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SUSTAINABLE YACHT TOURISM PRACTICES

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Abstract:

Yacht tourism has become an important asset for the countries which consider tourism as a means of development due to its environment awareness, national and international investments, the volume of business, employment opportunities, foreign exchange income, socio-economic and socio-cultural impact, and an increasing number of investments and incentives for yacht tourism have made and used in a number of countries. In the presence of such rapid developments, the environmental damage caused by yacht tourism has been of importance for coastal countries, and action plans and special projects involving many countries have been developed in order to enhance the awareness of the sustainability of yacht tourism. Given that environment is not a limited source, it is blatant that national or international sustainable tourism practices have been essential for coastal countries and environmental threats are now so severe that they cannot be overlooked. The purpose of the study is to discuss sustainable tourism practices as a part of the measures to eliminate the negative impacts of yacht tourism and provide relevant suggestions.

Keywords: *Yachting, yacht tourism, sustainability, environmental awareness*

1. Introduction

The availability of one or several of multifunctional recreational resources offered by the natural environment in a destination has a positive impact on the tourism demand for the region (Zengin, 2006). In particular, the beauty of the sea and coasts, the attractiveness of the bays and vegetation, the unspoiled natural landscape of the regions, the historical relics and favourable climatic conditions are too important to be ignored in the demand for yacht tourism in that region. Because yacht tourism results from yachting which is a recreational activity and evolves into a type of tourism; the provision of a number of services to yachts and yachters in the region allows for the emergence of tourism destinations and the increase in the demand for such destinations.

Directly linked to marine tourism and preferred by the tourists with high incomes, yacht tourism has been mentioned most often and increasingly seen as important; also, it is included in the literature as a type of tourism with a high economic return (Dinçer, 1987; Özer, 1990; Hall, 2001; Kaya and Narin, 2008; Payeras et al. 2011; Sezer, 2012; Lukovic, 2012; Albayrak, 2013). Yacht tourism is

a comprehensive and flexible form of tourism where travellers spend time freely on their yachts along the route they decide, they moor their yachts and visit the historical and natural beauties of the destination and its surroundings, they can visit the city centre, go shopping and also benefit from the services of other tourism businesses.

As a result, a region may be located on the route of a yacht tourism and preferred by people depending on yacht mooring, the availability of the recreational marine activities which yachters may be involved in (such as entertainment, sunbathing, amateur fishing, underwater exploration, diving, windsurfing, relaxation, etc.) and attractive geomorphological features (Doğaner, 2001). Therefore, yacht tourism improves to the extent that in a pristine environment intertwined with nature is complemented with infrastructure and superstructure services, and the environment and natural resources in the coastal countries investing in yacht tourism should not be protected against destruction. Moreover, the destinations are expected to value sustainable tourism practices and protect their natural and cultural heritage in the long term.

The countries desiring to make investment in this tourism, to create enlarged yacht tourism routes and to be in the route in the international dimension, make attempts for sustainable yacht tourism and develop various projects. Taking into account the theoretical gap in the literature, the purpose of this study is not only examine the preminent sustainable yacht tourism practices but also aims to contribute to the literature provides relevant suggestions. Therefore, investigation of this aspect as a whole becomes a fundamental issue. The methodology used includes bibliographic documentation and results of research for deepening the concept of sustainable yacht tourism practices internationally recognized for them. Hence, this study includes the importance of yacht tourism, the projects developed on the elements forming yacht tourism and the actual certification programs focusing on environmental awareness.

2. The Importance of Yacht Tourism and Its Current Status

An undeniably huge number of tourists interested in yachting in the recent years has enabled yacht tourism, which is in a rapid development process in coastal countries, to be an important part of tourism industry, which has become one of the world's largest industries. The technological developments practiced on yachts, the desire of tourists interested in yachting to see new places, the proximity of the destinations, the climate, the vegetation, the natural conditions such as bays, the activities, lifestyle, customs and traditions, attitude towards tourism of the local community, the investment of countries in yacht tourism as well as ease of transportation have allowed for many countries in the world to be located on the route of yacht tourism and to be preferable by tourists interested in yachting (Sevinç and Güzel, 2016a).

