Ecotourism and Sustainable Development in Egypt

Case Study of Dakhla Oasis

Tricia Dong • Ayushi Gummadi • Julia Price-Madison
Scarlett Royston • Elise Welch • Kendall Williams

Directed by Professor Lyn Boyd-Judson
University of Southern California
Order of Presentation

- Historical Context: Ayushi Gummadi
- Vision 2020: Julia Price-Madison
- Economic Development: Scarlett Royston
- Human Development: Tricia Dong
- Culture and Tourism: Elise Welch
- Environment and Ecology: Kendall Williams
- Conclusion and Questions
Historical Context of Ecotourism

Ayushi Gummadi
Sustainable Development

❖ Meets needs of the present (i.e. with regards to the tourism industry) while protecting and increasing opportunity for the future

❖ Three components: economic, social, and environmental

❖ Maintains cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, and biological diversity
What is Eco-Tourism?

- Involves travel to natural destinations
- Minimizes impact
- Builds environmental awareness
- Direct financial benefits for conservation
- Empowers local people
- Respects local culture
- Supports human rights and democratic movements
Why should we care?

- Irresponsible tourism can degrade nature, deface historical sites, and reroute money away from local economies.
- 1990s: non-developed countries began to promote responsible ecotourism as a development strategy.
- Green travel is now an effective marketing tool.
- Sustainable tourism is an effective means of international development.
Ecotourism in the World

Map of top 50 eco-lodges in the world
Development of Ecotourism in Egypt
Dakhla Oasis

Al Qasr Village
Al Qasr Village
History of Dakhla

- History of the New Valley dates back to Pharaonic times
- Oasis was the breadbasket of Egypt in Roman times
- Historical Village of Al Qasr
- Dr. Ahmed Fakhry found tombs in 1969
History of Tourism in Dakhla

- 1978: protected border area
- 1981: tourism office opens
- 1990: first hotel developed
- 1997: five families still lived in Al Qasr’s old village
Growth of Tourism in Dakhla

- Government initiatives initially helped but were eventually discontinued
- Pan Arab Tours and Siyag Tours brought an increasing amount of tourists
- Growth of international tourists i.e. Dutch, German, Italian students
- Increase in access via transportation
- Now 14 hotels including ecolodges
Mebarez Hotel
Mut, Dakhla Oasis

First hotel in Dakhla
El Negoom Hotel
Mut, Dakhla

Second hotel in Dakhla
Developed in 2000
Al Tarfa Desert
Sanctuary
Al Mansoura, Dakhla

Egypt’s First Eco-Luxury Lodge
Al Tarfa Desert Sanctuary

Offers Western conveniences close to nature
Desert Lodge
Al Qasr, Dakhla

First fully operational eco-lodge
Opened in 2004
Desert Lodge

Awarded Best Environmental Tourism Award in 2007 by German Travel Association DRV
Why Dakhla?

- Clean, unpolluted environment
- Desert safaris and camel trips
- Panoramic views of nature
- Adventure tourism
- Healthy/curative tourism- hot springs
- Temples, old city, local crafts and handiwork
Vision 2020:
The National Sustainable Development Plan for the Republic of Egypt

Julia Price-Madison
The Strategy

 dejtings

- Aims at achieving volume and value growth targets while avoiding collateral damage to the environment, culture and society

- Concentrates on gaining tourists from higher socioeconomic categories who want to explore different regions, especially the Western Desert

- Six primary objectives
1. Ensure an Appropriate Institutional Framework

- Clearly define roles for public and private sector
- Government promoting expansion of private sector
- The Egyptian Tourism Federation’s role
2. Ensure Easy Access, Safety and Security

- Objective: improve tourist satisfaction
- Air travel
  - Increase competitiveness
  - Open skies policy
  - Increase domestic direct flights
- Water travel
  - High speed drive-on ferry
- Safety
3. Expand the Product Base

- Increase scope of tourism to “new” regions
- Mass products
  - Culture
  - Business
  - Health/wellness/beauty
- Niche products
  - Desert expeditions
  - Ecotourism
  - Rural/community tourism
4. Provide the Necessary Infrastructure and Superstructure

- Eight tourism regions
  - Each responsible for improving infrastructure
- Infrastructure
  - Relevance in Dakhla
- Superstructure
  - Relevance in Dakhla
5. Improve Quality of Service

- Low current quality of service
- Human Resources Development Plan
  - Train desert guides, local tour guides
- Standardization of hotel grading
  - Encourages hotels to work towards achieving an upgrade
A local untrained tour guide in Dakhla
6. Promote the Product to the Market

