



Assessing the Viability and Potential for Developing Tourism Industry in Lavasan City using the IUCN Model

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Abstract

Rapid urbanization and geographical patterns in recent decades have encouraged tourism as one of the biggest industry and the most important goal for many countries. Due to this reason in recent years, tourism and recreational places have been considered enough importance. In this discussion, the potentiality of Lavasan city has been considered in developing tourism industry. The aim of this investigation includes studying and describing the potential and some eco-tourism options to develop eco-tourism and geo-tourism in Lavasan. GIS and standards of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) were used for evaluation followed by short analysis.

1. Introduction

One of the necessities for sustainable devolvment is that the natural resources to be protected as human heritage which in addition to responding needs of this generation can meet the need of next generations. To utilize nature and for its protection, a proper guideline has been propounded which some countries have accepted which is called as eco-tourism. International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is helping to promote awareness of the critical role that forests play, not least as the source of food security and livelihoods for more than 1.6 billion people. IUCN helps the world to find pragmatic solutions to our most pressing environment and development challenges. It supports scientific research, manages field projects all over the world and brings governments, non-government organizations, United Nations agencies, companies and local communities together to develop and implement policy, laws and best practice. The main goal includes encouraging societies to protect bio-systems, also balance in using natural resources based on ecologic standard. Lavasan city is one of areas with huge natural potential for eco-tourism. Due to this reason, Lavasan has been grown from village to city. Here is the discussion to understand the feasible

scope of eco-tourism in Lavasan city.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Study area

Tehran province includes 12 cities. Shemirant with an area of 1111 km² in the north part of Tehran province has 5/9 area of this province. Shemirant city includes 2 parts named Rudbar Ghasran and Lavasan of which Lavasan part includes 2 villages named small Lavasan and big Lavasan. Area under study encompasses Nour and Amoel cities by north, Damavan city by east, Karaj city by west and Tehran city by south. Geographically it is located in 35° 45' to 36° 2' N latitude and 51° 24' to 51° 50' E latitude. Its average altitude equals to 2500 msl (Figure 1).

2.2. Objectives of the study

The aim of introducing Lavasan is to achieve sustainable development and support country's national economy. This project is practical in objective and descriptive in method. In order to collect information, the following methods were used:

- Using GIS software for procuring the map.
- Employing the field method for colleting information in the area under study.