According to the data by the World Tourism Organisation in 2015, with 609 million tourists visiting Europe, the region ranks the first place as the top tourism region. It is followed by Asia-Pacific region welcoming 278 million tourists and the United States receiving 191 million tourists (UNWTO, 2016:15). The analysis on the most-preferred tourism regions in terms of yacht tourism indicated that the Caribbean Islands and the Mediterranean coasts, which are two important destinations for yacht tourism (Özer, 1990; ECLAC, 2004; Pardali et al. 2007), are

included in the route of many tourists interested in yachting. It is known that the destinations for yacht tourism have historically moved from the Western Mediterranean towards the Eastern Mediterranean due to a variety of reasons. According to estimations, the exotic nature of the islands across the Indian Ocean will attract mostly the tourists interested in yachting and many destinations will be located on the route of yacht tourism without any limitations in the future. Table 1 demonstrates that there are hundreds of stops from the Western Mediterranean to Gibraltar only in Europe. Thus, it can be stated that yacht tourism has become widespread in the world and there is a yachting activity in almost every coast.

Table 1

Popular Yacht Tourism Destinations and Seasons Worldwide

Northern Europe	Denmark (<i>May- September</i>), Norway (June- August), Sweden (<i>May- September</i>), United Kingdom (<i>May- September</i>)
Western Europe	Holland (<i>May- September</i>), France, Germany (<i>April- November</i>)
Southern Europe	Spain (<i>May-October</i>), Italy, Malta, Greece, Croatia (<i>April- October</i>)
East Mediterranean Europe	Turkey, Cyprus, Israel (<i>April-October</i>)
Asia-Pacific Region	Thailand and Malaysia (<i>All year long</i>)- Australia, Fiji, Tonga (<i>All year long</i>), New Zealand (<i>December-January</i>)
North America	Alaska and Canada (<i>June- September</i>)
Central America	Bahamas in the Caribbean Sea (Inagua, Abaco, Andros, Grand Bahamas, New Providence), Antil (Cuba, San Domingo, Haiti, Jamaica, Porto Rico, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Trinidad) and Virgin Islands (<i>November- July</i>)
South America	Rio de Janeiro (<i>December- March</i>)
Africa	Tunisia, the Canary Islands, Seychelles, Mauritius (<i>All year long</i>)

Source: Sevinç and Güzel (2016a, p.132)

In regard to the sub-regions of the tourism region of Europe and a number of countries in Europe, the favourable weather conditions and natural beauties of these countries, their historical places, an abundant number of short-range bays as well as their extensive investments has made the region preferable by the tourists interested in yachting in Europe. With over 27,000 km of waterways and more than 70,000 km of coastline, Europe offers a suitable environment for the 48 million European citizens, regularly taking part in recreational marine activities, 36 million of whom are boaters, and for a number of yachting activities for tourists. More than 6 million boats are kept in European waters and 4,500 marinas provide 1.75 million berths (European Boating Industry, 2016). It is further known that Europe has been the hub for 70% of yacht charters with a large number of them taking place in the Mediterranean basin (European Boating Industry, 2013). For that reason, yachting activities represent an important income for coastal and island economies in Europe (Diakomihalis and Lagos, 2011) also yachts, water sports and marinas provide an employment opportunity for 180,000 people and constitute an annual income of about 17 billion euros across Europe (European Boating Industry, 2016).

