

The Impact of Sustainable Tourism on the Economic and Social Development of Rural Destinations: A Case Study in Ecuador

Jessica Vargas¹, Marlene Coronel¹, Francisco Mena², Rafael Carrera¹

¹Universidad de las Fuerzas Armadas ESPE

²Universidad Internacional del Ecuador

Email: javargas12@espe.edu.ec

Abstract

A documentary review was carried out on the production and publication of research papers related to the study of the variables Sustainable Tourism, Economic Development and Rural Destinations. The purpose of the bibliometric analysis proposed in this document was to know the main characteristics of the volume of publications registered in the Scopus database during the period 2018-2023, achieving the identification of 135 publications. The information provided by this platform was organized through graphs and figures categorizing the information by Year of Publication, Country of Origin, Area of Knowledge and Type of Publication. Once these characteristics have been described, the position of different authors regarding the proposed theme is referenced through a qualitative analysis. Among the main findings made through this research, it is found that Spain, with 19 publications, was the country with the highest scientific production registered in the name of authors affiliated with institutions in that nation. The Area of Knowledge that made the greatest contribution to the construction of bibliographic material related to the study Sustainable Tourism, Economic Development and Rural Destinations, was Business, Administration and Accounting with 65 published documents, and the most used Type of Publication during the period indicated above were Journal Articles with 68% of the total scientific production.

Keywords: sustainable tourism, economic development, rural destinations, Ecuador.

1. Introduction

Tourism management is currently one of the most important issues globally, because this sector seeks to guarantee efficiency in the administration of these activities, focusing on improving the current conditions of the communities and the success of tourism. Authors such as the one who affirms that the intervention of local actors is important in the dynamism of sociocultural strategies that make it possible to efficiently manage these natural resources. To this end, it is necessary to emphasize that management has an effect on the responsible use of natural and

cultural resources, which shows that planning and management are fundamental processes for sustainable development. (Domínguez, 2013)

To promote the sustainable development of tourism, the World Tourism Organization states that a series of factors must be respected (UNWTO., 2020)

- Make optimal use of environmental resources that are considered integral to tourism development, effectively preserving important ecological processes and helping to conserve natural resources and ecological diversity
- Respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, preserve their cultural and architectural heritage and traditional values, and contribute to intercultural understanding and tolerance
- Ensure viable economic activities in the long term, which bring well-distributed socio-cultural benefits to all people, including full employment, income obtaining and distribution and social services for host communities, which helps to contribute to poverty reduction

In the case of Ecuador, Ecuadorian tourism is considered a fundamental practice in development, the State has endeavored to strengthen through public policies that imply guidelines for sustainability and participation.

Based on this premise, tourism for Ecuadorians has become an alternative tool for the industry and for regions that, due to their geopolitical, social, cultural, ethnic and environmental characteristics, are attractive to tourists today. Rural tourism is an activity mainly carried out in rural sectors, this activity is considered as an alternative viable strategy for economic growth. According to which it recognizes that "Ecuador's tourism potential is based on its high diversity in terms of culture, countries, geographical location, historical sites and cultural richness." (Tourism&Leisure–Europraxis, 2007)

The strengthening of the country of Ecuador in the international tourism market is the diversity of nature and the cultural values of its inhabitants... In this sense, the natural and cultural diversity of this region plays a decisive role in the sustainability of tourism and the economic benefits associated with it. The quantitative and qualitative relevance of tourism in Ecuador supports the perception of great potential in the sector that can be fully exploited. The objective of this article is to characterize the potentialities of the rural tourism sector in Ecuador, as well as its relevance in international competitiveness. For this reason, this article seeks to describe the main characteristics of the compendium of publications indexed in the Scopus database related to the variables Sustainable Tourism, Economic Development and Rural Destinations, as well. Such as the description of the position of certain authors affiliated with institutions, during the period from 2018-2023.(Tourism&Leisure–Europraxis, 2007)

2. General Objective

To analyze, from a bibliometric and bibliographic perspective, the preparation and publication of research papers in high-impact journals indexed in the Scopus database on the variables

Sustainable Tourism, Economic Development and Rural Destinations, during the period 2018-2023 by Latin American institutions.

