



Manzara Seyir Alanlarının ve Faaliyetlerinin Van İli Örneğinde İncelenmesi

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Öz

Eski ismi Tuşba olan Van kenti; Urartulardan kalan bir miras kentidir. Sahip olduğu tarihi zenginliğinin yanı sıra Türkiye'nin en büyük gölü olan Van gölüne de sahiptir. Doğu Anadolu Bölgesinde bulunan yöre hem kültürel değerleri hem de doğal zenginliği bakımından önemli bir ekoturizm potansiyeline sahiptir. Bu çalışmada bölgedeki mevcut potansiyel turizm içerisinde değerlendirilen manzara seyri incelenmiştir. Manzara seyri değerlendirilmesi SWOT analiziyle yapılmıştır. SWOT analizine göre Van kenti mevcut gölleri, tarihi kaleleri, kiliseleri ve camileriyle -doğayla bütünleşen kültürel objeleriyle- manzara seyrine önemli ölçüde kaynak oluşturmaktadır. Çalışmada yörenin sahip olduğu coğrafi konum, ekoloji, doğal oluşumlar ve zengin su kaynaklarının ekoturizm açısından önemli kaynak değerine sahip olduğu görülmektedir. Çalışmada ayrıca, SWOT analizinden yararlanılarak seyir alanları oluşturulabilecek yerler belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Manzara Seyri, Rekreasyon, Sürdürülebilir Çevre, Tuşba (Van).

Examination of Landscape Scenery Areas and Activities: A Case Study in Van Province of Turkey

Abstract

Town of Van, formerly known Tuşba, is a heritage from Urartus. In addition to its historical assets, Van is also at the shore of Van Lake, the largest lake in Turkey. Van which is located in Eastern Anatolian Region has a significant ecotourism potential due to its cultural and natural assets. In this study, scenery watching, considered a significant part of tourism potential of the region, was examined. A SWOT analysis was carried out in order to determine the potential of scenery landscape. Based on the results of SWOT analysis, Van Province has rich assets for scenery watching with its lakes, historical castles, churches and mosques as well as cultural objects integrated with nature. Results show that the area has outstanding resource values with its geographical position, ecology, natural formations and rich water resources. In the study, the scenery watching locations were determined using SWOT analysis.

Keywords: Landscape Scenery, Recreation, Sustainable Environment, Tuşba (Van).

INTRODUCTION

Ecotourism is an activity aiming to make use of environment without destroying it, learning and observing it without damaging its cultural values. Ecotourism is of two kinds; i.e. active and potential tourism activities (Akpınar, 2010; Arslan, 2005). Potential tourism activities are bird and butterfly watching, wildlife watching, trekking, scenery watching and botanic tourism. Scenery watching is among the potential tourism activities. It could be considered as a visual activity within the context of an idea consisting of natural and cultural elements (Nurlu, 2007). Everyday

life causes many stressors on people and people seek a way of relaxing to remove their stress. While some people prefer activities requiring active participation such as painting, listening to music and writing, others prefer sitting against a scenery of relaxing nature. Scenery watching is also actively used in many psychological relaxing method. The concept of 'scenery is the place where people feel most relaxed' allows people to feel safer, to adapt better and to develop proper solutions when they face a stress. Creating a safe environment associates the stress moment with a familiar situation and makes person stronger to deal with the stressor. In addition, therapists use scenery pictures in therapy rooms, thinking that they will relax their clients. Therefore, scenery watching, an ecotourism activity, has a considerable importance in human psychology.

