

**PALACKY UNIVERSITY IN OLOMOUC**

FACULTY OF SCIENCE

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES



Veronika KORČEKOVÁ

**Sustainable mountain tourism as a factor of local development:  
The case study of Tajikistan**

Master Thesis

Thesis Supervisor: Mgr. Simona Šafaříková

Olomouc, 2012

I, the undersigned Veronika Korčeková, declare that the work presented in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original, except as acknowledged in the text, and that the material has not been submitted, either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university.

Olomouc, 1<sup>st</sup> August 2012

.....

## Acknowledgements

---

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor Mgr. Simona Šafaříková for her valuable comments and supportive guidance during the entire process of thesis elaboration.

My gratitude also belongs to all participant of the TajikTour project, especially to the coordinator Komron Akhmedov for his organizational support during my stay in Tajikistan. In addition, I would like to acknowledge the members of the Euromontana Secretariat, who helped me to become more familiar with the issue of sustainable mountain tourism and gave me valuable ideas in initial stages of the thesis design. I am also very thankful to Saloni Dahra and Maarja Merivoo-Parro for their help with proofreading.

Furthermore, I thank my parents, family and friends for being always helpful and encouraging; as well as to Palacky University in Olomouc for awarding me Mobility grant and Vavroušek stipend and thereby making my research endeavour in Tajikistan possible.

## Abstract/ Abstrakt

---

The thesis seeks to examine the topic of sustainable mountain tourism and its relation to local development from a complex perspective. It extends the theoretical knowledge with the practically-oriented case study of Tajikistan - the Central Asian mountainous country with tremendous but not adequately acknowledged tourism potential. The aim of the thesis is to answer the main research question how should tourism policy be designed in Tajikistan, thereby pointing to the real policy challenges that a government has to deal with if it wishes to facilitate sustainable mountain development through tourism. Policy implications form the main outcome of the thesis and substantially contribute to the “knowledge pool” about sustainable mountain tourism.

**Keywords:** sustainable mountain tourism, local development, Tajikistan, tourism policy

\*\*\*\*

Diplomová práca sa venuje komplexnému skúmaniu udržateľného horského turizmu a jeho vzťahu k miestnemu rozvoju. Teoretické znalosti sú v práci rozšírené o prakticky orientovanú prípadovú štúdiu Tadžikistanu – horskej krajiny v Strednej Ázii, ktorá oplýva obrovským, no doposiaľ nedostatočne využitým turistickým potenciálom. Cieľom diplomovej práce je zodpovedanie hlavnej výskumnej otázky aké majú byť opatrenia verejnej politiky týkajúce sa turizmu v Tadžikistane. Týmto spôsobom diplomová práca upozorňuje na reálne výzvy verejných aktérov, ktorí by napomôcť udržateľnému rozvoju horských oblastí prostredníctvom turizmu. Hlavným výstupom práce sú závery pre prax, ktoré významne prispievajú k doterajším poznatkom o udržateľnom horskom turizme.

**Kľúčové slová:** udržateľný horský turizmus, miestny rozvoj, Tadžikistan, opatrenia verejnej správy/verejná politika v oblasti turizmu

## List of contents

---

Acronyms and abbreviations .....	2
List of figures and tables .....	3
Introduction.....	4
Methodology.....	7
<b>PART I: Sustainable tourism in mountain areas as a factor of local development</b>	
Chapter 1: Tourism and development.....	9
1.1 Global tourism trends.....	9
1.2 Importance of tourism for development.....	11
1.3 Transition context.....	12
1.4 Concepts related to sustainability.....	13
Chapter 2: Sustainable mountain tourism.....	17
2.1 Global agenda.....	17
2.2 Specific features of mountain areas .....	18
2.3 Sustainable tourism in mountain areas .....	20
Chapter 3: Policies towards sustainable mountain tourism .....	23
3.1 Relevant policy actors.....	23
3.2 Policy framework .....	25
3.3 “Good practice” examples.....	29
<b>PART II: Case study of Tajikistan</b>	
Chapter 4: Contextual background .....	32
4.1 Country profile.....	32
4.2 Tourism assets .....	37
4.3 Tourism obstacles .....	42
Chapter 5: Facilitating sustainable mountain tourism .....	48
5.1 Tourism stakeholders.....	48
5.2 General tourism policy.....	50
5.2.1 National legislation and strategic planning.....	51
5.2.2 Policy measures .....	52
5.3 Analysis of tourism policy.....	54
5.4 Suggestions for knowledge sharing and innovations .....	57
Chapter 6: Implications for the policy.....	60
6.1 SWOT analysis .....	60
6.2 Policy recommendations .....	62
Conclusion.....	64
References .....	66
Appendixes .....	72

## Acronyms and abbreviations

---

AKF	Aga Khan Foundation
CBT	Community-based tourism
CoE	Council of Europe
CoR	Committee of Regions
CYAST	Committee for Youth Affairs, Sports and Tourism under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
GBAO	Gorno Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast/ The Autonomous Province of Mountainous Badakhshan
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit/ German Agency for International Cooperation (former GTZ)
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
KCBTA	Kyrgyz Community-Based Tourism Association
MSDSP	Mountain Societies Development Support Programme
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OSI	Open Society Institute
PECTA	Pamirs Eco-Cultural Tourism Association
ST-EP	“Sustainable Tourism – Eliminating Poverty” programme
SWOT	Strengths – Weaknesses – Opportunities - Threats Analysis
UN	United Nations
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
ZTB	Zerafshan Tourist Board
ZTDA	Zerafshan Tourism Development Association
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council