3. Methodology

This article is carried out through a mixed orientation research that combines the quantitative and qualitative method.

On the one hand, a quantitative analysis of the information selected in Scopus is carried out under a bibliometric approach of the scientific production corresponding to the study of the variables Sustainable Tourism, Economic Development and Rural Destinations.

On the other hand, examples of some research works published in the area of study indicated above are analyzed from a qualitative perspective, based on a bibliographic approach that allows describing the position of different authors regarding the proposed topic. It is important to note that the entire search was carried out through Scopus, managing to establish the parameters referenced in Figure 1.

3.1. Methodological design

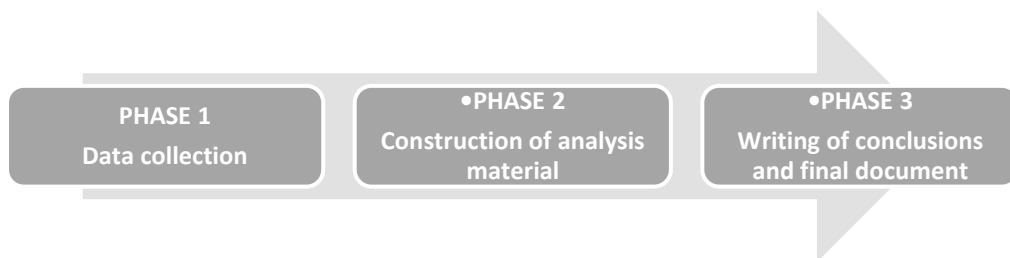


Figure 1. Methodological design

Source: Own elaboration

3.1.1 Phase 1: Data Gathering

Data collection was carried out from the Search tool on the Scopus website, where 135 publications were obtained from the choice of the following filters:

TITLE-ABS-KEY (sustainable AND tourism, AND economic AND development, AND rural AND destinations) AND PUBYEAR > 2017 AND PUBYEAR < 2024

- Published documents whose study variables are related to the study of Sustainable Tourism, Economic Development and Rural Destinations.
- Limited to the years 2018-2023.
- Without distinction of country of origin.
- Without distinction of area of knowledge.

- Without distinction of type of publication.

3.1.2 Phase 2: Construction of analysis material

The information collected in Scopus during the previous phase is organized and then classified by graphs, figures and tables as follows:

- Co-occurrence of words.
- Year of publication.
- Country of origin of the publication.
- Area of knowledge.
- Type of publication.

3.1.3 Phase 3: Drafting of the conclusions and final document

In this phase, the analysis of the results previously yielded is carried out, resulting in the determination of conclusions and, consequently, the obtaining of the final document.

4. Results

4.1 Word co-occurrence

Figure 2 shows the co-occurrence of keywords found in the publications identified in the Scopus database.

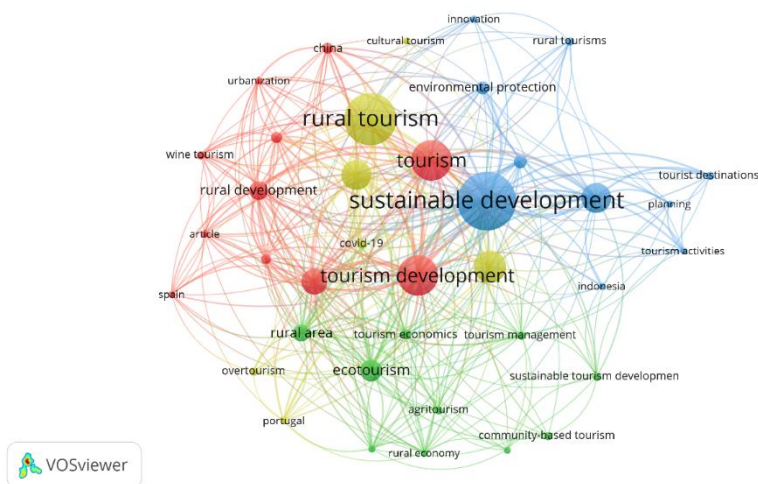


Figure 2. Word co-occurrence

Source: Own elaboration (2023); based on data exported from Scopus.

