

Article

From Sustainability to Destination Loyalty: Structural Analysis of Visitor Perceptions in the National Marine Park of Alonissos–Northern Sporades

Igor Trišić 

Faculty of Geography, University of Belgrade, Studentski Trg 3/III, 11000 Belgrade, Serbia; trisici@hotmail.com; Tel.: +381-64-143-13-75

Abstract

This study investigates the structural impact of marine conservation dimensions and institutional frameworks on visitor experiences and behavioral intentions within the National Marine Park of Alonissos–Northern Sporades (NMPA). Anchored in the sustainability prism model (SPM), the research examines how conservation-driven environmental capital, alongside economic, socio-cultural, and institutional pillars, influences tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. Primary quantitative data were garnered via a cross-sectional survey administered to a statistically robust sample of 2251 visitors. Structural equation modeling (SEM) reveals that all four SPM dimensions significantly influence both immediate satisfaction and long-term loyalty. Crucially, the empirical outputs unveil an asymmetric dualism: while immediate tourist satisfaction is predominantly driven by the sensory consumption of pristine biodiversity and active marine conservation ($\beta = 0.577$), long-term loyalty is fundamentally anchored in the perceived efficiency of the institutional conservation governance framework ($\beta = 0.413$). These findings underscore the imperative of integrating transparent institutional mechanisms with active ecosystem preservation to secure the socio-ecological viability of marine conservation areas. Ultimately, this study provides actionable insights for balancing escalating ecotourism demands with strict, zero-compromise biodiversity conservation in vulnerable marine sanctuaries.

Keywords: conservation marine area; visitor satisfaction; visitor loyalty; institutional constraints; National Marine Park of Alonissos; sustainable tourism management

1. Introduction

Modern tourism is increasingly shifting towards conservation areas (CAs), where pristine nature becomes the primary motive for travel. However, the development of tourism within these sensitive ecosystems requires a careful balance between the conservation of natural resources and the fulfillment of visitor needs [1]. The CAs, such as national marine parks, represent complex systems in which sustainability and active biodiversity conservation are not merely desirable outcomes but prerequisites for the long-term survival of the marine ecosystem [2–4].

Marine parks play a pivotal role in the global growth of tourism, acting as “magnets” for nature-based destinations. They not only protect biodiversity but also generate significant economic value through ecotourism, providing visitors with unique opportunities for education and recreation [5,6]. Empirical research suggests that robustly managed marine protected areas directly catalyze destination attractiveness, as eco-centric tourists



Academic Editor: Colin Michael Hall

Received: 16 May 2026

Revised: 30 June 2026

Accepted: 8 July 2026

Published: 12 July 2026

Copyright: © 2026 by the author.

Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland.

This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the [Creative Commons Attribution \(CC BY\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) license.

inherently link their perception of quality to the rigorous conservation levels of the marine ecosystem [7]. For Alonissos, the marine park represents far more than an ecological sanctuary; it functions as the primary brand asset that sets the island apart in Greece's highly competitive tourism sector.

However, the relationship between tourism and marine parks is reciprocal and often conflicting. While tourism can provide essential funding for critical preservation efforts [8], it simultaneously exerts strong pressure on the very resources it seeks to protect. Negative impacts of tourism on marine parks include mechanical damage to underwater ecosystems caused by anchoring, noise pollution that disturbs marine mammals, and water quality degradation [9]. For specific species, such as the Mediterranean monk seal in Alonissos, even minimal human presence can trigger stress and the abandonment of critical habitats, underscoring the need for strict institutional oversight to guarantee successful species conservation [10].

Consequently, escalating tourism pressures within marine parks necessitate the operationalization of the carrying capacity framework to ensure that visitor density does not exceed the threshold for irreversible ecological damage. Balancing these impacts through the components of sustainability is crucial for achieving a synergy where tourism supports preservation management, and effective conservation enhances the overall visitor experience [11].

A significant research gap is observed in the existing literature. While numerous studies have examined the impact of environmental and economic sustainability on tourist satisfaction, few works provide an integrated view of all four components of the sustainability dimensions, especially the role of institutional constraints in achieving preservation goals within marine CAs. It is rarely examined how specific park rules and conservation management directly contribute to or hinder visitor loyalty.

This study aims to examine the structural impact of sustainability dimensions and institutional constraints on the satisfaction and behavioral loyalty of visitors within the NMPA. To address this objective, the primary research question is formulated as follows: How do the four integrated dimensions of sustainability shape visitor satisfaction and destination loyalty within this marine preservation framework, and which pillar yields the most substantial predictive power?

The results of the study will provide insight into whether visitors are willing to accept institutional constraints as part of an authentic experience and which aspects of sustainability and conservation efficiency are decisive in their decision to return to the island.

2. Literature Review

2.1. The Sustainability Prism Model (SPM) in Protected Areas

The theoretical framework of this research relies on the sustainability prism model (SPM), which expands the traditional "triple bottom line" concept (ecology, economy, and society) by introducing a fourth, institutional component. The environmental component focuses on biodiversity preservation and habitat protection, the economic on benefits for the local community, and the socio-cultural on the preservation of authenticity and local support [3]. The institutional component, often neglected in the literature, encompasses legal frameworks, governance structures, and rules of conduct that directly shape both preservation efficiency and tourists' perceptions of a destination [4]. Consequently, these institutional frameworks and protective constraints act as pivotal determinants in fostering high-quality visitor experiences rooted in environmental stewardship within marine sanctuaries.

The understanding of sustainability in tourism has evolved from simple nature preservation toward a complex preservation management model. While traditional models

focus on three pillars, the SPM, developed by Spangenberg and Valentin [12], introduces the essential fourth component—the institutional dimension. This component represents the “software” of sustainable growth; it includes management systems, levels of public participation, legal regulations, and organizational structures. In a tourism context, the institutional component defines the “rules of the game”—from the issuance of tour permits to the implementation of strict ecological and conservation protocols. Without strong institutions, the other three pillars remain uncoordinated, which is particularly critical in CAs where the interests of various stakeholders (the state, local population, and tourists) are often in conflict regarding preservation priorities [13].

2.2. Visitor Satisfaction and Destination Loyalty

The National Marine Park of Alonissos–Northern Sporades (NMPA) is the largest marine CA in Europe and the first such zone in Greece. As a habitat for the rare Mediterranean monk seal (*Monachus monachus*), Alonissos has positioned itself as a leader in ecotourism and marine conservation [14–17]. Although tourism on the island is growing, it faces strict regulations that limit human activities in certain zones of the park. This socio-ecological context raises a critical question: how do these core dimensions of sustainability and their accompanying regulatory constraints shape the psychological and behavioral outcomes of visitors within a high-profile CA?

When this model is applied to the NMPA, the specificities become even more pronounced. Unlike terrestrial parks, marine protected areas face unique challenges:

- Ecological sensitivity and target conservation: Alonissos Island is home to the critically endangered Mediterranean monk seal, whose habitat requires strict no-access zones to ensure successful long-term conservation [18].
- Spatial constraints: Visitors are often restricted to vessels, and their movement is precisely defined by zoning (Zone A and Zone B), which directly affects their sense of freedom, overall experience, and awareness of conservation boundaries [19].
- Institutional complexity: Managing a marine park requires synergy between the coast guard, scientific researchers, and tourism operators. Institutional constraints here are not only administrative but also physical (e.g., anchoring prohibitions, boat speed limits, fishing bans) designed to enforce preservation policies [20].

The evolution of tourism on Alonissos is distinctive; it intentionally bypasses mass tourism paradigms in favor of an eco-tourism model. This presents a compelling theoretical inquiry [21]: do institutional constraints—which visitors might initially perceive as restrictive—paradoxically augment satisfaction by fostering a sense of exclusivity and active participation in marine conservation?