Due to increasing demand, the economic impacts of yacht tourism on national economy have become more apparent and yacht tourism is now considered as a source of foreign exchange, investment and income generation by coastal countries (Sevinç and Güzel, 2016a). Given the above-average expenditures of the tourists interested in yachting, the importance of yacht tourism for such countries can be better acknowledged (Özer, 1990). For the sake of example, yacht enterprises benefit from the expenditures of yacht charter, the services of crew and consultation, etc.; yacht marines benefit from the expenditures of yacht mooring for tourists travelling on their yachts; berthing organizations benefit from the expenditures of maintenance and repair, and all of the businesses in the area benefit from the daily expenditures of tourists interested in yachting, which many include their accommodation depending on their length of stay, and their taxes and expenditures ultimately contribute to national economy (Sevinç and Güzel, 2016a). Since yacht tourism is a type of tourism, which involves not only travelling by yacht, but also the combination of yacht, yachter, yacht management, yacht construction and marina (Kalemdaroglu et al. 2004). For that reason, the expenditures of the tourists interested in yachting only on marinas are higher than the expenditures of other tourists; indeed, the foreign exchange revenue of a yacht is equal to the expenditures of about thirty tourists (Lett, 1983; Bektaş, 1994; Özkan and Ayran 2009; Özer Sarı, 2013). Indeed, a study in Spain, where yacht tourism is foremost, revealed that the average daily expenditures of the tourists interested in yachting and travelling to the Balearic Islands are higher by 94 percent than that of mass tourists (Payeras et al. 2011, p.117).

It is obvious that the importance of yacht tourism has been increasing and better acknowledged every day in the world (Hall, 2001; Diakomihalis and Lagos, 2011; Sariisik et al. 2011; Chen et al. 2016; Sevinç and Güzel, 2016b) Indeed, the investments of countries on the elements of yacht tourism are an indicator of that. The countries such as Italy, France and Spain, which previously acknowledged the importance of yacht tourism, have made the necessary efforts to enhance their shores and secure their infrastructure by ensuring that yacht tourism is an important branch of tourism in their country. The neighbouring countries are also affected by these developments, leading to a different competitive environment. In fact, the European countries integrated with a joint economic, political and social movement developed common policies on tourism in order to profit from tourism in the best way and to achieve their objectives.

Legal Regulations Concerning Yacht Tourism in the World

With an increased number of the members of the European Union attempting to develop a common policy on tourism, the borders of the Union extended, and there have been disruptions in the development of tourism policies since each member country suffers from different problems in relation to tourism (İstanbulu Dinçer, 1997). However, the European Union promoted yacht tourism during that interval due to its environmental, socio-cultural and economic advantages for countries and focused on the practices based on sustainability (European Commission, 2015). Indeed, the EU countries adopted tourism policies, other than their national policies on yacht tourism, in order to improve and ensure the competitiveness. The reason is that the negative impacts of mass tourism became apparent on the Western Mediterranean coasts, and marine pollution, increase in taxes and opportunities in other regions directed the tourists interested in yachting

to other destinations, particularly, to the Eastern Mediterranean. At this point, it is remarkable that the 1972 Stockholm Conference emphasized the importance of bringing solutions for the prevention of marine pollution and in later periods (UNCHE, 1972), the countries began to focus on the development of legal regulations. It highlighted the necessity to take the appropriate measures in order to combat marine pollution based on the use of the continental shelf and the seabed by taking into consideration of the Mediterranean Action Plan in line with the purposes of the 1976 Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (UNEP, 2004). The “polluter pays” principle and “environmental impact assessment” principle in the Rio Declaration adopted as a result of the 1992 United Nations Environment and Development (Rio) Conference as well as Agenda 21, which seeks lasting solutions by considering the management, development and environmental issues of the 21st century, are resolutions of critical importance for yacht tourism due to their characteristics (UNCED, 1992). Accordingly, all of these resolutions serve as a guideline which every country can benefit from and determine their tourism strategies by taking into consideration their own national objectives and priorities.