Sustainable Development was the keyword most frequently used within the studies identified through the execution of Phase 1 of the Methodological Design proposed for the development of this article. Sustainable Tourism is among the most frequently used variables, associated with variables such as Rural Tourism, Ecotourism, Agrotourism, Economy Rural. De the above, it is striking, the social field Tourism has contributed significantly to the development of society, since it represents a fundamental axis for urban and technological development in the modernization of towns. In the same way, this fact has helped to expand the way of thinking about cultural enrichment, leading to a change in social attitudes. On the other hand, tourism has not only boosted economic growth in the Ecuadorian region, it has also become an agent of social, cultural and environmental change. Therefore, a sustainable orientation will reduce the negative effects, generate economic profitability, entrepreneurship and communities.

4.2 Distribution of scientific production by year of publication

Figure 3 shows how scientific production is distributed according to the year of publication.

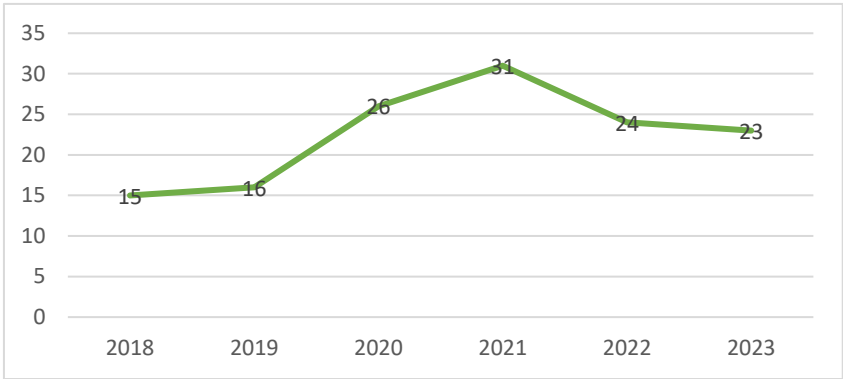


Figure 3. Distribution of scientific production by year of publication.

Source: Own elaboration (2024); based on data exported from Scopus

Among the main characteristics evidenced by the distribution of scientific production by year of publication, an increase in the number of publications registered in Scopus during the years 2021 is notorious, reaching a total of 31 documents published in journals indexed on this platform. This can be explained thanks to articles such as the one titled "Examining the Rural Architecture Shaping Sustainable Tourism in Emerging Economies through Stakeholder Perspectives: Sile, Istanbul" The study aims to prevent the migration of local communities elsewhere, the disappearance of cultural traditions over time, the inactivity of historic rural buildings and the transformation of rural areas into places unsuitable for the daily life and rituals of the local population with sustainable rural development. tourism policies and strategies. To this end, a participatory perspective will be presented considering the differences of Akcakese Village in Sile, as in the case studies, with a holistic database that will be created in line with the opinions of tourists, residents, public officials and travel organizers. This case study has used a conceptual framework of current trends in sustainable rural tourism, as well as a combination of a SWOT

matrix and an Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) approach to understand the main ways in which a declining rural destination can use its architectural heritage to regenerate physically, socially and economically. In this way, the study will contribute to identifying applications that can be made to revitalize historic rural areas, which have experienced a decline similar to that of Akcakese Village over time, focusing on rural tourism.(Kurnaz, 2023)

4.3 Distribution of scientific production by country of origin

Figure 4 shows how scientific production is distributed according to the nationality of the authors.