The aim of the study is to investigate natural and cultural resources of Van Province, situated in Eastern Anatolia Region of Turkey. Possible areas of scenery watching and tourism potential of the region for different aspects were investigated. In this context, in addition to social considerations, cultural and economic considerations of Van Province and some of its districts (Başkale, Muradiye, Erciş, Edremit, Çatak, Özalp, Gevaş, Bahçesaray) were also presented. Suggestions were made about sustainable use and protection of all natural resources employing all data available for ecotourism planning. Such an effort will add to already available potential of Van Province through supporting ecotourism and tourism alternatives. In addition, through tourism planning, a better use of natural and cultural assets and riches, and maintaining of a sustainable environment were aimed.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

Available resources in Başkale, Muradiye, Erciş, Edremit, Çatak, Özalp, Gevaş and Bahçesaray districts of Van Province constituted the material of investigation into scenery watching and natural and cultural resources. SWOT analysis technique was employed (Sanò at al., 2004). Data from MDP studies, small sized infrastructure projects implemented by Eastern Anatolia Development Agency towards strengthening of tourism infrastructure, and projects aiming to develop tourism implemented by Van Governorship Attraction Center Coordination Office were extensively used in the present study.

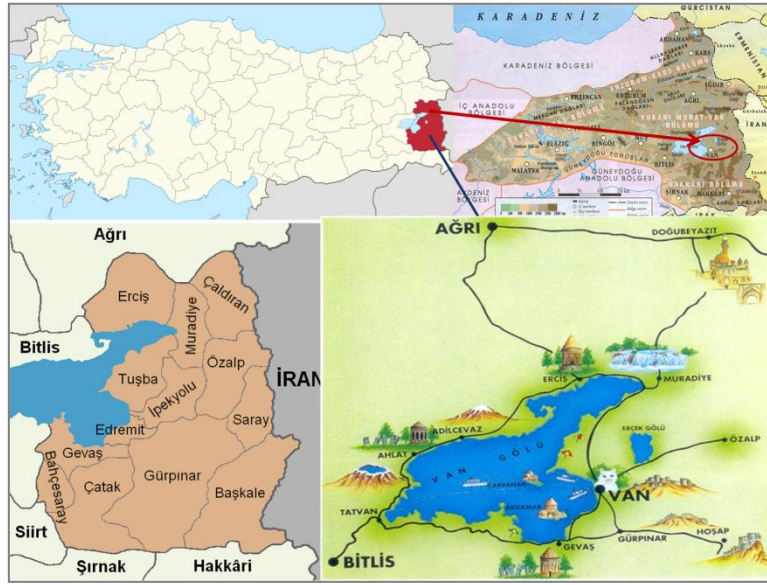


Figure 1: Van Map (Turkey)


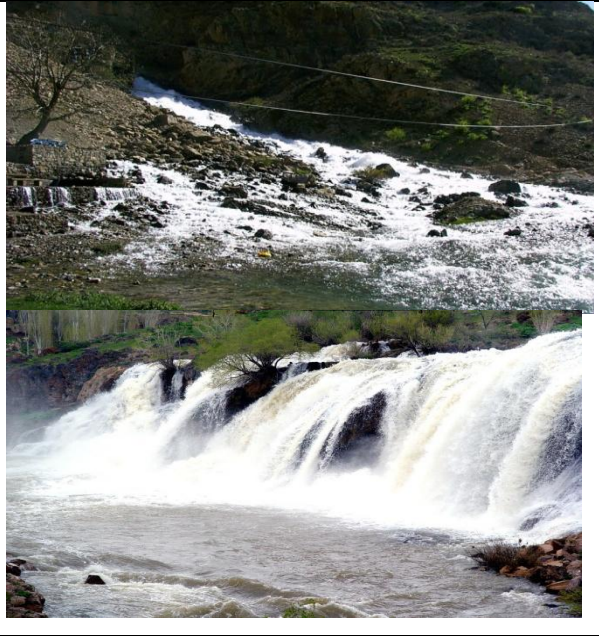

In this study, SWOT Analysis method is chosen because focus of this article is quality. The aim of this study is to identify the key internal and external factors about the city of Van. The findings of the study were used in the SWOT Analysis. The study group formed under supervision of Dr. Kübra Yazici and the members are from different branches, two of them Landscape Architecture, two of them Agricultural Engineer, one of them is Economist, one of them is Sociologist who is also a member of Eastern Anatolia Development Agency. The modus operandi of SWOT Analysis is as follows:


İnternal Factors	External Factors
Determining the strengths and weaknesses of the places in the City of Van for sightseeing activities. Determining the variables which can be controlled. (Internal Factors)	Determining the opportunities and threats by examining the environmental factors which are beyond our control. (External Factors) Economics Socio-Culture Technology
Evaluation of Findings	
Step 1	Determining which findings of the study can be used in SWOT analysis
Step 2	Participants divided into 4 groups and each group chose a delegate to speak for the group.
Final Evaluation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Positive factors (findings) compared for their effects on strengths and opportunities• Negative factors (findings) compared for their effects on weaknesses and threats• Factors (findings) which can be positive or negative according to what you focus on were evaluated	
Conclusion and Suggestions	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The strategy and plan to enhance and sustain the strengths derived2. The strategy and plan to improve the weaknesses to strengths derived3. The strategy and plan to eliminate the threats derived4. The strategy and plan to profit from opportunities derived	

FINDINGS

Location of Van Province

Van Province lies in between the longitudes of 42 / 40 and 44 /30 E and in between the latitudes of 37 / 43 and 39 / 26 N. Province land is 19,069 square km, which accounts for 2.5% of Turkey's total land.

	Landscape Elements That Could Be Used for Scenery Watching	
Sunset	<p>The most preferred scenery watching in Van Province is the watching of sunset. Especially Edremit district is the focus of native and foreign tourists with its unparalleled sunset. Apart from Edremit, Gevaş and Erciş districts also offer beautiful sunset watching.</p>	
Water watching (Seasonal waterfalls, Muradiye waterfall)	<p>Water items are important elements as scenery materials for Van Province. Especially Van Lake, Muradiye Waterfall, Kanispi Waterfall and Bendimahı stream are other attractions for native and foreign tourists. These are certain factors for the development of tourism in the region. In addition to unparalleled scenery and sound of the waterfalls, water items also allows rich landscape watching and relieving of the stress through the color recital of the plants around them.</p>	
Mountain – Lake - Solar watching	<p>Van Province is surrounded by extinct volcanoes of up to 3000 m height. Mountains which make up 53% of land in Van Province are significant elements of scenery. When Van Lake formed by the mountains is combined with the sun, unparalleled sceneries form.</p>	

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Fairy Chimneys and Travertine</p>	<p>Fairy chimneys in Başkale District, also called 'Vanadokya' due to its similarity to Cappadocia by native tourists, are important landscape items. Although it does not cover a large area, Travertine around the Dereiçi (Sawkan) village about 45 km away from Başkale District offers a major visual recital for native people. This is Akçalı Travertine whose formation is still underway and which is among the extraordinary natural heritage items of Van (Van Province Office of Culture and Tourism)</p>	
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Evaluation of SWOT Analysis;

Data from SWOT analysis carried out for scenery watching in the Van Province and the vicinity was evaluated and categorized below:

Strengths (S):

- Geological formation of Van as the largest close basin in Turkey,
- Presence of a soda lake, the largest in Turkey and among the largest ones in the world, in Van,
- Presence of extinct volcanoes,
- Lake formations of different sizes in the province and in close vicinity (Erçek and Sihke lakes) and seasonal waterfalls,
- An undisturbed natural environment with its extraordinary natural resources (in Gevaş district),
- Rich wildlife and fauna (Bendimahi stream),
- Potential for natural water activities,
- Availability of different options in the town for natural and cultural riches for ecotourism,
- Town's location on Silk Road and within national main transportation network of commercial and defense zones

Weaknesses (W):

- Insufficiency of publicity, available methods and marketing of ecotourism,
- Absence of a developed touristic service industry,
- Bad sight due to the garbage dumped in Van Lake, the most important tourism attraction in the region,
- Lack of adequate lodging facilities, one of the major problems in ecotourism, and failure to meet the demands of foreign tourists (Malkoç at al., 2010),
- Inadequacy of publicity of Van Lake and Muradiye waterfall,

- Lack of publicity for fairy chimneys and travertine and unawareness for them in Turkey,
- Inadequacy of qualified personnel for ecotourism activities,
- Lack of sightseeing tour organizations,
- Financial and transportation problems experienced by university professors in Van,
- Lack of information and awareness towards ecotourism,
- Insufficiency of native people in foreign language,
- Transportation difficulties to villages of some districts (lack of covered roads or harsh weather conditions).