The countries, seeking to take advantage of yacht tourism during that period, aim to improve at national and regional level as well as to ensure the effective and efficient use of their resources. Therefore, for instance, having the potential to take part in a number of international partnership due to its location, Turkey has developed its own “*National Agenda 21*” and “*the Black Sea and the Mediterranean Regional Environment and Sustainable Development Programmes*.” As a result, there is a growing competition and cooperation among the Mediterranean countries yachting-related in recent years (Pardali et al., 2007; Lukovic, 2012). Moreover, the Mediterranean region can be divided into two areas like the western coast and the eastern coast (Chen et al. 2016). Due to its geographical location, eastern coast countries are expected to become an important destination in the future of yacht tourism thanks to its winds suitable for a number of marine activities all year long, its yet unpolluted seas and shores, its natural bays and modern marinas built with the latest technology (Tandoğan, 1998; Chappell, 2009; Maheshwari, 2010; Diakomihalis and Lagos, 2011; Sariisik et al. 2011; Chen et al. 2016) For that reason, the countries anticipated to make investments on yacht tourism, to preserve natural environment and to include yacht tourism in action plans. Thus, in addition to its economic contribution, yacht tourism enabled the countries to prosper in a controlled manner, affecting other areas by means of multiplier effect. Consequently, certain marine routes and water areas were promoted as tourist attractions. Since seas as well as rivers and lakes, and tourist attractions in the region became an asset for yacht tourism. As yacht tourism draws attention to clean water areas and marine rather than the investments of hotels located on shores and regarded as “tourism pollution”, ugly housing and destroyed environment, etc. (Özer, 1990; Bektaş, 1995; ECLAC, 2003) and acts responsible to the environment, it has been recently considered as an alternative to coastal concretion. The objective is to enable activities related to sea to be available on all of the shores.

3. Environmental Awareness and Sustainability In Regard to Yacht Tourism

The developments on yacht tourism in the Western European in the recent years have influence mainly on the Eastern European countries as well as many coastal countries. The factors such as the marine pollution in the Western European countries, the spread of the US-based economic crisis to Europe, lengthy bureaucratic procedures, legal regulations, the lack of infrastructure and superstructure, climate change and natural disasters, etc. have a negative impact on a country in terms of yacht tourism and also provide an opportunity for other coastal countries. However, given that environment is not a limited resource, it should be noted that marine pollution poses a threat to all countries of the world. Since sea water cleans air, generates oxygen, also revitalizes people and gives them peace of mind as it contains some substances which balance melatonin and serotonin levels. Being seen as a source of healing (Nakasone and Akeda, 1999), seas have an effective role in human health and are among the most important reasons for people to become interested in yachting. Accordingly, the protection of bodies of water and natural environment will ensure the sustainability of yachting activities and contribute to the improvement of yacht tourism at a national level.

Given the elements of yacht tourism, it would not be reasonable to expect that yachting activities take place in a region where there are no natural habitats and other tourist attractions (Dođaner, 1999; Jennings, 2003). In this regard, with increased awareness on sustainability, yacht tourism became a part of the action plans and special projects involving many countries, and national or international sustainable tourism practices were made into a requirement (UNEP, 2004; ICOMIA, 2005; European Commission, 2015). Particularly, the advancement of yacht tourism and the way to eliminate the waste water of facilities have become an issue in the recent years; oil, oil products, detergents and solid waste discharged into sea by yachters led to the reduction of the amount of oxygen in the sea water and sea pollution (Jansen et al. 2009; Angelis, 2015; IMO, n.d.; ISO, n.d.).

4. Sustainable Yacht Tourism Practices

Many environmental projects are now being developed at international, national and regional levels and sustainable tourism policies, programs and practices are available. Sustainable tourism practices consist with the law, be updated and developed and they also include certain elements such as control mechanisms, certification, eco-label, voluntary participation and membership. Indeed, all of these can be caused the potential tourists with environmental awareness to prefer these practices (Buckley, 2002; Font, 2002; Dodds, 2010; Arli, 2012; Capacci et al. 2015). In addition, these prefer contribute to economically (Sipic, 2010; Torrent et al. 2011). Despite the growing amount of published research about yacht tourism the literature on sustainability of yacht tourism is still limited. In fact, upon reviewing on the sustainable practices of the elements of yacht tourism come into prominence the certification programs, projects developed, environmental awareness such as Blue Card, CE Inspection & Certification, Blue Flag, Gold Anchor, Odyssey Blue Tourism and the Seabin Project. Although the focus of the response in different (yacht manufacturing, yachting, marina etc.) all practices are actually interrelated for sustainable yacht

tourism. In the light of these observations, it is obvious that the sustainable yacht tourism practises need further development, results of implementations should be observed as a whole. Different from the previous researchers, this study describes the prominence practices as a whole, refers to interrelated in a conceptual framework and knowledge gaps.