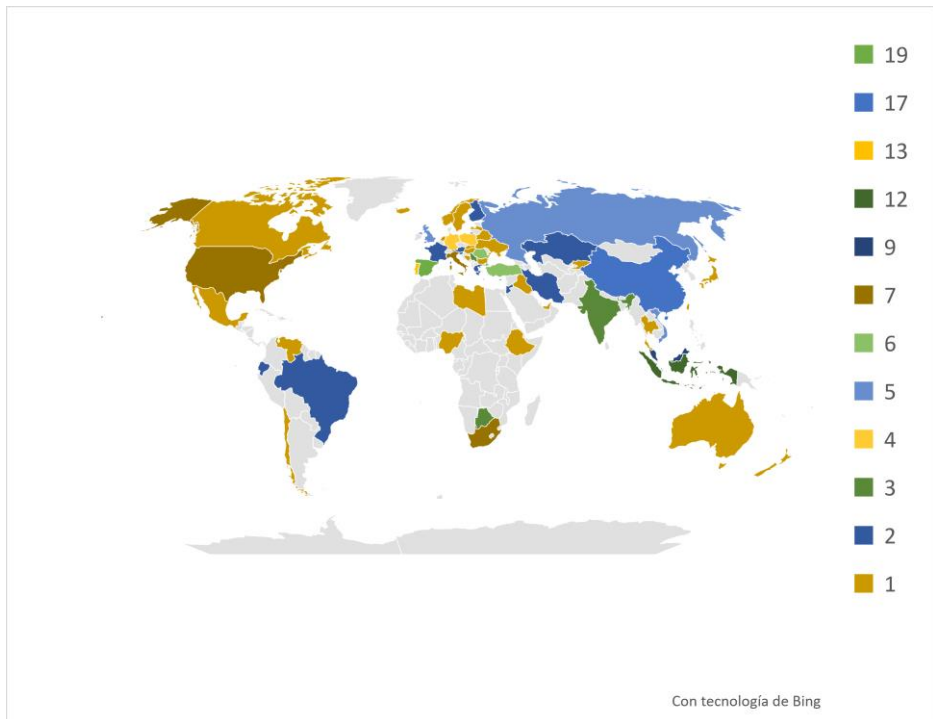


Figure 4. Distribution of scientific production by country of origin.

Source: Authors' elaboration (2024); based on data provided by Scopus.

Within the distribution of scientific production by country of origin, records from institutions were taken into account, establishing Spain as the country in that community with the highest number of publications indexed in Scopus during the period 2018-2023, with a total of 19 publications in total. In second place, China with 17 scientific documents, and Portugal occupying the third place presenting to the scientific community, with a total of 13 documents among which is the article entitled "Analysis of benefits of leisure agriculture and rural tourism on the use of eco-environmental resources" This article presents a study on the analysis of the

benefits of the use of ecological and environmental resources driven by the development of leisure agriculture and rural tourism. The study was conducted by the Environmental Policy and Economics Group (EEPG). The main objective of this study is to conduct an analysis of the benefits of the agroecological environment and resource use in Jilin Province according to the system of evaluation of environmental and resource benefits of recreational agriculture. This assessment will be combined with an analysis of the current situation of resource use and will be based on the principle of net social benefits from resource provision and environmental. The results of the experiments show that the degree of coupling of the agricultural economic system in Jilin Province from 2015 to 2021 is greater than 0.9, which puts it in the high-quality coupling category ($0.9 \leq C \leq 1$). The degree of synergy ranges from 0.54608 to 0.78358 and shows an upward trend, but remains in the medium synergy stage ($0.50 \leq D \leq 8$). This article conducts relevant research on the use of ecological and environmental resources, which is of great practical importance in promoting the rational use of recreational agricultural resources and ultimately the long-term sustainable development of recreational agriculture. In addition, the article presents an analysis of the benefits of ecological and environmental resource use promoted by the development of leisure agriculture and rural tourism.(Sun, 2023)

4.4 Distribution of scientific production by area of knowledge

Figure 5 shows the distribution of the preparation of scientific publications based on the area of knowledge through which the different research methodologies are implemented.

