities or communes that has not much resources that can serve in tourism development. Only 10% had considered not important tourism in their plan of development. This can depend from geographical position, geophysical features, historical values etc.

5. Which is the relation between sustainable development and sustainable tourism development in strategy?

They are trying to collaborate with specialists in all areas, to integrate all elements of development, in a way, to have sustainability. By the fact that tourism is part of development strategies, the plan is built on the basis of sustainable tourism

development. Sustainable tourism has three interconnected aspects: environmental, socio-cultural, and economic. Sustainability implies permanence, so sustainable tourism includes optimum use of resources, including biological diversity; minimization of ecological, cultural and social impacts; and maximization of benefits for conservation and local communities. It also refers to the management structures that are needed to achieve this.

6. Which is the relation between local government and local business?

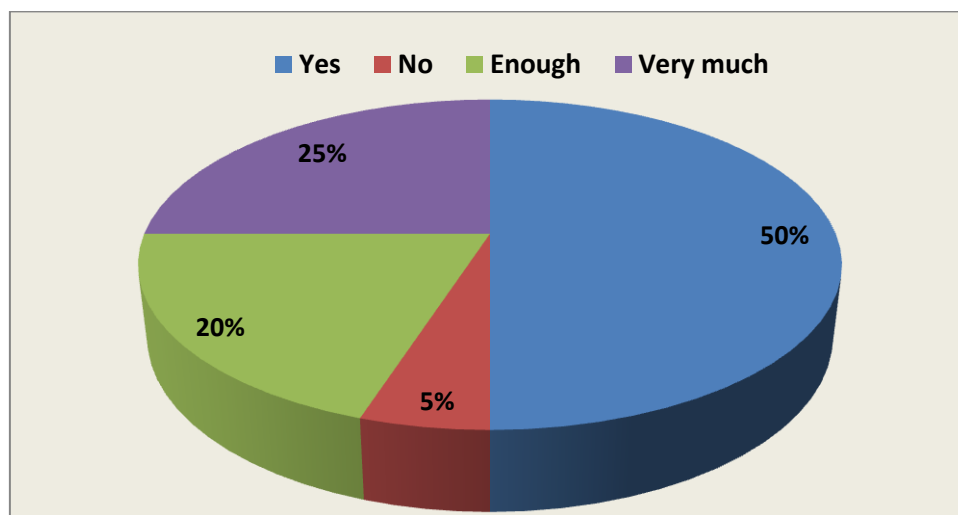
“Support them” this was the main answer from all the persons which have make the questionnaires. All the studies and plans have aims to support local developments which indirectly consist at construct and develop local economies. In all the municipality or commune before and during the time of making plan and strategies the staff and the legal represented of commune take meeting with local business and discusses to get information about their ideas, their problems.

7. You believe that tourism in future years will bring benefits for you community?

- Yes
- No
- Enough
- Very much

Yes	No	Enough	Very much
20	2	8	10

Graphic 3



50% of local units think that tourism will bring many economical and social benefits if they go on to invest and to manage well tourism activity. 20% of them declare that they will profits from tourism activity. 5% of local units interviewed response that for their local government tourism will bring enough benefit. Only 5% do not believe in tourism economy. This can show that the main parts of local governances have start to construct road for tourism development.

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