Opportunities (O):

- Willingness of native people to take part in potential ecotourism activities,
- High potential of alternative ecotourism types and different options offered for different ecotourism activities,
- Rich natural resources of Van in Eastern Anatolia Region,
- Central status of Silk Road in Van province for high commercial value ,
- Increasing interest in ecotourism around Van Lake and in the vicinity,
- Water sports organizations and publicity opportunities,
- Landscape fabric of Van which can be improved by protection and restoration programs (e.g. Yedi Kilise Church),
- MDP projects of Eastern Anatolia Development Agency which are already underway to develop ecotourism activities in Van and in the vicinity,
- Development projects for tourism implemented by Attraction Center Coordination,
- Willingness of wealthy local people to invest in the region,
- Presence of suitable areas for scenery watching activities,
- Microclimatic nature of the climate of the region due to lake effect,
- Ecotourism related investigations, explorations and excursions carried out by some faculties of Yüzüncü Yıl University

Threats (T):

- Sediment accumulation in Van lake, sewage and garbage disposal into the lake,
- Unplanned tourism activities carried out by investors and resulting risk for deterioration of landscape,
- Migration,
- Unconscious agriculture, animal husbandry and overgrazing of pastures,
- Environmental pollution (contamination of lakes, sewage and garbage disposal into streams),
- Threats such as mass migration to towns and resulting unavailability of young workers to be employed in ecotourism are the factors that could negatively affect scenery watching areas (Özhan, 1997).

CONCLUSION and SUGGESTIONS

Van Province has a significant potential for being a tourism center in Eastern Anatolia Region of Turkey with its cultural assets, natural riches, local traditions, transportation facilities and beautiful climate that allows many attractions in four seasons. Based on the data obtained, Van Province offers many alternatives for scenery watching. Especially Van Province and the vicinity offers unparalleled sceneries to native and foreign tourists with Van Lake, the largest lake in Turkey, and the surrounding extinct volcanoes. It is a reality that presence of elements that have visual quality and streams, seasonal waterfalls that appear in spring, hills, small flat areas, volcanic mountain summits and endemic plants offer extraordinary sceneries (Zennelli, 2011; Qin 2013). Therefore, ecotourism and recreational photography and scenery watching activities provide various alternatives and great riches to visitors.

In SWOT analysis carried out in the present study, the following evaluations were made: in infrastructure planning towards scenery watching, it is necessary to consider the establishment of watching hills in order to fully enjoy the nature and sceneries which relax the eye of native and foreign visitors while getting rid of all tiredness. In watching areas to be designed for this purpose;

- Visual quality should be aimed through site selection, planning, design, implementation, transportation, wind direction, aspect and four season color composition.

Awareness of native people and businesses should be increased for preventing the air, water and soil pollution that can make visual pollution. In addition;

- Pollution which already exists in Van should be remedied by management of solid waste, sewer, and etc.
- Wetlands and other natural habitats should be protected and their sustainability should be achieved.

Pollution and unconscious consumption constitute a number of threats for scenery watching in the region. In planning the activities, these threats should be taken into consideration. Destroying of the resources in these areas should be prevented, wastes should be managed, and the town should be made free of pollution (Grass, 1991).

It is necessary to establish watching hills and improve lodging facilities in the districts with many scenery watching sites. Lodging facilities to be built should be in line with the architectural fabric of the region. Based on the study by Orhan (2010) transportation capacity as well as the lodging should be taken into account. Building of large multi-story buildings that do not fit within the cultural fabric of the region should be avoided in ecotourism planning of the region (Das and al., 1997). It is a reality that ugly buildings constitute a threat for scenery watching sites. In the establishment of facilities, buildings compatible with natural environment and traditional building culture and architecture should be considered.

Van was a fast developing Province, but the earthquake disaster of 2011 caused a massive unemployment and migration problem for the native people. This fact should be considered by tourism sector in planning of tourism activities. Employment possibilities developed by tourism will lower the migration of younger population.

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