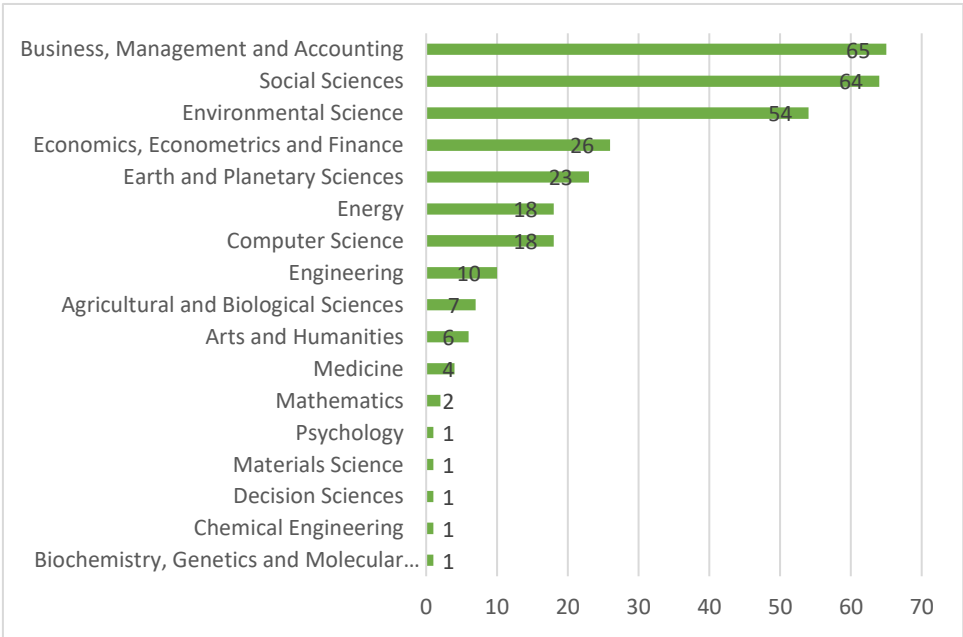


Figure 5. Distribution of scientific production by area of knowledge.

Source: Authors' elaboration (2024); based on data provided by Scopus.

Business, Management and Accounting was the area of knowledge with the highest number of publications registered in Scopus with a total of 65 documents that have based its methodologies on Sustainable Tourism, Economic Development and Rural Destinations. In second place, Social Sciences with 64 articles and Environmental Sciences in third place with 54. The above can be explained thanks to the contribution and study of different branches, the article with the greatest impact was registered by Business, Management and Accounting entitled "The contribution of mycological tourism to well-being, economy and sustainable development" This article analyzes the scientific production related to tourism and mushrooms. The method used was a bibliometric analysis and a systematic review of the literature. The main results show that this is a recent area of study that predominates in Spain but that it will expand and gain relevance over time. The thematic analysis has made it possible to structure the information according to the economic contribution of this tourism niche, the well-being it brings to residents and tourists, the importance of a sustainable development of the activity, and the promotion and marketing of this new tourism. Supporting mycological tourism will help the development of rural areas and bring physical, mental, social, educational and nutritional benefits to residents and tourists. This study has allowed us to develop a future research agenda, highlighting the importance of conducting more research to reap the benefits of mycological tourism and at the same time transfer that knowledge to stakeholders, which will be necessary. (Suazo, 2022)

4.5 Type of publication

In the following graph, you will see the distribution of the bibliographic find according to the type of publication made by each of the authors found in Scopus.