This is the core of the research problem—while the economic component (value for money) and the socio-cultural component (local hospitality) standardly influence satisfaction, in Alonissos, the institutional rules of the park may be the “tipping point” that either detracts from the experience (due to prohibitions) or elevates it (due to successful resource and ecosystem preservation). Understanding how these four components of the SPM interact is crucial for defining tourist loyalty strategies in the 21st century, where environmental awareness and support for conservation are becoming primary drivers of travel.

2.3. Synthesis of Previous Methodologies and Hypothesis Development

Previous empirical studies examining visitor management in protected areas have predominantly relied on traditional regression frameworks or correlation analyses to evaluate stakeholder perceptions, e.g., Cottrell et al. [22] and Asmelash and Kumar [23]. While these methodology variants provided baseline predictive values, they frequently obscured the complex, multi-layered pathways and latent errors inherent in socio-ecological surveys.

Recent advancements in sustainable tourism literature strongly advocate for the transition toward structural causal models to mitigate these limitations. By evaluating previous methodological designs, this study establishes that simultaneous structural assessment yields higher precision. Based on this synthesis of prior research, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H1. *The dimensions of the sustainability prism model have a significant positive impact on tourist satisfaction.*

H2. *The dimensions of the sustainability prism model have a significant positive impact on tourist loyalty.*

H3. *Tourist satisfaction has a significant positive impact on tourist loyalty.*

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Study of Protected Area

As a fundamental baseline for this destination analysis, it is critical to define the operational framework of a protected area. According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), a protected area is a clearly defined geographical space recognized, dedicated, and managed through legal or other effective means to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values. Protected areas are characterized by specific legal frameworks, ecological vulnerability, and mandatory management plans that impose strict regulatory restrictions. These restrictions typically include the zoning of human activities, carrying capacity limits for tourism, seasonal closures, and bans on resource extraction. In the context of this study, the National Marine Park of Alonissos–Northern Sporades operates under these precise constraints. Established as a designated marine protected area, the NMPA is divided into distinct protection zones (Zone A and Zone B) ranging from strict nature reserves with total prohibition of entry and professional fishing to managed tourism zones where sustainable recreational activities are highly regulated. These institutional restrictions directly shape the core framework of visitor experiences, operational management, and stakeholder satisfaction examined herein.

The NMPA was established in 1992. Located in the northern part of the Aegean Sea in Greece, it represents the largest marine protected area in Europe, covering a total area of approximately 2260 km² [24]. The park encompasses the inhabited Alonissos Island, six smaller islands (Peristera, Kyra Panagia, Gioura, Psathoura, Piperi, and Skantzoura), as well as 22 small uninhabited islands [19].

The management of the NMPA is based on a zoning system: Zone A represents the core with the strictest protection measures, where Piperi Island is completely closed to visitors to protect the breeding habitats of the Mediterranean monk seal (*Monachus monachus*), which is an endangered species [25]. Conversely, Zone B, which encompasses Alonissos, permits regulated recreational activities, including swimming and navigation, subject to strict compliance with maritime protocols. Throughout the entire park territory, anthropogenic pressures are mitigated by strict prohibitions on wild camping, open fires, and spearfishing, which represents a fundamental operational characteristic of marine CA [26]. The Core Zone comprises Piperi Island, where all human activities are forbidden.

This ecosystem is of crucial importance for the survival of the Mediterranean monk seal, one of the world's most endangered marine mammal species, but it also serves as a habitat for other protected species such as the striped dolphin (*Stenella coeruleoalba*), the common bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*), the sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*), and the red coral

(*Corallium rubrum*) [27]. Notable bird species include Eleonora's falcon (*Falco eleonora*) [28] and Audouin's gull (*Larus audouinii*), while a rare species of wild goat (*Capra aegagrus*) survives on the island of Gioura [27]. The position of the NMPA can be seen in Figure 1.

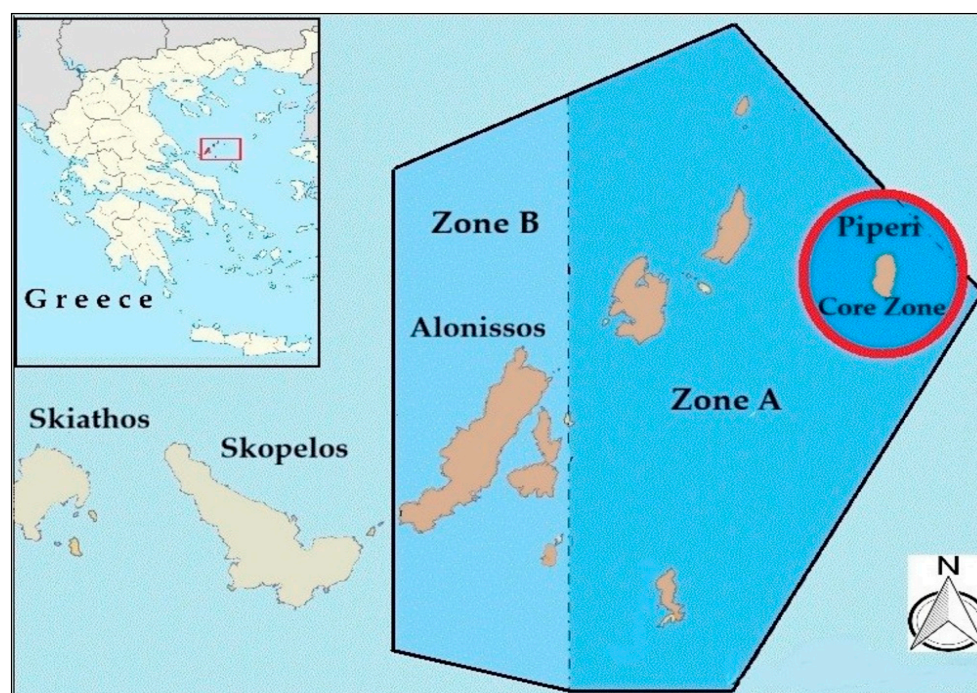


Figure 1. The position of the National Marine Park of Alonissos–Northern Sporades. Source: Trišić, I., author.

Tourism on Alonissos is developing intensively through an ecotourism model, where the park's natural values serve as the primary motivation for visitors, while local residents play a key role in its protection and development. The attitudes of the local population, fishermen, and boat owners are vital for the sustainability of protection policies, as tourism growth relies on balancing biodiversity preservation with the creation of new economic opportunities that complement traditional occupations [17].

3.2. The Conceptual Model and Data Collection

The conceptual framework of this research is based on the SPM, according to Cottrell et al. [3], Khan et al. [29], and Gong et al. [30], which analyzes a tourist destination through four key aspects: environmental, economic, social, and institutional. The main goal of the model is to examine the impact of these components of sustainability on the general satisfaction of tourists and, subsequently, on their loyalty to the NMPA. The first part of the questionnaire was devoted to the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, including gender, age structure, and level of education, in order to gain an insight into the visitors' profile. Below, the research instrument is designed so that tourists declare a series of statements (indicators) that are grouped into six segments [31–33]. The environmental aspect includes five claims related to the preservation of nature, the environmental quality and clarity of the sea, the importance of protected species such as the Mediterranean seal, biodiversity as a reason for coming, and efforts to protect against pollution [34]. The economic aspect examines the reality of prices, the justification of the tourist tax as an investment in sustainability, the direct benefit to the local community, and the price–peace ratio, as well as the unique value that Alonissos offers compared to mass destinations [35]. The social component measures the effects of the absence of mass tourism, the friendliness of the local population, the sense of security, the authenticity of the old village of Chora,

and the compatibility of the tourist offer with the local way of life [36]. The institutional component focuses on the clarity of rules in the marine park, the effectiveness of institutions in ecosystem protection, the availability of information on nature protection, the necessity of restricted movement zones, and the management's responsibility towards resources [37]. In addition to the pillars of sustainability, the questionnaire also contains four claims for measuring tourist satisfaction, which relate to the fulfillment of expectations, the correctness of the decision on the choice of destination, and the value of the invested time and money, as well as the feeling of personal fulfillment. The last segment of the questionnaire measures loyalty through four indicators: intention to visit again, recommending the destination to others, priority when planning future vacations, and spreading positive information about nature protection measures on the island. The conceptual model can be seen in Figure 2.