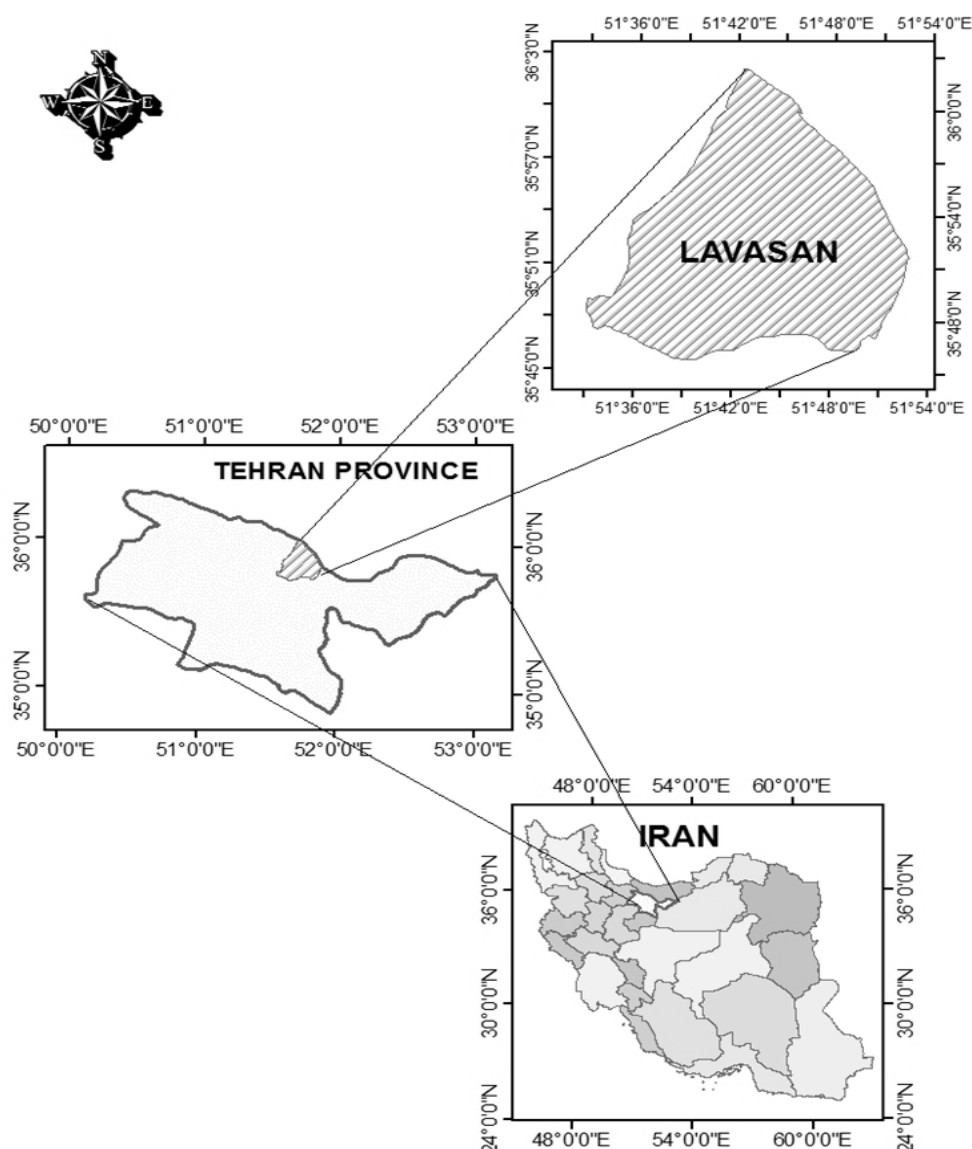


Figure 1: Location of Shemirant territory in Iran

- Making use of the library for obtaining information using library documents and accessing research history.
 - Using the Internet for obtaining information regarding agricultural methods and accessing information from the websites of related organizations.
 - Drawing upon the information from Iran's Statistics Bureau in order to obtain statistics from various periods.
- Specific objectives of the study include the following:
- Identifying and introducing eco-tourism potentials of the area.
 - Recognizing barriers in stable development in the study area to increase tourism.
 - Prescribing guidelines for environmental protection based on IUCN model.

3. Results and Discussion

One of the most important attractive factors of tourism is natural and recreational value (water, soil, vegetation). Statistic shows that most of the people come here due to beautiful nature (forest park, Lateyan dam, Lavasan waterfall, Afjeh iceberg, etc.).

In this discussion, it was intended to decide a method according to international standards especially developing countries (Table 1 and 2). Hence planning and programming based on IUCN-UNEP-WTO and Standards of Natural Tourism Document and selected tourism areas statutes of Iran were used- So, eco-tourism for this area should constitute for planned performance zones as follows-

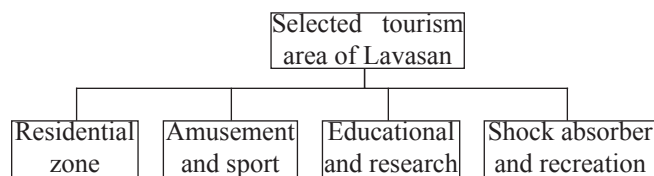


Table 1: Kinds of tourism activities based on Standards of Natural Tourism Document

Recreational kind	Description
Height	Attractiveness of each area to develop concentrated recreational place is provided between 400-1800 msl
Geographical direction	In summer, recreational place in northern and eastern directions and in winter, eastern and southern directions are proper
Slope	Attractiveness and desirability of each area in slope <15%
Pedology	Soils include sand and loam texture, clay loam sand, loam clay and clay loam are the most desirable soils for concentrated recreational place
Temperature	Monthly temperature averages between 21-30°C
Sunny days	7-15 days month ⁻¹
Relative humidity	25-30% month ⁻¹
Erosion	Fixed lands or lands which have low sensitivity against erosion
Vegetation	Its desirability depends on density of trees equals to 40-80% or 20-40% with equal combination of monocotyledon and dicotyledon
Wild life	Far from sensitive habitats
Water resources	Desirability and attractiveness of each area in concentrated recreational area providing 12-45 l day ⁻¹
Tourism infrastructure	Access to the roads- physical communication plays an important role in tourism activities
Cultural	Provided facilities must be compatible with nature and culture
Tolerance capacity	Using facilities and kind of activities without damaging natural environment with satisfactions of visitors
Aesthetics	Arranging facilities and recreational activities accurately and focusing on style, proportion, structure and architecture

3.1. Residential zone

This zone is located in southern west of Lavasan which includes motel such as villa, suit and wooden cottages and