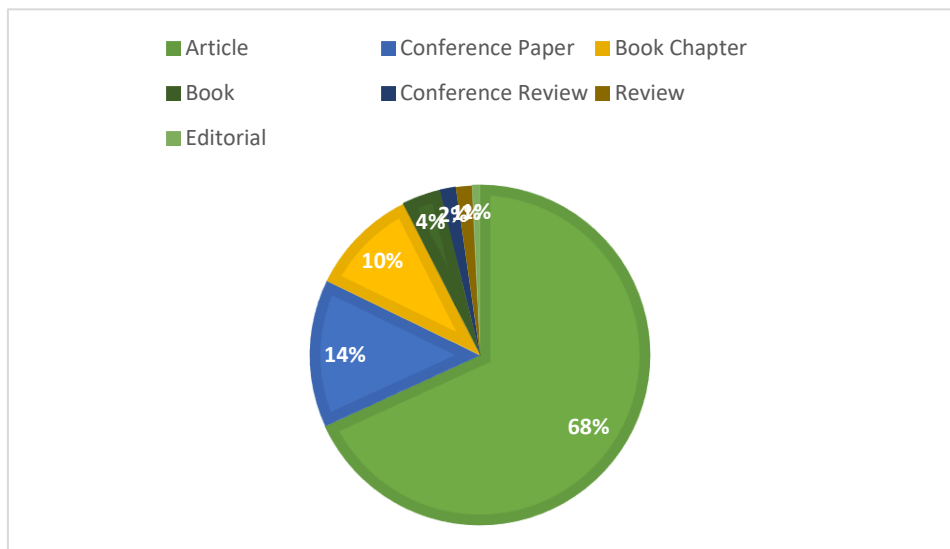


Figure 6. Type of publication.

Source: Own elaboration (2023); based on data provided by Scopus.

The type of publication most frequently used by the researchers referenced in the body of this document was the Journal Article with 68% of the total production identified for analysis, followed by the Session Paper with 14%. Chapter of the Book are part of this classification, representing 10% of the research papers published during the period 2018-2023, in journals indexed in Scopus. In the latter category, the one entitled "The mechanism of influence and measurement of tourists' perception of authenticity in the sustainable development of rural tourism: a study based on the 10 most popular rural tourism destinations in China" stands out. This study takes as its object of research the ten most popular rural tourism destinations in China from 2011 to 2021. First, grounded theory is used to construct the impact model of tourists' perception of authenticity on the sustainable development of rural tourism. The results show that tourists' perception of the authenticity of rural tourism includes four dimensions: visual perception, embodied perception, perception of use and interactive perception. With local attachment as an intermediary, authentic perception has a positive effect on the sustainable development of rural tourism, including economic sustainability, ecological sustainability, and cultural sustainability. In the early stages of tourism development, tourists focus primarily on visual authenticity. As tourists become deeply involved in rural tourism, they will pay more attention to interactive authenticity. Then, based on AHP, the measurement index was constructed and a survey was conducted among ten villages to verify the effectiveness and universality of the model.(Zheng, 2023)

5. Conclusions

Through the bibliometric analysis carried out in this research work, it was possible to establish that Spain was the country with the highest number of records published for the variables Sustainable Tourism, Economic Development and Rural Destinations. With a total of 19 publications in the Scopus database. In the same way, it was possible to establish that the application of theories framed in the area of Business, Management and Accounting, The results of the previous bibliometric analysis can be concluded that sustainable development is an issue that has gained prominence today, tourism activity and the quality of natural resources are correlated in such a way that they have become the basis for the development of the tourism industry in particular in the process of economic growth.

Tourism development in Ecuador is a driving agent of the economy, since it enhances numerous activities and possibilities, the interaction between the desires of tourists, their aspirations and the expectations that the inhabitants of the host communities evidence. Rural tourism is a tourist activity that can be carried out in several regions of Ecuador, this fact has been considered by the state as a viable strategic alternative for sustainable development, poverty reduction, and strengthening economic growth.

The potential of Ecuador's tourism activity has become a fundamental piece not only in its rich diversity but also for its cultural traditions, in the diversity and beauty of its ecosystems, architecture and emblematic places. One of the strengths that makes Ecuadorian tourism attractive at an international level is the vocation of its inhabitants, expressed in the careful attention of international visitors. Therefore, tourism as a sustainable economic activity

constitutes a valuable variable to incorporate citizens into private or community entrepreneurship, generating large sources of employment directly or indirectly, which contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of the inhabitants.