- Increase awareness
  - Educate international community of opportunities in Egypt
  - Promote “greenness” and conservation
- Fiscal support for tourism
  - Possible tax breaks
Implications for Investment

✦ Provides many opportunities
  ✦ Concentrates on promoting tourism in Dakhla region
  ✦ Relies heavily on international private investment
  ✦ Fiscal expansion of industry must come from private investors
Economic Development in Egyptian Tourism

Scarlett Royston
Sustainable Ecotourism and the Economy

- Tourism is the second largest foreign currency earner of Egypt after petroleum.
- Contributes to 8.3% GDP directly and 11.3% GDP indirectly.
- Forecasted to grow by 4.2% and 5.8% respectively over the next ten years.
- Directly responsible for employing 1.4 million people and indirectly responsible for 2.8 million.
Figure II.1
Egypt TTCI Rank vs. Regional Competitors

- United Arab Emirates: 18
- Tunisia: 34
- Qatar: 36
- Jordan: 45
- Bahrain: 47
- Egypt: 58
- Kuwait: 67
- Algeria: 93
Al Qasr Village, Dakhla
Market Profile of Dakhla

- Source Market: Italian, German, French, and British, Dutch, Spanish, American, Australian
- Average length of stay: 1-4 nights
  - Hotels or lodges
  - Desert camping
- Transportation: plane, desert safari, bus
- Types of tourism: culture, health, adventure, eco, sports, educational (us!)
- Growing market
  - 2005: 61,686 tourists
  - 2009: 115,075 tourists
  - Overnight camping, not including hotel stays
Strengths of Tourism in Dakhla

- Booming winter tourism
- Natural attractions
  - Desert
  - Scenic landscapes
  - Wildlife
- Cultural attractions create opportunities for economic growth
  - Crafts
  - Historical city
  - Museums
- Creates jobs
Weaknesses of Tourism in Dakhla

- NOT a summer season destination
- Lack of high-end accommodation
  - Value for money??
  - No wireless internet available in Dakhla hotels
  - Credit card use – travelers don’t like carrying large amounts of money, but everything runs on cash in Dakhla - few ATMs
    - Decreases potential sales
    - Creates negative customer experience
- Low product diversification = high competition
- Missing niche; same products are created by all small businesses
- Lack of access to economic data specific to Dakhla
Tourism Opportunities in Dakhla

- Desert development
  - Fairly untouched so far
  - Lots of land
  - Historical sites
- New market for high-end ecotourism
- Potential for new products in the market
- Potential to make tourism a long term economic provider
Threats and Challenges to Tourism in Dakhla

- How to turn Dakhla into a year-round destination
- Trained workforce
- Competition between oases
- Developing diversification of products
# Economy SWOT Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Boosts economy in the winter</td>
<td>• Not a year-round destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Attractions lead to more jobs</td>
<td>• Lacks high-end accommodations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Missing niches</td>
<td>• Missing niches</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• High-end ecotourism</td>
<td>• Competition from other oases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• New products</td>
<td>• Year-round destinations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Long-term potential</td>
<td>• Diversification of products</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Human Development

Tricia Dong
Tourism and Human Development
Human Development

Human Development Index

- As of 2009 the Human Development Report ranked Egypt 123rd out of 182 countries

Components

- Life expectancy
- Education
- Standard of living
Life Expectancy in Dakhla

- Egypt is ranked 102nd with the average life expectancy to be 69.9 years (HDI report 2009)

- Women’s health
  - Access to information on birth control, prenatal care, maternal care

- Children’s health
  - Preventable illnesses
  - Basic hygiene

- Life expectancy can be improved due to economic benefits of tourism
Education in Al Qasr

- Literacy rate is ranked 119th with 66.4% of adults over the age of 15 and enrollment is ranked 79th with 76.4% of children in schooling.

- Al Qasr school system
  - 2 primary schools, 2 prep schools, and 1 secondary school

- Other schooling options
  - Pottery, basket weaving, agriculture

- Obligatory schooling
  - More girls are attending and staying in school than previous years

- Adult illiteracy
  - Higher enrollment will increase available skilled workforce for tourism
Culture Center in Al Qasr
Sponsored by the Ministry of Culture
Standard of Living

Moving Al Qasr out of the Islamic village
Global Gender Gap Index in 2007 ranks Egypt 120th out of 128 countries.