Blue Card

It should not be overlooked that every project with the aim of raising the sea and environmental awareness contributes to sustainability, since one of the greatest reasons to undermine tourism revenue is to direct discharge of waste into the sea and to deaf to the situation. The practice of "Blue Card", which was developed and enforced for boats and yachts in order to raise environmental awareness, is based on the provisions of "*International Maritime Organization-MARPOL 73/78 Convention, Bucharest Convention, Barcelona Convention, the European Union (EMSA), Decree No. 648 & 644 and the Environmental Law No. 2872.*" Hence, in order to raise awareness among people and to create a sea culture, the practice of blue card has been made compulsory. As of 2015, a total of 51 facilities including 39 private and 12 public marinas adopted the practice of blue card and the number of registered yachts with a blue card increased to 12,750 (CYGM, 2011; TCS, 2014).

According to reports and with the increasing demand for yacht tourism in recent years, there has been an increase in marine pollution across the Aegean and Mediterranean coasts, and the system of blue card and strict inspections attempted to eliminate such increase. In this way, the information such as the type and amount of the waste discharged by waste collection ships, fishing ports, marinas and similar shore facilities and the amount and type of waste created in ships are accessible on web; a strict supervision is exercised over the illegal discharge of bilge, waste water and garbage in yachts and other boats into the sea. In addition to deterrent measures, criminal proceedings are initiated for the yachters violating the rules. Nevertheless, some yachters still discharge waste waters into bays at night without being noticed (Koşar Danışman et al. 2016). The lack of waste water tanks in old boats not suitable for the system leads to that these boats do not come into the harbour and discharge their waste into open seas.

CE Certification

It is apparent that yachts lead to temporary or permanent marine pollution under sail or while moored. The most important reason of such pollution is the shortcomings of yachters and yachts in terms of seaworthiness. Therefore, it is of critical importance that yachters should be sensitive to the environment during maintenance and repair and utilize environmentally friendly products in their yachts. In particular, the chemical substances contained by painting materials so as to keep marine animals away from the surface and their toxic nature are inevitably harmful to sea (Srinivasan and Swain, 2007). For that reason, the consideration of environmental trends and technological developments should be essential for any action to be taken in regard to yacht tourism and the elements of yacht tourism. In this sense, the "CE" marking, which is a conformity assessment and marking system referring to the compliance to the European standards in yacht manufacturing, has been used in order to ensure that yachts are manufactured in accordance with national and international standards on safety,

health, environment and consumer protection, and to ensure free movement in the EU and other countries (DCI, 2014).

Blue Flag

Sustainable practices are being adopted in order to draw attention to environmental awareness (Fışkın et al. 2016; Koşar Danışman and Kaya, 2016) and emphasize its importance, and national organizations evolve into international ones with such practices like “Blue Flag”, which is sought for beaches, marinas and sustainable boating tourism operators. It is known that the businesses of marinas have an important effect on coastal and urban texture, and such effect is present on all coastal areas (Özkan and Ayıran, 2009). For that reason, since environmental protection is a critical consideration in making investments in marinas, the quality services provided as well as environmental awareness accelerate the progress of marinas in the industry (Sevinç and Güzel, 2016a). Hence, the practice of “Blue Flag” has become one of the practices which can contribute to such progress. So that of the fulfilment of 25 criteria for marinas, 33 criteria for beaches and 6 criteria with 17 rules for yacht specified by the Foundation for Environmental Education, “Blue Flag” is given to the eligible marinas as an international environment award. The award indicates to ensure that sea water is clean, provide an environmental management, perform certain activities to raise environmental awareness, have the equipment to meet the needs and ensure their safety. Therefore, the practice of blue flag is characterized as a brand or by “Eco-Label” (Font, 2002). According to the 2016 data (Figure 1), a total of 4,266 beaches, marinas and sustainable boating tourism operators in 47 countries have been awarded with blue flag (FEE, 2016).