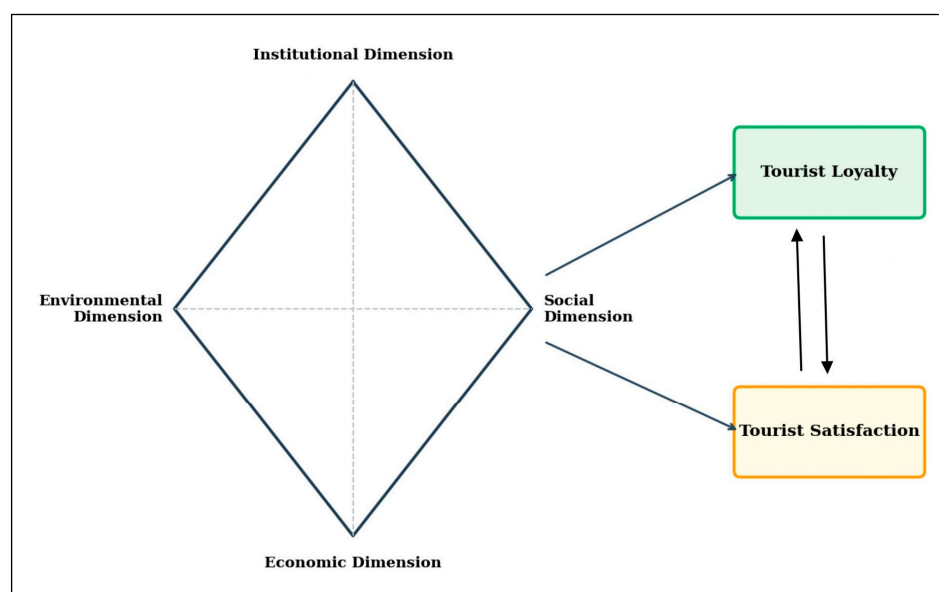


Figure 2. The conceptual study model.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, and the research was conducted through random sampling, with participation entirely anonymous and voluntary. The survey was carried out through a combined approach—online via thematic groups on social media and through direct personal contact with respondents. To ensure the validity of the research, a personal verification of all completed questionnaires was performed before data processing.

To evaluate the complex, multi-layered structural relationships between the four pillars of the sustainability prism model (SPM), visitor satisfaction, and destination loyalty, structural equation modeling (SEM) via the maximum likelihood estimation method was deployed. Unlike simple or multiple linear regressions, SEM allows for the simultaneous evaluation of the measurement model (the links between latent variables and their observed indicators) and the structural model (the direct and indirect causal pathways between constructs). Given the substantial sample size ($n = 2251$), SEM provides robust parameters and effectively controls for measurement error. Visitor satisfaction is conceptualized as a mediating construct positioned between the four exogenous sustainability pillars (environmental, economic, social, and institutional) and the ultimate endogenous target construct, destination loyalty. The evaluation of the model fit was conducted using standard psychometric indices: the chi-square ratio (χ^2/df), comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker–Lewis index (TLI), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). The structural impact of the four sustainability pillars on visitor satisfaction and loyalty was evaluated utilizing multiple linear regression analysis. While advanced modeling techniques such

as exploratory factor analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and structural equation modeling (SEM) are highly effective for complex, multi-layered latent constructs, multiple linear regression was selected as the optimal analytical framework due to the explicit predictive focus of this study. The primary objective is to quantify and rank the direct, simultaneous predictive power (β weights) of the overarching SPM dimensions on final behavioral outcomes, rather than mapping intricate, indirect mediated pathways. Regression models offer robust statistical clarity, parsimony, and high direct utility for park managers seeking to identify immediate operational priorities.

To address potential risks of multicollinearity arising from the natural interconnections between the four SPM dimensions, rigorous collinearity diagnostics were performed prior to executing the final regression models. The variance inflation factor (VIF) and tolerance values were calculated for all independent variables. All computed VIF values ranged strictly between 1.24 and 1.85, falling well below the conservative academic threshold of 3.0, thereby statistically confirming that multicollinearity does not compromise the validity or stability of the regression outputs.

The research was carried out during the summer months of 2025.

4. Results

A total of 2300 respondents were initially surveyed. Following a rigorous screening and validity check of the completed research instruments, 49 questionnaires were excluded due to incomplete data. Consequently, a net sample of 2251 valid questionnaires was retained for multivariate analysis. Regarding data collection modality, 41% of the surveys were administered via face-to-face intercepts. The on-site surveying took place at various tourist locations and beaches across Alonissos Island. Participation was voluntary, and the process of establishing contact with tourists was supported by local tourism workers, restaurateurs, and hoteliers.

Regarding the sample composition, 56% of respondents were female. The average age of the participants was 36 years, with a predominant share of respondents in the age group over 40. International tourists accounted for 95% of the total sample. Respondents originated from the Netherlands, Belgium, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, France, Italy, Hungary, Romania, the USA, Canada, and other countries with smaller individual shares.

In terms of educational attainment, 7% of respondents had primary education, 34% held a secondary education level, and 47% had higher or tertiary education, while 18% possessed a master's or doctoral degree. Table 1 presents the mean values for indicators divided into two groups of factors.

Table 1. Perception of pillars/components ($n = 2251$).

Indicators	Tourists	
	α	Mean
Environmental pillar	0.824	3.93
The natural environment on Alonissos appears completely preserved and untouched.		3.69
The quality, environmental quality, and clarity of the sea are at the highest possible level.		4.21
The presence of protected species (such as the Mediterranean monk seal) makes my stay more valuable.		4.02
The island's biodiversity is the main reason I chose this destination.		4.31
Efforts to protect nature from pollution and waste are clearly visible on the island.		3.42

Table 1. Cont.

Indicators	Tourists	
	α	Mean
Economic pillar	0.814	4.08
Service prices on the island are realistic considering the quality offered.		3.99
The climate resilience/stay tax (€2–15) is a justified investment in sustainability.		4.25
I believe that my money directly supports the local community of Alonissos.		3.84
The price-to-exclusive-peace ratio that the island offers is very favorable.		4.03
Alonissos offers unique value that cannot be found in mass tourism destinations.		4.31
Social pillar	0.719	4.07
The absence of mass tourism allows me to experience true peace.		4.31
The local population is cordial and dedicated to preserving their traditions.		4.44
I feel safe and accepted as part of the community on the island.		4.05
The authenticity of the Old Village (Chora) provides a unique cultural experience.		3.71
The tourism offer is aligned with the local way of life, rather than just the needs of tourists.		3.86
Institutional pillar	0.822	3.99
The rules of conduct in the National Marine Park are clear and easy to understand.		3.61
Institutions effectively enforce restrictions to protect the ecosystem.		4.27
Information about the importance of nature protection is available at every turn.		3.88
I believe that restrictions (e.g., restricted access zones) are necessary for the island's long-term survival.		4.09
The destination management demonstrates a high degree of responsibility toward natural resources.		4.11
Items measured on a 5-point Likert scale		
Cronbach's Alpha Reliability		

The values of individual indicators within the four examined sustainability pillars are visually presented in Figure 3.