WORKS CITED

- Domínguez, L. B. (2013). Necessary foundations to achieve local socioeconomic development through heritage tourism management.
- Kurnaz, A. A. (2023). Examining the rural architecture shaping sustainable tourism in emerging economies through stakeholder perspectives: Sile, Istanbul. TURKEY.
- Suazo, P. V.-L. (2022). The contribution of mycological tourism to well-being, the economy and sustainable development. CHILE, SPAIN .
- Sun, B. W. (2023). Analysis of the benefits of leisure agriculture and rural tourism on the use of eco-environmental resources. CHINA.
- Tourism&Leisure—Europraxis. (2007). Final report-design of the strategic plan for the development of sustainable tourism for Ecuador "PLANDETUR 2020".
- UNWTO. (2020). World Tourism Organization.
- Zheng, T. Y. (2023). The mechanism of influence and measurement of tourists' perception of authenticity in the sustainable development of rural tourism: a study based on the 10 most popular rural tourism destinations in China. CHINA.
- Albalaki, F. M. M., Mohammed, Z. F., Majeed, R. J., & Talab, H. R. (2019). Investigating the relationship between management accounting techniques and sustainability development in iraqi tourism firms. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, 8(5) Retrieved from www.scopus.com
- Al-Jawahry, B., Mahdi, M., Al-Fatlawi, Q., & Almagtome, A. (2022). THE IMPACT OF IPSAS ADOPTION ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT: A CROSS COUNTRY ANALYSIS. [WPŁYW PRZYJĘCIA IPSAS NA ZRÓWNOWAŻONY ROZWÓJ TURYSTYKI: ANALIZA MIĘDZYNARODOWA] *Polish Journal of Management Studies*, 25(2), 36-55. doi:10.17512/pjms.2022.25.2.03
- Alonso-jiménez, R. F., Loren-méndez, M., Pinzón-ayala, D., & Ollero-lobato, F. (2021). Heritage cataloguing in history: Conceptual and graphical foundations of immovable cultural heritage data bases in the case of spain. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 13(19) doi:10.3390/su131911043
- Antamoshkina, E., Korabelnikov, I., Daeva, T., Nazarova, T., & Morozova, N. (2021). Methodological approach to the assessment of ecological tourism as a direction of sustainable development of the tourism industry. Paper presented at the E3S Web of Conferences, , 296 doi:10.1051/e3sconf/202129605006 Retrieved from www.scopus.com
- Arbolino, R., Boffardi, R., De Simone, L., & Ioppolo, G. (2020). The evaluation of sustainable tourism policymaking: A comparison between multicriteria and multi-objective optimisation techniques. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 29(6), 1000-1019. doi:10.1080/09669582.2020.1843044
- Arenas-Resendiz, T., Tejeida-Padilla, R., Morales-Matamoros, O., Coria-Páez, A. L., & Sánchez-García, J. Y. (2018). Using viable system model for Chinese outbound tourist market sustainability. Paper presented at the Proceedings of the 60th Annual Meeting of the International Society for the Systems Sciences, ISSS 2016, Retrieved from www.scopus.com
- Bekun, F. V., Adedoyin, F. F., Etokakpan, M. U., & Gyamfi, B. A. (2022). Exploring the tourism-CO2 emissions-real income nexus in E7 countries: Accounting for the role of institutional quality. *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events*, 14(1), 1-19. doi:10.1080/19407963.2021.2017725
- Bella, G. (2018). Estimating the tourism induced environmental kuznets curve in france. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 26(12), 2043-2052. doi:10.1080/09669582.2018.1529768
- Berinde, S. -, & Corpădean, A. -. (2019). Assessing the sustainable room for growth for a particular romanian tourism area of business: The case of accommodation businesses. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 11(1) doi:10.3390/su11010243
- Betta, L., Dattilo, B., Di Bella, E., Finocchiaro, G., & Iaccarino, S. (2021). Tourism and road transport emissions in italy. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 13(22) doi:10.3390/su132212712