Figure 1. Blue Flag International Map 2016

Source: <http://www.blueflag.global/>

Gold Anchor

“Gold Anchor” is awarded to the businesses of marinas by the Yacht Harbour Association established to support and improve the industry of marinas, depending on their credibility, and their compliance with the standard of quality service and legal regulations in 26 countries. Over 160 marinas participate from 28 countries

around the world, the scheme is increasingly growing as an internationally recognised accreditation. Ratings are endorsed by the Royal Yachting Association, ICOMIA (International Council of Marine Industry Associations) and the British Marine Federation (THYA, 2016a). The businesses of marinas that wish to be awarded with such title will become eligible to be awarded with “1 Gold Anchor” once they are successful in the process of self-evaluation. After a 4-stage assessment of the businesses of marinas with the fundamental qualifications, which includes the assessment of customer services, the required facilities and the practices of mystery shopper and survey, the businesses will be awarded with “5 Gold Anchors.” As of 2016, there are 101 marinas awarded with the title of “5 Gold Anchors” (THYA, 2016b).

Odyssea Blue Tourism

The European Cooperation grouping (GEC) Odyssea, non-for-profit organization, leads the development of the Odyssea program to European and Mediterranean level. Its founding members include French, Spanish and Italian of the marinas, Federations the 3 European leaders for nautical tourism. Odyssea program has been able to unite and network more than 70 port cities, 9 countries and 16 Mediterranean and European regions in France, Spain, Italy, Greece, Portugal, Morocco, Malta etc. Odyssea label project and strategy, Odyssea 2014-2020 objectives growth and tourism blue consist of a layout ecotourism blue waterways and greenways along the river. This in an objective innovative new business models of exploitation, new forms of solidarity and ethics, exchanges of good practice, as well as the creation of innovative products and diversified to strengthen the growth potential of the sector. The other purpose is to improve accessibility, connectivity and transnational visibility of new offers of "blue" tourism destination and promote sustainability by controlling the impact of tourist activities on the environment through better management of flows and dating. After an initial phase of experimentation with 10 projects European 2007-2013 approved, the French Federation of marinas Ports (FFPP), the GEC Odyssea and partners of boating, tourism and culture, agriculture, handicrafts and environment, launch so with Odyssea growth and tourism blue 2014 - 2020, "the blue around ports tourism", according to 6 axes (FFPP, 2016).

Seabin Project

Intended to start in 2016, “*Seabin Project*”, which is a sustainable practice involving the recycled materials developed by the establishment of a R&D centre in Palma Mallorca so as to eliminate the pollution of the sea surface, has been designed to be used in marinas, docks and piers, inland waterways, lakes and yachts. In this way, in addition to solid waste in the water area, all of floating wastes such as oil, fuel, detergents will be automatically collected into a bin and trapped in the net of the bin (<http://seabinproject.com>).

5. Discussion

Yacht tourism has an economic, environmental and socio-cultural impact at international level, and its activities take place in partially untouched bays as well as destinations with natural, historical and cultural beauties due to its characteristics and nature. Different destinations have become increasingly important in yacht tourism with each passing day and the world demands of yacht tourism are prominent in many coasts. For instance, it is believed that the demand

of yacht tourism shifting from the Western Mediterranean towards the Eastern Mediterranean (Tandoğan, 1998; Chappell, 2009; Diakomihalis, 2011; Chen, 2016) and focusing on the Mediterranean coasts will be concentrated on the Black sea in time with climate change and the Black Sea will be an alternative to the Mediterranean basin for the tourists interested in yachting and looking for new destinations (Kiselev, 2013; Levinska, 2015; Sevinç and Güzel, 2016a). This may create an opportunity for the countries boarding the Black Sea. However, the enhancement of environmental awareness (Blackman et al. 2014) to achieve an industrial success in cooperation with institutions and organizations, the preservation and enrichment of all of the natural, historical and cultural values are of critical importance for the sustainability of yacht tourism.