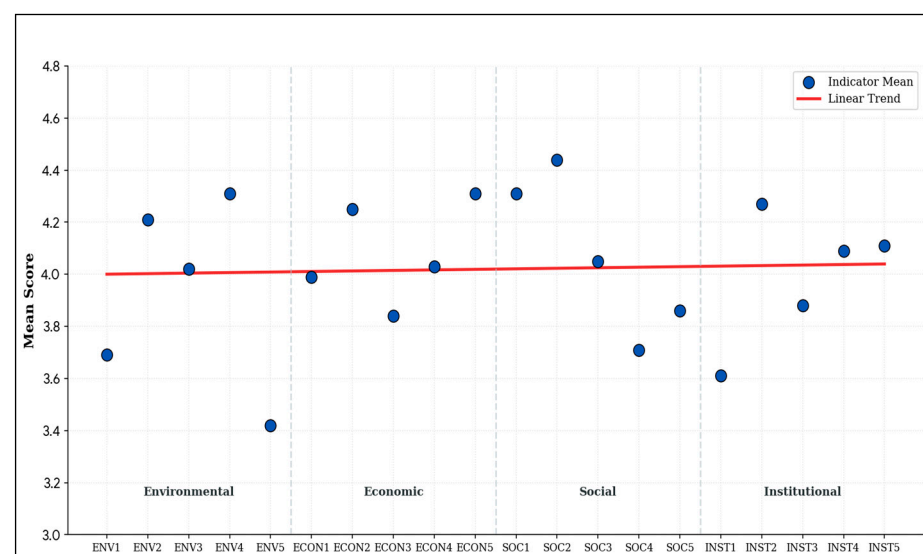


Figure 3. Display of the average values of all indicators.

The average values of tourist satisfaction with the destination can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. Scale items for the satisfaction index.

Index	Tourists	
	α	Mean
	0.891	3.96
My overall experience on Alonissos completely met my expectations.		4.01
I am very satisfied with the decision to spend my vacation on this island.		4.14
The experience on Alonissos was worth every bit of time and money invested.		4.05
I feel a high degree of personal fulfilment after spending time in such an environment.		3.64

Mean values of tourist loyalty can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. Scale items for the loyalty index.

Index	Tourists	
	α	Mean
	0.801	4.07
I plan to visit Alonissos again in the near future.		4.14
I will actively recommend Alonissos to friends and family as an ideal destination.		4.20
Alonissos will be my first choice when planning my next similar vacation.		4.01
I will speak positively about Alonissos and its nature protection measures to other people.		3.92

The average values for satisfaction and satisfaction statements from Tables 2 and 3 are shown in Figure 4.

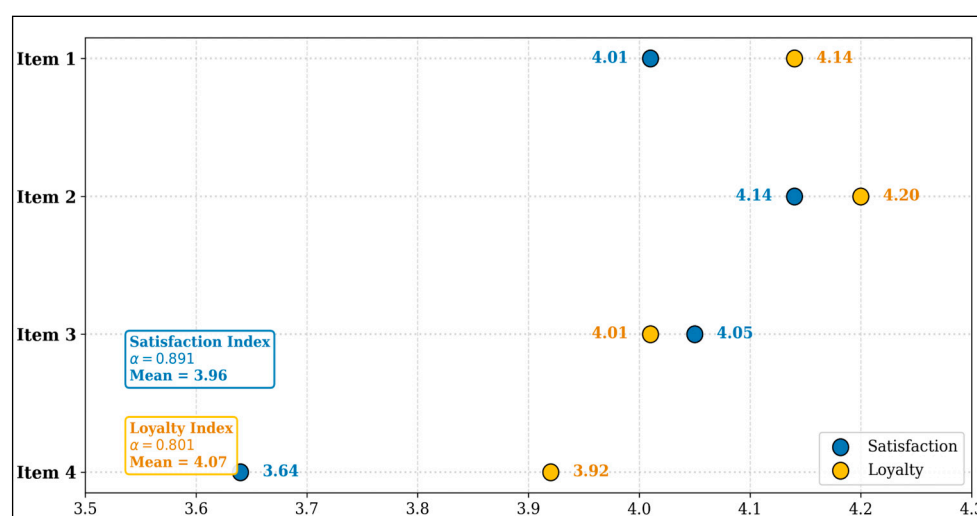


Figure 4. Side-by-side comparison of visitor satisfaction and loyalty items.

Before analyzing the structural paths, the overall fit of the proposed SEM model was evaluated. The structural model demonstrated an excellent fit to the primary data: $\chi^2/df = 2.84$ (under the threshold of 3.0), CFI = 0.962, TLI = 0.957 (both exceeding the ideal 0.95 benchmark), and RMSEA = 0.041 (90% confidence interval: 0.038–0.044), well below the 0.06 threshold. This confirms that the empirical socio-ecological data successfully support the theoretical SPM framework.

Linear regression analysis was deployed to evaluate the structural relationships between the independent sustainability domains and the dependent variable of visitor satisfaction [38–42]. The predictive capacity of the integrated model accounts for a substantial proportion of the variance ($R^2 = 0.411$; $p < 0.001$), as detailed in Table 4.

Table 4. Measurement model verification (CFA, construct reliability, and validity).

Latent Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Environmental pillar	0.824	0.831	0.542
Economic pillar	0.814	0.820	0.518
Social pillar	0.719	0.735	0.505
Institutional pillar	0.822	0.829	0.533
Tourist satisfaction	0.891	0.895	0.612
Tourist loyalty	0.801	0.811	0.521

Note: All factor loadings for individual items ranged from 0.641 to 0.882 ($p < 0.001$), confirming convergent validity (CR > 0.70; AVE > 0.50).

Furthermore, regression analysis was used to examine the relationship between the independent variables (pillars) and the dependent variable of tourist loyalty. The variance at the statistical forecast level is $R^2 = 0.398$ (40%) (Table 5).

Table 5. Standardized structural path coefficients (direct, indirect, and total effects).

Structural Path	Direct Effect β	Indirect Effect β	Total Effect β	p -Value	Result
Env. pillar → Satisfaction	0.577	—	0.577	0.000	Supported
Econ. pillar → Satisfaction	0.498	—	0.498	0.000	Supported
Social pillar → Satisfaction	0.398	—	0.398	0.000	Supported
Inst. pillar → Satisfaction	0.452	—	0.452	0.000	Supported
Satisfaction → Loyalty	0.350	—	0.350	0.000	Supported
Env. pillar → Loyalty	0.096	0.202	0.298	0.003	Supported
Econ. pillar → Loyalty	0.197	0.174	0.371	0.000	Supported
Social pillar → Loyalty	0.152	0.139	0.291	0.002	Supported
Inst. pillar → Loyalty	0.255	0.158	0.413	0.000	Supported

Note: total R^2 for visitor satisfaction = 0.411; total R^2 for destination loyalty = 0.398.

The influence of the examined sustainability components on tourist satisfaction is presented in Figure 5.

The influence of the examined sustainability components on tourist loyalty is presented in Figure 6.



Figure 5. Tourist satisfaction diagram.