Table 2: Rules and standards of services located in selected tourism area

Application, kind and services	Description
Residential	Having hotels at least 3-star and higher category.
Food stuff	Having first class restaurant and lower fast food units and coffee shop.
Information	Minimum information system such as information station presenting tourism maps, brochure, pamphlet, guides and consult in Persian and English languages and also includes website to present kinds of graphical and descriptive information.
Shopping centers	Having modern shopping centers presenting goods and services with high quality. In shopping center, local and national products must be provided.
Recreational and amusement centers	Providing amusement and playing facilities according to the Islamic standards of Republic of Iran.
Cultural products center	Possibility in presenting kinds of national cultural products.
Financial services (private and governmental bank)	Possibility in presenting electronic banking and sales services and currency exchange.

ecological houses in order to utilize summer and winter capacities (Figure 2). Environmental programming and utilizing development standards and planning guidelines should focus in establishing tourist installations such as development density, height, architecture with stable environment that meets the needs of tourist and residence (Jabarenezhad and Hossein, 2008).

3.2. Amusement and sport zone

Recreational and amusement and sport zone is one of the most important zones of this area. Lake of Lateyan dam with area as 330 ha is located 25 km away from eastern north of Tehran over Jajroud River (Figure 3).

Boat and water sky stations in this lake work under supervision of air force and municipality of Lavasan. In this lake, many kinds of fish are grown (Jafari, 2001).

3.3. Educational and research zone

Since education has effective role in providing natural tourist services, the educational goals of this zone must be planned so that useful information can be presented to visitors and tourists. Most important goal in presenting local information for tourists is that describing natural phenomena may help in

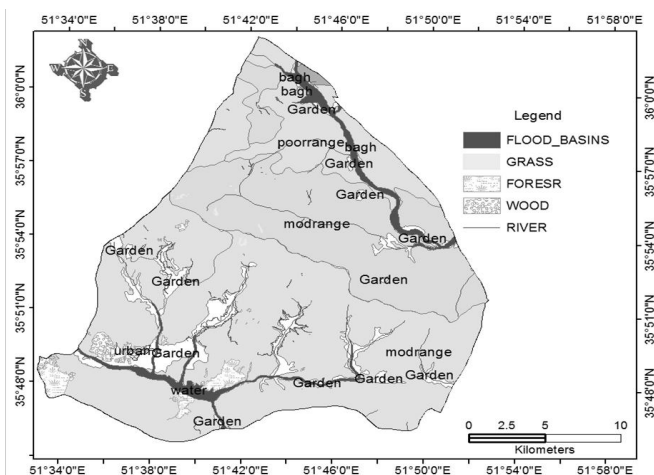


Figure 2: Land use in the study area

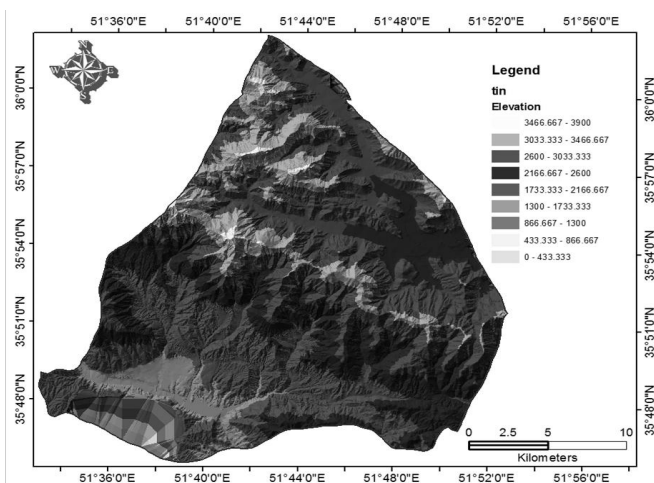


Figure 3: Elevation in the study area

understanding the tourist place. Visitors and tourists must not trampled plants and must avoid to destruct biological resources (herbal and animal); and even after visiting area they should gain interest to educate new tourists to describe advantages of preserving environmental resources and kind of treatment with nature.

3.4. Shock absorber and recreation zone

Shock absorber zone in protected areas is a shield against damage and destructions and protects desirability of area. Studies show that entering vehicles into protected areas especially in vacations such as nature day 2 April causes serious damages to biological species.

4. Conclusion

Lavasan City has been recognized as one of the potential tourist places in Iran. However, through studies and evaluations should be done to find out possibilities and facilities and infrastructures of tourism in this area. Moreover, it can provide job opportunity for the local people and proper consideration must be taken to restore and preserve the traditional culture..

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