In order to ensure sustainable tourism at the national level, the involvement of public authorities, local governments, and relevant enterprises, non-governmental organizations and local people with a greater responsibility is essential (Mazilu and Sitnikov, 2010; European Boating Industry, 2013). Furthermore, marine tourism unions and associations have a responsibility in ensuring sustainability, and as the projects of these unions and associations in this regard are fulfilled, environmental awareness will be estimated more and more important. In this way, the positive impact of yacht tourism on environment can be greater, since in case of the intense use of marine tourism resources, oversupply in the use of coasts, environmental awareness, the lack of the culture and preservation of marine tourism (Jansen et al. 2009; Sevinç and Güzel, 2016a), yacht tourism can have a negative impact on environmental values. For that reason, bearing capacity is a point to take into consideration for the sustainability of yacht tourism. In regard to yacht tourism can be transcribed for the points to take into consideration while fulfilling the responsibility for the elements of supply on sustainable tourism (WTTC, 2001:40-53), which are determined by the World Tourism Organization are as follows:

- To determine the existing regulators and the capacity of the economic framework which form the sustainability of yacht tourism,
- To identify the economic, social, cultural and environmental influence areas of the components of yacht tourism,
- To promote trainings on yacht tourism and to mould public opinion,
- To develop projects for the improvement of sustainable yacht tourism,
- To take into consideration the relevant experiences and methods of the countries advanced in sustainable yacht tourism,
- To ensure the involvement of all segments of society in yacht tourism,
- To develop and utilize new sustainable products for yacht tourism,
- To keep informed of the developments on sustainable development and to cooperate.

In addition to all of these, the following considerations are importance: to make savings on the consumption of energy, water, paper and other materials, to reduce the amount of waste, and to pay attention to solid waste recycling, to disseminate the use of the systems allowing the collection of liquid waste. In this regard, only a unit would fail in ensuring and supporting the sustainability of yacht tourism (European Commission, 2015); since the activities may have a negative or positive impact on other units. In other words, while the destruction of the nature

has a negative effect on yachting activities; the pollution created by the discharge of waste into sea by a yacht and its damages have an adverse impact on other yachts, marinas, human health, etc. The positive impact is apparent in a way that other groups of tourists can benefit from the services provided by marinas and that the tourists interested in yachting spend their time at bays and natural environment through the services provided by yacht businesses, that the tourists interested in yachting can utilize other tourist facilities in addition to natural and historical places in the destination after mooring their yachts. Therefore, in addition to effects, there are other regulations in order to create a healthy balance between yacht tourism and environment (Jansen et al. 2009; Sevinç and Güzel, 2016a), which are “*environmental impact assessment (EIA), environmental legislation, bearing capacity and opportunity cost.*”

Although the protection of the environment and the preservation of its naturalness and cleanliness are the underlying requirements for yacht tourism, it would not be an accurate inference that every coast should serve as a centre for yacht tourism as long as resources are effectively and efficiently used. In other words, yacht tourism is only one of the types of tourism that will contribute to the improvement of a region. Therefore, it may be necessary to evaluate a destination in regard to other types of tourism or different sectors that will potentially contribute to the region’s economy as well as in terms of yacht tourism. For that reason, a cost-benefit analysis should be conducted on a regional scale. In this way, it is possible to determine the industries that can be less harmful to the environment while using the resources and that can have the greatest contribution to the economy. In the event that the investments on yacht tourism are deemed appropriate following the cost-benefit analysis, the next consideration should be the stages of environmental planning and development for the advancement of yacht tourism. Since the positive impacts of yacht tourism, in addition to its economic contribution at a regional and national level, should be equally distributed between the local authorities and the public. In this regard, if not paid attention, long-term adverse reactions against yacht tourism may emerge in the stage of the preparation of the reports of EIA (<http://www.7deniz.net>).