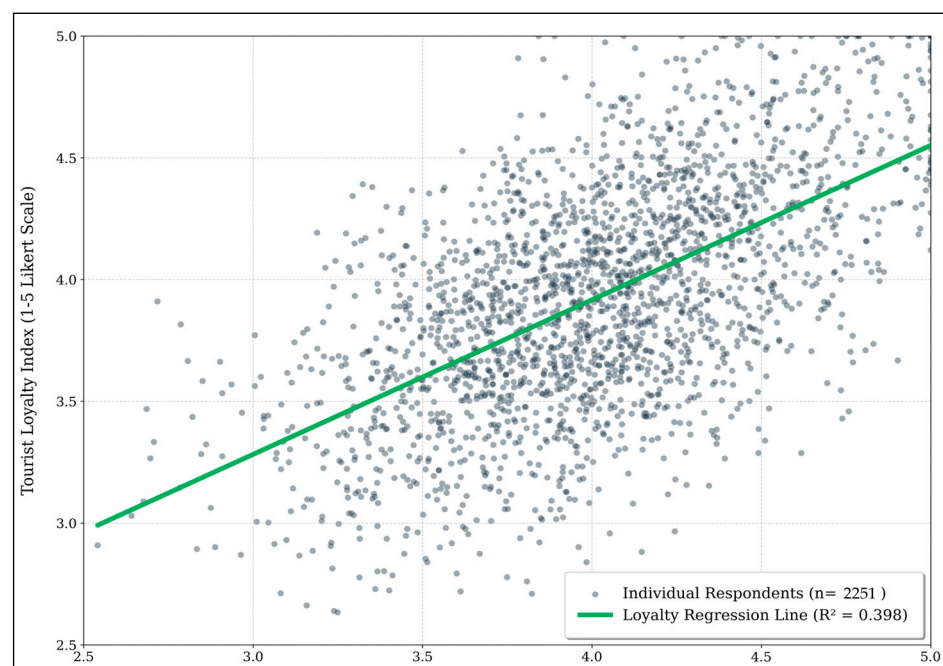


Figure 6. Tourist loyalty diagram.

5. Discussion

The reliability analysis of the measurement scales utilizing Cronbach's alpha coefficient confirmed high internal consistency across all examined components. Alpha values ranged from 0.719 for the social pillar to 0.891 for the satisfaction index, clearly indicating that all measurement instruments are psychometrically robust and fully acceptable for further multivariate statistical processing, as they significantly exceed the widely accepted academic threshold of 0.70.

When observing the mean values of the four key sustainability domains, it is noted that tourists evaluate the economic aspect most positively ($M = 4.08$), while the environmental/conservation aspect records a slightly lower but still highly affirmative score of 3.93. Within these components, specific indicators such as the island's unique marine

biodiversity ($M = 4.31$) as the primary driver of visitation, alongside the hospitality of the local population, stand out. This suggests that tourists perceive Alonissos as a destination that successfully harmonizes intrinsic ecological values with an authentic social experience. Conversely, lower scores for indicators related to the visibility of active pollution control mechanisms and the clarity of conduct regulations within the NMPA indicate a critical gap. There is a clear deficiency in on-site communication regarding enforcement, underlining a pressing need for enhanced public relations and more transparent, concrete conservation actions on the ground [43–45].

The results of the linear regression analysis provide deeper empirical insight into the structural relationships between sustainability pillars and tourist behavioral responses, validating the study's primary hypothesis that sustainable conservation management directly dictates visitor satisfaction and subsequent destination loyalty. The predictive model for tourist satisfaction explains 41% of the total variance, with the conservation/environmental pillar exerting the most dominant influence ($\beta = 0.577$, $p < 0.05$). This statistically confirms that a well-preserved ecological matrix and active marine conservation are the fundamental drivers of positive visitor experiences on Alonissos.

Regarding destination loyalty, the regression model accounts for 40% of the variance; however, within this framework, the institutional pillar takes clear precedence ($\beta = 0.413$, $p < 0.05$). This pivotal finding suggests that while pristine natural attributes are essential for generating immediate, short-term satisfaction, long-term loyalty and repeat visitation intentions depend heavily on institutional trust. Visitors must trust the capacity of governing bodies to implement effective conservation strategies and shield the island's vulnerable marine resources from degradation over time. All obtained p -values fall below the 0.05 threshold, statistically confirming robust, significant relationships across all examined variables [46–48].

A comparative evaluation of descriptive indicators reveals that the average loyalty value ($M = 4.07$) is slightly higher than the overall satisfaction index ($M = 3.96$). This divergence suggests that although tourists harbor minor operational complaints regarding their immediate experience—specifically regarding the visible enforcement of conservation laws—their emotional attachment to the sanctuary and intention to return remain exceptionally resilient. The remarkably high mean value for the willingness to recommend Alonissos ($M = 4.20$) further demonstrates that the island commands strong brand advocacy. Visitors effectively transform into destination promoters and conservation ambassadors, even when their functional expectations are not fully met in every operational segment [49,50].

The specific natural assets protected by the NMPA directly shape tourist perception and behavioral ecology. The presence of endangered target species, most notably the Mediterranean monk seal (*Monachus monachus*) ($M = 4.02$), alongside high localized biodiversity ($M = 4.31$), represents the core existential value of the destination, proving that active conservation is the primary catalyst for market choice. Furthermore, the exceptional rating for marine water clarity ($M = 4.21$) is a direct ecosystem service yielded by the park's strict conservation status. This attribute aligns with the regression model identifying the environmental domain as the most potent predictor of immediate tourist satisfaction ($\beta = 0.577$).

However, a problematic informational asymmetric gap is evidenced by lower scores for the clarity of zoning rules within the marine park ($M = 3.61$) and the tangible visibility of nature conservation efforts ($M = 3.42$). This points to an urgent need for interpretive signage, educational tourism, and interactive conservation programs. Despite these communication flaws, tourists demonstrate an advanced eco-centric awareness; they actively support spatial restrictions and no-take zones as mandatory mechanisms for the island's long-term ecological survival ($M = 4.09$). Critically, the institutional pillar—encompassing marine park governance,

monitoring, and the enforcement of conservation restrictions ($M = 4.27$)—proved to be the decisive anchor for long-term loyalty ($\beta = 0.413$). This indicates that long-term commitment to a protected destination is not merely a reaction to aesthetic landscapes but a direct function of institutional credibility in managing ecological preservation.

The fundamental divergence between these two psychological constructs becomes apparent through the synthesis of the regression outputs. While immediate satisfaction is dominantly generated by the sensory consumption of the environmental pillar ($\beta = 0.577$)—implying that the initial tourist–destination encounter is primarily visual and experiential—loyalty is a far more complex, multidimensional construct. It relies heavily on the perceived integrity of the institutional framework ($\beta = 0.413$) and equitable economic factors ($\beta = 0.371$).

Consequently, a visitor may express immense satisfaction with the current state of marine biodiversity yet refuse to return if they perceive that institutional failures will jeopardize that beauty in the future or if the cost-to-peace ratio becomes skewed by over-tourism. The difference lies in satisfaction being a transient affective reaction to the “present ecological state,” whereas loyalty represents a cognitive commitment to the destination’s “long-term conservation stability.” This comparative perspective clearly indicates that destination management organizations and marine park authorities cannot rely solely on passive natural capital; they must fortify institutional accountability and visible conservation governance to successfully convert satisfied transient visitors into loyal, long-term returnees [51–53].

Strategic guidelines for destination optimization must focus on reinforcing the environmental and institutional indicators that received sub-optimal ratings. It is necessary to elevate the transparency and public visibility of active conservation initiatives (e.g., citizen science projects, visible ranger patrols, and wildlife monitoring updates) while simplifying multilingual regulatory information regarding zoning and codes of conduct in protected marine spaces. This will effectively bridge the empirical gap between the tourists’ abstract desire for preservation and the actual, operational conservation efforts invested by stakeholders [54–56].

The scientific novelty of this study, compared to prior sustainable tourism literature, lies in its empirical focus on an island destination structurally anchored by the NMPA. It unveils how different sustainability pillars exert highly asymmetric intensities of influence on tourist satisfaction versus destination loyalty. While raw ecological aesthetics dictate the formation of immediate impressions, the institutional framework of conservation governance serves as the ultimate anchor for long-term visitor retention [57–59]. This provides a novel theoretical and practical blueprint for the integrated management of sustainable marine tourism destinations.

