



## **Creating Convergence in Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Tourism Development: Case Study of Bergama, Turkey**

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The near ubiquitous use of the term “sustainable” in describing alternative typologies and strategies for tourism development prompts the question of how exactly such measures are sustainable. The question is of particular relevance to cultural heritage in Turkey. Given the country’s great archaeological wealth and growing tourism industry, it is probable that sustainable tourism development (STD) initiatives will be implemented at more cultural heritage sites in the future. Domestic and international tourism operators, state and local governments, and site managers have been able to promote STD in Turkey for a variety of reasons, including Turkey’s developmental potential, the importance of the tourism industry, and the political gains from sponsoring these initiatives. Yet, it is not well understood how STD is defined at local and governmental levels in Turkey, nor what the objectives of STD initiatives actually are.

The concept of STD is examined from a global perspective in the first part of my paper. Advocacy material and academic scholarship are used to explore key themes and debates in the field of STD and to contextual the situation in Turkey. Then a comprehensive list of STD initiatives in the Marmara, Black Sea, Mediterranean, Eastern and Southeastern Anatolian Regions of Turkey with supplemental information about their missions and programming from internet resources and staff interviews identifies and describes their environmental, economic, and social goals. Since the policies that affect STD are mostly decided at the state level due to the centralization of the Turkish government, it is necessary to collect information about initiatives nationwide.

This phase is a crucial step in understanding the potential of STD as a tool to better protect and manage cultural heritage sites in Turkey. Having described the current state of STD in the country, I suggest policies, methods, and models that will allow cultural heritage sites to maximize the benefits of STD. In the second part of my paper, I make recommendations for STD in the city of Bergama, located in the Aegean Region of Turkey. My proposals are based on research into social, economic, and environmental issues as well as the cultural heritage management system in the city and surrounding region. It requires analysis of demographic data as well as state and local policies affecting tourism in the city, and interviews with key stakeholders such as municipal employees, archaeologists, and locals employed in the tourism sector. This proposal for “best practices” in Bergama provides a roadmap for STD in the city, and serves as a planning model for other cultural heritage sites in Turkey that are integrated into urban settings.

**KEY WORDS:** Sustainable tourism development; cultural heritage management; cultural tourism; Bergama; Pergamon.