After all, the reasons that a region is a destination for yacht tourism are primarily its location and its natural and relatively clean bays. In this regard, as coasts now involve the opportunities of transportation and tourism, the protection of ecological balance has become necessary. Since the presence of the yacht tourism in a country depends on its environmental awareness and the availability of its seas and coasts. Otherwise the negative effects will be inevitable and non-rotatable. For instance, a study in Turkey by the Branch of Bodrum of the Maritime Chamber of Commerce revealed that there are a total of 239 bays suitable for yachting between the Gulf of Edremit and Phaselis in Antalya, that a total of 41 bays have been destroyed in a way that it is not possible to restore them as of 2013 and that 104 of them have been taken under protection within the scope of National Park and 94 of them, left without any protection, have been subjected to destruction due to dense urbanization and social pressure (TCS, 2015). Although, the destinations with a combination of many features such as *Gökova, Hisarönü, Fethiye, Göcek, Kekova, Antalya and Kusadası* are important centres for yacht tourism in Turkey. Moreover, there have not been created environmental awareness entirely and understood the importance of sustainable yacht tourism

practices as a whole in the destinations (Lucrezi et al. 2015; Koşar Danışman, and Kaya, 2016).

6. Conclusion and Suggestions

Yacht tourism has become an industry that provides a variety of employment opportunities in the recent years and has developed with the promotion of natural, historical and cultural beauties of coastal countries. The desire of people to be close to nature and their interests in yacht, soothing sea and other water areas enabled yacht tourism to grow. Not only the technological developments around the world but also the variation of the demands and expectations of consumers reflected on the elements of yacht tourism, leading to structural changes in every area. To be a preferable destination in the market of international yacht tourism during this period depends on the close follow-up of the developments on yacht tourism and the emergence of appropriate policies and legal regulations. The effective implementation of such policies depends on the good analysis of yacht tourism demands and the development of plans complying with the conditions of the region and the understanding of sustainable yacht tourism. Given the countries advanced in yacht tourism and the recent changes in yacht tourism, it is observed that eastern coast (Greece, Croatia, Turkey etc.) of Mediterranean region does not have a major role in the international market of yacht tourism according to its existing values when compared to the western coast. So does the countries boarding the Black Sea. Among the reasons that yachting is not advanced in these coasts, however, legal regulations on yachting activities, yachting clubs, activities, fairs, relevant publications and departments in educational institutions enabled the improvement of yacht tourism and brought about an optimistic view for the future.

The increasing interest in yachting, become widespread and the prominence of yacht tourism among alternative types of tourism mark the birth of a new era apart from Caribbeans and western Mediterranean coast in yacht tourism. For that reason, consideration should be given to environmental planning in order to ensure sustainability. Given the characteristics of yacht tourism and the expectations of the tourists interested in yachting, all of the needs of the destination should be considered in planning activities and the investments in infrastructure and superstructure should be taken into consideration in regard to environmental planning. In other word, the investments should be made by taking into consideration of the existing ecological and socio-cultural values will not be harmful to the natural environment and the region. Since, if resources are preserved in harmony without spoiling the natural environment, the sustainability of yacht tourism can be ensured in the new era. In this context, yacht tourism should become an industry which makes economic contribution and also ensures the protection of environmental values and the development of the destinations. Thus, this conceptual study refers to the environmental awareness of the measures that can be taken in regard to the elimination of the negative impacts of yacht tourism and the practices concerning the sustainability of the yacht tourism. Therefore, practices are described as a whole and depicted the importance of sustainable yacht tourism.

This study, related to the practices of sustainable tourism, is limited to the recently popular practices and certificate programs of the elements of the yacht tourism. It has been observed that the importance of the yacht tourism and

environment has been appreciated and sustainable practices have diversified while the fields of application have expanded. The prevention of ecocide and the creation of awareness are, yet, inadequate. Researchers may handle these practices in different dimensions, make international comparisons according to coastal areas and the results of the practices by developing an extensive group of sample for the studies to be realized in future.

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