- Gender-specific jobs
- Daily lives of men in comparison to women of Al Qasr
- Tourism changing the lives of local people in Al Qasr
  - Perception of women beginning to change due to tourism
  - Male hotel and restaurant staff
  - Tourist expectations
Tourism’s Effects on Human Development in Dakhla

- Creates jobs for the local people of Dakhla
- Leads to better health care and education
- Tourism giving back to the Al Qasr community
  - Trash clean ups
  - Waste management programs
  - Use of local goods
- Increases in tourism can improve overall human development
## Tourism and Human Development SWOT Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Conventional appliances available for majority of local population  
  • Obligatory education  
  • Increase awareness of local problems such as education and healthcare  
  • Creates jobs for local residents | • Exploits the local people  
  • Tourist expectations: required to act and dress a certain way |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Potential for more local employment  
  • Funding for local programs to promote health and education | • Corruption with distributing human development funds  
  • Resistance from the locals to accept help in development |
Culture and Tourism

Elise Welch
Culture of Al Qasr

 предпочитаемый

 liable

 Culture of Al Qasr

 Lifestyle

 Crafts
- weaving
- pottery
- blacksmith
Culture of Al Qasr

 Paladin

Heritage sites
- Museums
- Islamic old town
- Archaeological sites
Interaction of Tourism and Culture in Al Qasr

- Crafts made for tourists
- Souvenir shop
- Local accounts
SWOT Analysis: Culture of Al Qasr

_strengths:
- skilled craftsmen
- hospitable people
- historical sites

_weaknesses:
- poorly advertised
- lack of craft variation
- no official tour guide
SWOT Analysis: Culture of Al Qasr

- **Opportunities:**
  - Old Islamic Village as heritage site
  - Archaeological sites
  - Enhance and promote museum
  - Partnership between Desert Lodge and local sites

- **Threats:**
  - Archaeological excavation
  - Nationally protected village
  - Increased tourism
  - Crossing the line from capitalizing to exploiting
## Culture SWOT Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Local crafts, historical sites</td>
<td>• Poorly advertised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hospitality of village people</td>
<td>• No official tour guides</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Expanding archaeological excavations</td>
<td>• Tourism saturation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Partnerships with local villages</td>
<td>• Crossing from capitalizing to exploiting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Environment & Ecology

Kendall Williams
Landscape of Dakhla

- The Western Desert
  - The New Valley
- One of Five Oases
  - Al Qasr, Dakhla
    - Lush land, mountain back drops, water springs, clean air, farming, water reserves
Natural Attractions of the Area

- En Route to Dakhla
  - Crystal Mountains
  - White Desert
  - Black Desert

- While at Dakhla
  - Gardens
  - Organic Farms
  - Biking Trails/Tours
  - Natural Hot Springs
Main Concerns of Al Qasr

🎓 Water Conservation & Efficiency

🎓 Pollution & Trash Control
Eco Friendly Initiatives:
The Desert Lodge

- Energy Sources
- Water Control
- Killing Two Birds with One Stone Mentality
# Environment SWOT Analysis

**Strengths**
- Beautiful landscapes unique to location
- Appreciation for natural attractions

**Weaknesses**
- Nonrenewable water sources
- Difficult to acclimate to temperatures
- Extreme night and day climates

**Opportunities**
- Advancing cleaning system
- Teaching better conservation techniques
- Diversifying crops, using less water

**Threats**
- Disrupting ecosystems through people and wildlife interactions
- Not establishing concrete plans to ensure water conservation and preservation
Where do we go from here?
A summary of our midterm assessment
## SWOT Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Boosts economy in the winter</td>
<td>• Not a year-round destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Attractions lead to more jobs</td>
<td>• Lacks high-end accommodations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conventional appliances available</td>
<td>• Exploits the local people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Obligatory education</td>
<td>• Tourist expectations: required to act and dress a certain way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increase awareness of local problems</td>
<td>• Poorly advertised, no official tour guides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Local crafts, historical sites, hospitality</td>
<td>• Nonrenewable water sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Beautiful landscapes, unique location</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Appreciate natural attractions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• High-end ecotourism</td>
<td>• Competition from other oases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Potential for more local employment</td>
<td>• Year-round destinations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Funding for local programs to promote health and education</td>
<td>• Corruption with using human development funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Expanding archaeological excavations</td>
<td>• Resistance to accept help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Partnerships with local villages</td>
<td>• Tourism saturation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Advancing cleaning system</td>
<td>• Crossing from capitalizing to exploiting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teaching better conservation techniques</td>
<td>• Disrupting ecosystems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Diversifying crops, using less water</td>
<td>• Not establishing plans to ensure water conservation and preservation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thank you for your time!