

# Natural and Cultural Resources as a ‘Vehicle’ for Paving Alternative Local Tourist Development Paths: A Participatory Methodological Framework

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**Abstract** The focus of the present paper is on the development of a participatory methodological framework, founded on the scenario-based planning approach and participatory evaluation tools for planning the integrated development of a specific region, the Region of Sterea Ellada—Greece. Towards this end, particular emphasis is placed upon the sustainable exploitation of natural and cultural resources for the spatial planning of alternative tourist development paths, which are effectively integrated into the local economic structure and its future perspectives. The proposed framework results in the synthesis of scenario-specific policy guidelines which, by taking into consideration variables of the internal and external environment of the study region and the particular decision contexts these outline, support policy makers by providing a range of policy directions and policy measures that can serve effective decision making within each specific decision context. Moreover, the participatory evaluation approach adopted in the proposed framework, supports public and stakeholders’ engagement in the decision making processes, rendering them thus more pluralistic, legitimized and transparent, which in turn are to the benefit of the planning process, the final policy decisions and their implementation at the local level.

**Keywords** Natural and cultural resources • Spatial planning • Participatory planning • Alternative tourism • Scenarios • Evaluation • Policy guidelines

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