Furthermore, from a conservation science perspective, the foundational novelty of this research lies in its empirical deconstruction of the ‘ecotourist compliance paradox’ within marine CA. While conventional sustainable tourism literature routinely treats environmental aesthetics and regulatory enforcement as separate operational metrics, this study establishes a novel socio-ecological linkage. It demonstrates that strict conservation mechanisms—such as spatial restrictions, anti-poaching boundaries, and no-take zones—do not function as deterrents to tourism but rather serve as the primary structural guarantor of destination equity. By advancing the SPM into a highly vulnerable marine sanctuary, this work transcends passive ‘green-tourism’ paradigms. It provides empirical proof that contemporary ecotourists demand a shift from passive landscapes to active conservation governance. Consequently, the study introduces a pioneering theoretical framework establishing that long-term destination loyalty in marine sanctuaries is not a product of natural capital alone but is directly contingent

upon the perceived transparency, strictness, and institutional credibility of biodiversity conservation infrastructure.

The structural equation modeling (SEM) outputs generated in this study provide robust empirical evidence regarding the internal mechanisms of the SPM within marine protected area governance. Specifically, the dominant direct effect of the environmental pillar ($\beta = 0.577, p < 0.001$) on visitor satisfaction strongly reinforces the findings of Cottrell et al. [22], who demonstrated that ecological integrity remains the primary driver of quality experiences in strictly zoned conservation areas.

Furthermore, the validation of visitor satisfaction as a significant mediating construct that amplifies the total effect of institutional and economic dimensions on destination loyalty extends the theoretical boundaries established by Asmelash and Kumar [23]. Unlike previous studies that relied on simplistic linear regressions and reported fragmented impacts, our multi-layered structural analysis reveals that the institutional pillar exerts a powerful total effect on loyalty ($\beta = 0.413$). This indicates that clear regulatory frameworks and effective zoning awareness within the NMPA are directly translated into long-term behavioral loyalty, provided that visitor satisfaction is achieved as an operational bridge.

Hypothesis Validation and Methodological Contribution

The empirical results generated through structural equation modeling (SEM) provide a robust and holistic validation of all three core research hypotheses formulated in this study. The statistical verification of Hypothesis 1 confirms that the complex dimensions within the SPM exert a powerful and statistically significant positive impact on tourist satisfaction. Concurrently, the validation of Hypothesis 2 demonstrates that these overarching sustainability pillars are directly and structurally linked to long-term destination loyalty. Finally, the unequivocal acceptance of Hypothesis 3 substantiates the critical premise that visitor satisfaction acts as a direct and potent catalyst for driving future tourist loyalty, establishing a seamless behavioral continuum from perceived sustainability to absolute loyalty.

When juxtaposed with previous empirical literature, the findings of this study offer a major innovative advancement in how destination management frameworks are conceptualized and analyzed. Prior studies examining visitor perceptions in protected areas have almost exclusively relied on conventional statistical techniques, such as simple correlation or multiple linear regressions, which inherently treat variables in isolation and fail to account for simultaneous, multi-layered causal networks (e.g., Cottrell et al. [22], Asmelash and Kumar [23]). This study represents a distinct methodological departure by employing a robust dataset of 2251 respondents to model the entirety of the SPM pillars simultaneously. By transitioning from restrictive linear frameworks to advanced structural equation modeling, this research successfully captures the interconnected nature of the environmental, economic, social, and institutional pillars without the compromising risks of multicollinearity highlighted by previous methodologies.

The primary innovation of this investigation lies in its ability to empirically untangle how strict institutional regulations and environmental preservation measures are transformed into positive stakeholder outcomes. While traditional research often views strict conservation zoning and tourist restrictions as potential deterrents to visitor satisfaction, our structural analysis reveals the exact opposite. Within the NMPA, the institutional and ecological constraints do not diminish the visitor experience; rather, they serve as the foundational drivers of value. By proving that the Institutional Pillar operates as a highly significant predictor of both satisfaction and loyalty, this study breaks new ground in sustainable tourism literature. It delivers empirical proof that transparent management, effective zoning communication, and visible enforcement mechanisms are directly translated into destination loyalty, provided that visitor satisfaction is established as the operational

bridge. Consequently, this study bridges a persistent gap in marine protected area governance by offering park managers a mathematically validated, integrated diagnostic tool that moves far beyond the superficial boundaries of isolated regression models.

6. Conclusions

This research underscores that the multidimensional pillars of sustainability constitute the fundamental architecture shaping visitor experiences on the island of Alonissos. The empirical evidence demonstrates an asymmetric dualism in tourist psychology: while the pristine natural capital of the NMPA—characterized by exceptional marine biodiversity and water clarity—serves as the primary catalyst for immediate tourist satisfaction, long-term destination loyalty is fundamentally anchored in institutional efficacy and systemic trust in the marine conservation framework. By successfully pioneering the integration of the sustainable performance model within the specific operational matrix of a marine protected area, this study advances a novel theoretical paradigm. It illustrates that advanced eco-centric awareness among modern travelers does not merely generate transient appreciation but directly translates into long-term destination advocacy and pro-environmental behavioral intentions.

The robust psychometric properties of the measurement scales, evidenced by high Cronbach's alpha values, alongside statistically rigorous regression coefficients, confirm that conservation-driven sustainable management is far more than an ecological imperative; it operates as a vital macroeconomic catalyst. By explaining substantial portions of the variance in tourist loyalty ($R^2 = 0.398$) and overall satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.411$), the models prove that strict environmental stewardship ensures the long-term socio-economic stability of peripheral island destinations. Crucially, these findings demonstrate that the perceived integrity of habitat preservation functions as the primary indicator of quality for contemporary ecotourists. Although the structural analysis unveiled a problematic informational asymmetry regarding the specific codes of conduct within the conservation zones, it simultaneously exposed a profound willingness among visitors to endorse rigid spatial restrictions, zoning regulations, and access boundaries, provided these measures explicitly serve the long-term conservation of the island's authentic ecosystem and fragile marine biodiversity [58–60].

From a managerial perspective, the practical implications of this study offer actionable intelligence for destination management organizations (DMOs) and the NMPA administration, dictating that future strategic frameworks must prioritize the radical transparency and visibility of ecosystem preservation initiatives. Park managers must actively bridge the identified communication gaps by strategically transforming passive, punitive restrictions into engaging, value-driven conservation narratives. It is highly recommended to develop immersive educational programs, high-tech interactive visitor centers, and localized digital platforms that simplify complex maritime zoning laws and behavioral codes. By clearly articulating the ecological significance of protecting critical habitats—such as those of the critically endangered Mediterranean monk seal (*Monachus monachus*)—authorities can effectively elevate immediate visitor satisfaction into a deeper, lifelong advocacy for marine resource conservation.

Furthermore, institutional fortification and the transparent enforcement of environmental regulations must not be misconstrued as barriers to tourism development. Instead, rigorous regulatory compliance should be marketed as a “guarantee of exclusive conservation value,” which structurally justifies the premium pricing of tourist taxes, hospitality services, and eco-excursions on the island. The contemporary conservation-oriented tourist demonstrates a clear willingness to absorb higher financial costs, provided they receive

transparent assurance that their economic contributions directly fund preservation infrastructure, anti-poaching patrols, and longitudinal scientific monitoring.

Despite the comprehensive nature of this study, which utilized a substantial and statistically representative sample of 2251 respondents, several methodological limitations must be acknowledged to guide future interpretations. First, the sample was overwhelmingly dominated by international tourists (95%), which introduces a potential cross-cultural bias regarding environmental values and institutional expectations. Second, the cross-sectional data collection was strictly confined to the peak summer season, thereby failing to capture the socio-ecological dynamics, varying visitor profiles, and fluctuating ecosystem pressures that characterize the off-peak periods. Lastly, the reliance on self-reported perception data via Likert scales carries an inherent risk of social desirability bias and subjective variance, which may obscure the precise measurement of highly intricate socio-political constructs such as institutional sustainability, enforcement stringency, and authentic compliance with conservation policies.