- Brauer, R., & Dymitrow, M. (2021). The language of sustainable tourism as a proxy indicator of quality. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 13(1), 1-17. DOI:10.3390/SU13010025
- Buonocore, E., Grande, U., Franzese, P. P., & Russo, G. F. (2021). Trends and evolution in the concept of marine ecosystem services: An overview. *Water (Switzerland)*, 13(15) doi:10.3390/w13152060
- Buric, M. N., Stojanovic, A. J., Filipovic, A. L., & Kascelan, L. (2022). Research of attitudes toward implementation of green accounting in tourism industry in Montenegro-practices, and challenges. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 14(3) doi:10.3390/su14031725
- Buzoianu, O. A. C., Stefan, M., Popescu, M. L., & Andreica, A. (2019). Analysis of the romanian sites from the perspective of the relationship strategies on the tourism market. *Quality - Access to Success*, 20(S2), 146-151. Retrieved from www.scopus.com
- Cadarsó, M. -, Tobarra, M. -, García-Alaminos, Á., Ortiz, M., Gómez, N., & Zafrilla, J. (2022). The Input–Output method for calculating the carbon footprint of tourism: An application to the spanish tourism industry doi:10.1007/978-3-030-76441-8_3 Retrieved from www.scopus.com
- Campos, C., Laso, J., Cristóbal, J., Alberti, J., Bala, A., Fullana, M., . . . Aldaco, R. (2022). Towards more sustainable tourism under a carbon footprint approach: The camino lebaniego case study. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 369 doi:10.1016/j.jclepro.2022.133222
- Cavallaro, F., Galati, O. I., & Nocera, S. (2017). Policy strategies for the mitigation of GHG emissions caused by the mass-tourism mobility in coastal areas. Paper presented at the Transportation Research Procedia, , 27 317-324. doi:10.1016/j.trpro.2017.12.062 Retrieved from www.scopus.com
- Chan, C. -. (2022). The impact of COVID-19 on domestic tourism by older people in taiwan. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 10 doi:10.3389/fpubh.2022.885632
- Chazot, J., Hoarau, L., Carzon, P., Wagner, J., Sorby, S., Ratel, M., & Barcelo, A. A. (2020). Recommendations for sustainable cetacean-based tourism in french territories: A review on the industry and current management actions. *Tourism in Marine Environments*, 15, 211-235. doi:10.3727/154427320X15943351217984
- Chen, G., Cheng, M., Edwards, D., & Xu, L. (2022). COVID-19 pandemic exposes the vulnerability of the sharing economy: A novel accounting framework. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 30(5), 1141-1158. doi:10.1080/09669582.2020.1868484
- Chen, H., Costanza, R., & Kubiszewski, I. (2022). Land use trade-offs in china's protected areas from the perspective of accounting values of ecosystem services. *Journal of Environmental Management*, 315 doi:10.1016/j.jenvman.2022.115178
- Cheng, X., Xu, D., Sun, H., Zheng, M., & Li, J. (2022). Rural spatial differentiation and revitalization approaches in china: A case study of qingdao city. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(24) doi:10.3390/ijerph192416924
- Chu, C., Shao, M., & Wang, X. (2021). Dissolved biochar promoted photodegradation of tetracycline in aqueous environment. Paper presented at the E3S Web of Conferences, , 251 doi:10.1051/e3sconf/202125102055 Retrieved from www.scopus.com
- da Costa Tavares, M. C., & do Carmo Azevedo, G. M. (2021). Society 5.0 as a contribution to the sustainable development report doi:10.1007/978-981-33-4256-9_5 Retrieved from www.scopus.com
- Dasgupta, P., & Vogelaar, A. (2022). Brand bhutan and the political economy of sustainable tourism development doi:10.1007/978-3-030-92208-5_13 Retrieved from www.scopus.com
- Del Gesso, C., Lodhi, R. N., & Cobanoglu, C. (2022). Local government's role in promoting city hospitality: A meta-ethnography with a public management perspective. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 34(10), 3855-3880. doi:10.1108/IJCHM-09-2021-1092