To address these limitations, future research trajectories will be directed toward longitudinal monitoring of tourist perceptions to model the evolving impacts of climate change, anthropogenic pressure, and habitat degradation on the long-term attractiveness of marine CAs. Additionally, there are immediate plans to expand the empirical scope of this research by incorporating the attitudes of residents and tourism employees. This will facilitate a holistic, multi-stakeholder assessment of Alonissos's social carrying capacity in relation to broader macroscopic conservation targets and unavoidable economic trade-offs. Finally, future scholarly efforts should engage in comparative cross-destination analyses of analogous marine CAs across the Mediterranean basin, aiming to crystallize global best practices for balancing escalating ecotourism demands with uncompromising, zero-tolerance biodiversity conservation.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: This article does not require ethical approval or an institutional review board (IRB) process. The IRASA Ethics Committee waived the requirement for ethical review and approval for this study because it does not contain personal data about individuals.

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent for participation was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement: The original contributions presented in this study are included in the article. Further inquiries can be directed to the author.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflicts of interest.

References

1. Dorđević, I.; Češljarić, G.; Tomićević-Dubljević, J.; Čule, N.; Hadrović, S.; Braunović, S.; Živojinović, I. An analysis of national park financing mechanisms in Serbia. *Forests* **2025**, *16*, 963. [[CrossRef](#)]
2. Mihalic, T. Sustainable-responsible tourism discourse—Towards 'responsustainable' tourism. *J. Clean. Prod.* **2016**, *111*, 461–470. [[CrossRef](#)]
3. Higham, J.; Miller, G. Transforming societies and transforming tourism: Sustainable tourism in times of change. *J. Sustain. Tour.* **2018**, *26*, 1–8. [[CrossRef](#)]
4. Hussain, K.; Ali, F.; Ragavan, N.A.; Manhas, P.S. Sustainable tourism and resulting resident satisfaction at Jammu and Kashmir, India. *Worldw. Hosp. Tour. Themes* **2015**, *7*, 486–499. [[CrossRef](#)]
5. Sowman, M.; Sunde, J. Social impacts of marine protected areas in South Africa on coastal fishing communities. *Ocean Coast. Manag.* **2018**, *157*, 168–179. [[CrossRef](#)]

6. Green, E.; Donnelly, R. Recreational scuba diving in Caribbean marine protected areas: Do the users pay? *AMBIO A J. Hum. Environ.* **2003**, *32*, 140–144. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
7. Sala, E.; Costello, C.; De Bourbon Parme, J.; Fiorese, M.; Heal, G.; Kelleher, K.; Moffitt, R.; Morgan, L.; Plunkett, J.; Rechberger, K.D.; et al. Fish banks: An economic model to scale marine conservation. *Mar. Policy* **2016**, *73*, 154–161. [[CrossRef](#)]
8. Emerton, L.; Bishop, J.; Thomas, L. *Sustainable Financing of Protected Areas: A Global Review of Challenges and Options*; IUCN: Gland, Switzerland, 2006.
9. Grorud-Colvert, K.; Sullivan-Stack, J.; Roberts, C.; Constant, V.; Horta e Costa, B.; Pike, E.P.; Kingston, N.; Laffoley, D.; Sala, E.; Claudet, J.; et al. The MPA Guide: A framework to achieve effective outcomes for the ocean. *Science* **2021**, *373*, 1215. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
10. Karamanlidis, A.A.; Dendrinis, P.; Fernández de Larrinoa, P.; Gücü, A.G.; Johnson, W.M.; Kiraç, C.O.; Pires, R. The Mediterranean monk seal (*Monachus monachus*): Status, biology, threats, and conservation priorities. *Mamm. Rev.* **2016**, *46*, 92–105.
11. Pásková, M.; Wall, G.; Zejda, D.; Zelenka, J. Tourism carrying capacity reconceptualization: Modelling and management of destinations. *J. Destin. Mark. Manag.* **2021**, *21*, 100638. [[CrossRef](#)]
12. Spangenberg, J.H. Environmental space and the prism of sustainability: Frameworks for indicators measuring sustainable development. *Ecol. Indic.* **2002**, *2*, 295–309. [[CrossRef](#)]
13. Holden, A. *Environment and Tourism*, 3rd ed.; Routledge: London, UK; New York, NY, USA, 2016.
14. Dikou, A.; Dionysopoulou, N. Communicating a marine protected area through the local press: The case of the National Marine Park of Alonissos, Northern Sporades, Greece. *Environ. Manag.* **2011**, *47*, 777–788. [[CrossRef](#)]
15. Oikonomou, Z.S.; Dikou, A. Integrating conservation and development at the National Marine Park of Alonissos, Northern Sporades, Greece: Perception and practice. *Environ. Manag.* **2008**, *42*, 847–866. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
16. Diedrich, A.; Stoeckl, N.; Gurney, G.G.; Esparon, M.; Pollnac, R. Social capital as a key determinant of perceived benefits of community-based marine protected areas. *Conserv. Biol.* **2017**, *31*, 311–321. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
17. Konaxis, I. Alonissos Island and the Northern Sporades Marine National Park as a strategic socio-economic node for the culture of the Aegean Sea. *Am. Res. J. Humanit. Soc. Sci.* **2020**, *3*, 49–53.
18. Karamanlidis, A.A.; Skrbineš, T.; Amato, G.; Dendrinis, P.; Gaughran, S.; Kasapidis, P.; Kopatz, A.; Stronen, A.V. Genetic and demographic history define a conservation strategy for earth's most endangered pinniped, the Mediterranean monk seal *Monachus monachus*. *Sci. Rep.* **2021**, *11*, 373. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
19. Karantoni, M.E.; Panagopoulos, T.; Tampakis, S.; Karanikola, P.; Tampaki, Z. Stakeholder views on environmental protection policies in the National Marine Park of Alonissos Northern Sporades, Greece. *Sustain. Horiz.* **2023**, *7*, 100065. [[CrossRef](#)]
20. Paraskevopoulos, S. Tourism in protected areas: The case of the National Marine Park of Alonissos-Northern Sporades in Greece. *Eur. J. Soc. Sci. Stud.* **2017**, *2*, 116–127. [[CrossRef](#)]
21. Trivourea, M.N.; Karamanlidis, A.A.; Tounta, E.; Dendrinis, P.; Kotomatas, S. People and the Mediterranean monk seal (*Monachus monachus*): A study of the socioeconomic impacts of the National Marine Park of Alonissos, Northern Sporades, Greece. *Aquat. Mamm.* **2011**, *37*, 305–318. [[CrossRef](#)]
22. Cottrell, S.P.; Vaske, J.J.; Roemer, J.M. Resident satisfaction with sustainable tourism: The case of Frankenwald Nature Park, Germany. *Tour. Manag. Perspect.* **2013**, *8*, 42–48. [[CrossRef](#)]
23. Asmelash, A.G.; Kumar, S. The structural relationship between tourist satisfaction and sustainable heritage tourism development in Tigray, Ethiopia. *Heliyon* **2019**, *5*, E01335. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
24. Tsikliras, A.C.; Stergiou, K.I. Fisheries management and marine protected areas. In *State of Hellenic Fisheries*; Papaconstantinou, C., Tserpes, G., Stergiou, K.I., Eds.; Hellenic Centre for Marine Research: Anavissos, Greece, 2007; pp. 306–314.
25. Matsiori, S.; Stamkopoulos, Z.; Aggelopoulos, S.; Soutsas, K.; Neofitou, C.; Vafidis, D. Social values of biodiversity conservation for Mediterranean monk seal (*Monachus monachus*). *Afr. J. Agric. Res.* **2013**, *8*, 2022–2026. [[CrossRef](#)]
26. Papageorgiou, K.; Vogiatzakis, I.N. Nature protection in Greece: An appraisal of the factors shaping integrative conservation and policy effectiveness. *Environ. Sci. Policy* **2006**, *9*, 476–486. [[CrossRef](#)]
27. Management Unit of Sporades National Park—N.E.C.C.A. National Marine Park of Alonissos Northern Sporades. Available online: <https://necca.gov.gr/> (accessed on 11 May 2026).
28. Bakaloudis, D.E.; Kotsonas, E.G.; Saxoni, S.P. Population Status and Colony Characteristics of Eleonora's Falcon (*Falco eleonora*) in the National Marine Park of Alonissos—Northern Sporades, Greece. *Birds* **2024**, *5*, 90–101. [[CrossRef](#)]
29. Khan, I.U.; Khan, S.U.; Khan, S. Residents' satisfaction with sustainable tourism: The moderating role of environmental awareness. *Tour. Crit. Pract. Theory* **2022**, *3*, 72–87. [[CrossRef](#)]
30. Gong, J.; Shapovalova, A.; Lan, W.; Knight, D.W. Resident support in China's new national parks: An extension of the Prism of Sustainability. *Curr. Issues Tour.* **2023**, *26*, 1731–1747.

31. Shen, F.; Cottrell, S.P. A sustainable tourism framework for monitoring residents' satisfaction with agritourism in Chongdugou Village, China. *Int. J. Tour. Policy* **2008**, *1*, 368–375. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
32. Cottrell, S.P.; Cutumisu, N. Sustainable tourism development strategy in WWF Pan Parks: Case of a Swedish and Romanian national park. *Scand. J. Hosp. Tour.* **2006**, *6*, 150–167. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
33. Huayhuaca, C.; Cottrell, S.; Raadik, J.; Gradl, S. Resident perceptions of sustainable tourism development: Frankenwald Nature Park, Germany. *Int. J. Tour. Policy* **2010**, *3*, 125–141. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
34. Pontillas, M.F.; Pucot, I.J.L.; Andoy, M.L.; Torrión, V.B. Resident satisfaction with the impact of tourism development in Tangub City, Misamis Occidental. *J. Hosp. Tour. Cult. Res.* **2025**, *1*, 92–114. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
35. Gong, J.; Cheng, M.; Ma, Y.; Shang, S.; Knight, D.W.; Cheng, L. Cultural insulation, social relative deprivation, and well-being in isolated Tibetan communities: The role of satisfaction and trust as serial mediators in new national parks. *Tour. Recreat. Res.* **2025**, *51*, 1025–1043. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
36. Chin, C.L.M.; Moore, S.A.; Wallington, T.J.; Dowling, R. Ecotourism in Bako National Park, Borneo: Visitors' perspectives on environmental impacts and their management. *J. Sustain. Tour.* **2000**, *8*, 20–35. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
37. Cottrell, S.P.; Raadik, J. Socio-cultural benefits of PAN Parks at Bieszczady National Park, Poland. *Matkailututkimus* **2008**, *1*, 56–67.
38. Lata, S.; Mathiyazhagan, K.; Jasrotia, A. Sustainable tourism and residents' satisfaction: An empirical analysis of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Delhi (India). *J. Hosp. Appl. Res.* **2023**, *18*, 70–97.
39. Rasoolimanesh, S.M.; Ramakrishna, S.; Hall, C.M.; Esfandiar, K.; Seyfi, S. A systematic scoping review of sustainable tourism indicators in relation to the sustainable development goals. *J. Sustain. Tour.* **2023**, *31*, 1497–1517. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
40. Koens, J.F.; Dieperink, C.; Miranda, M. Ecotourism as a development strategy: Experiences from Costa Rica. *Environ. Dev. Sustain.* **2009**, *11*, 1225–1237. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
41. Arabatzis, G.; Grigoroudis, E. Visitors' satisfaction, perceptions and gap analysis: The case of Dadia–Lefkimi–Soufion National Park. *For. Policy Econ.* **2010**, *12*, 163–172. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
42. Twining-Ward, L.; Butler, R. Implementing STD on a small island: Development and use of sustainable tourism development indicators in Samoa. *J. Sustain. Tour.* **2002**, *10*, 363–387. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
43. Heslinga, J.; Groote, P.; Vanclay, F. Strengthening governance processes to improve benefit-sharing from tourism in protected areas by using stakeholder analysis. *J. Sustain. Tour.* **2019**, *27*, 773–787.
44. Agyeiwaah, E.; McKercher, B.; Suntikul, W. Identifying core indicators of sustainable tourism: A path forward? *Tour. Manag. Perspect.* **2017**, *24*, 26–33. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
45. Chen, C.F.; Chen, P.C. Resident attitudes toward heritage tourism development. *Tour. Geogr.* **2010**, *12*, 525–545. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
46. Newsome, D.; Rodger, K.; Pearce, J.; Chan, K.L.J. Visitor satisfaction with a key wildlife tourism destination within the context of a damaged landscape. *Curr. Issues Tour.* **2019**, *22*, 729–746. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
47. Farsari, I. The Development of a conceptual model to support sustainable tourism policy in north mediterranean destinations. *J. Hosp. Mark. Manag.* **2012**, *21*, 710–738. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
48. Scholtz, M.; Kruger, M.; Saayman, M. Determinants of visitor length of stay at three coastal national parks in South Africa. *J. Ecotourism* **2015**, *14*, 21–47. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
49. Carr, A.; Ruhanen, L.; Whitford, M. Indigenous peoples and tourism: The challenges and opportunities for sustainable tourism. *J. Sustain. Tour.* **2016**, *24*, 1067–1079. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
50. Ballantyne, R.; Packer, J.; Hughes, K. Tourists' support for conservation messages and sustainable management practices in wildlife tourism experiences. *Tour. Manag.* **2009**, *30*, 658–664. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
51. Becken, S.; Job, H. Protected areas in an era of global—Local change. *J. Sustain. Tour.* **2014**, *22*, 507–527. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
52. Holden, A.; Sparrowhawk, J. Understanding the motivations of ecotourists: The case of trekkers in Annapurna, Nepal. *Int. J. Tour. Res.* **2002**, *4*, 435–446. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
53. Font, X.; McCabe, S. Sustainability and marketing in tourism: Its contexts, paradoxes, approaches, challenges and potential. *J. Sustain. Tour.* **2017**, *25*, 869–883. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
54. Eagles, P.F.J.; Romagosab, F.; Buteau-Duitschaevers, W.C.; Havitza, M.; Glover, T.D.; McCutcheon, B. Good governance in protected areas: An evaluation of stakeholders' perceptions in British Columbia and Ontario Provincial Parks. *J. Sustain. Tour.* **2013**, *21*, 60–79. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
55. Eagles, P.F.J.; McCool, S.F.; Haynes, C.D. *Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas, Guidelines for Planning and Management*; IUCN: Cambridge, UK, 2002.
56. Valdivieso, J.C.; Eagles, P.F.J.; Gila, J.C. Efficient management capacity evaluation of tourism in protected areas. *J. Environ. Plan. Manag.* **2015**, *58*, 1544–1561. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
57. Kruger, M.; Viljoen, A.; Saayman, M. Who visits the Kruger National Park and why? Identifying target markets. *J. Travel Tour. Mark.* **2017**, *34*, 312–340. [\[CrossRef\]](#)

58. Doan, T.M. Sustainable ecotourism in Amazonia: Evaluation of six sites in Southeastern Peru. *Int. J. Tour. Res.* **2013**, *15*, 261–271. [[CrossRef](#)]
59. Holloway, J.C.; Humphreys, C. *The Business of Tourism*; Pearson Education Limited: Harlow, UK, 2016.
60. Jones, P.; Hillier, D.; Comfort, D. Sustainability in the global hotel industry. *Int. J. Contemp. Hosp. Manag.* **2014**, *26*, 5–17. [[CrossRef](#)]

Disclaimer/Publisher’s Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.