## List of figures and tables

---

<b>Figure no. 1:</b> The graph of international tourism market share.....	10
<b>Figure no. 2:</b> The scheme of twelve aims of sustainable tourism.....	15
<b>Figure no. 3:</b> The map of the landscape of Tajikistan.....	33
<b>Figure no. 4:</b> The administrative map of Tajikistan.....	36
<b>Figure no. 5:</b> The map of tourism assets in Tajikistan.....	37
<b>Figure no. 6:</b> The map of protected areas in Tajikistan.....	38
<b>Figure no. 7:</b> The map of natural hazards in Tajikistan.....	47
<b>Figure no. 8:</b> The map of “Silk road” routes .....	58
<b>Table no. 1:</b> The scale of benefits from “pro-poor” tourism.....	12
<b>Table no. 2:</b> The involvement of government in tourism sector.....	28

## Introduction

---

*“Making tourism more sustainable is not just about controlling and managing the negative impacts of the industry...Policies and actions must aim to strengthen the benefits and reduce the costs of tourism.”*

*(UNEP & UNWTO, 2005: 2)*

Tourism is increasingly being recognized as a means of rapid economic development, especially in the context of the developing world (Godde et al., 2000; GTZ, 1999; FAO, 2005; ICIMOD, 2007a; UNEP & UNWTO 2005). Despite the recent global recession, it continues to play an important role in supporting economic growth (OECD, 2010). However, positive effects may be counterbalanced with rather negative impacts and hence tourism does not always bring benefits to local communities and their living environments. In order to design relevant policies appropriately, there is a need to be aware of the possible challenges that may arise as well as acknowledge specificities of a particular context.

Mountain areas are unique places that offer great potential for the development of tourism sector. Their natural resources and the cultural heritage of mountain people make them an ideal place for finding solitude, adventure, recreation and scenic beauty. Yet, in order to seek comparative advantage out of these assets, certain conditions such as adequate infrastructure or service provision need to be in place. Moreover, special policy measures securing sustainability of tourism in the long run should be implemented.

Considering the outlined facts, it is important to define the concept of sustainable mountain tourism, to outline underlying theoretical knowledge and to examine ways how sustainable mountain tourism should be implemented in order to enhance local development and make the biggest use of local assets. Recognizing the multifaceted and context-specific nature of this issue, the general research focus is narrowed down to one particular country - Tajikistan.

There are many reasons for identifying Tajikistan as a suitable country for the case study. Besides its predominant mountainous character which represents significant potential for mountain tourism, Tajikistan is classified as the least developed among all countries in Central Asia<sup>1</sup>. The importance of the improvement of secondary and tertiary sectors of the economy is very high, as the country's

---

<sup>1</sup> Central Asia in the meaning of five former countries of the Soviet Union: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan



main economic revenues come from primary sectors such as production of hydro-energy, cotton and aluminium; leaving the country dependent on the global market. As economic opportunities in the country are rather limited, people are forced to look for sources of livelihood abroad. A considerable part of the productive and predominantly young population emigrates. The significance of the economic migration can be illustrated by the fact that Tajikistan is the biggest recipient of remittances<sup>2</sup> when counted as the share of national income, representing around 31% of the country's annual GDP (World Bank, 2012: 2).

These alarming tendencies make Tajik economy highly dependent on external factors and call for an immediate policy action. Considering its landlocked location, predominantly rural character and mountainous terrain of Tajikistan, development of sustainable mountain tourism appears to be the most effective way to capitalize on local natural assets and unique traditional lifestyle.

However, looking at the current state of tourism in the country, more needs to be done by national authorities as regards sustainable tourism in mountain areas. Even though tourism is recognized as an alternative economic sector and the government has developed tourism law as well as strategic documents addressing tourism development, policy action is not satisfactory. Sustainable mountain tourism does not have an important position on the actual policy agenda because its gross contribution to the national economy is rather negligible (ZTDA, 2008: 1). Moreover, the Soviet legacy, rigid political structures and continually ongoing transformation of the country make the innovative tendencies in tourism sector even more difficult.

Therefore, considering all reasons mentioned above, the examination of the policy context in Tajikistan with regards to sustainable mountain tourism is highly important for tackling the knowledge gap, making policy-planners aware of this issue and designing well-targeted tourism policy.

In this context, the main aim of this thesis is to answer the following question: *“How should tourism policy be designed in order to enhance sustainable mountain development in Tajikistan?”*.

The thesis seeks to answer this question in the following order. After the methodological chapter, part one provides the underlying theoretical background and incorporates three chapters. Chapter one is devoted to the broad issue of tourism and development. Using the theoretical knowledge

---

<sup>2</sup>Money sent to country from migrants working abroad

gained through the literature review, general concepts and patterns of tourism are defined. Chapter two is narrowed down to the issue of sustainable mountain tourism. It outlines the global policy agenda and examines the specificities and importance of tourism in relation to mountain areas. In order to provide characteristics of adequate policy related to sustainable mountain tourism, chapter three is devoted to the investigation of relevant policy actors and the creation of a framework for policy action. Moreover, it offers useful examples of good policy practices.

Underlying theories outlined in part one are subsequently applied in part two which attempts to access the real situation of mountain tourism in Tajikistan. This practically-oriented case-study comprises three chapters and is written in the form of policy analysis addressed to relevant governmental authorities. After a brief but comprehensive analysis of the country context, tourism assets and obstacles are discussed in chapter four. Chapter five is focused specifically on the examination of tourism-related policies and measures in the country. Building on the theoretical as well as empirical knowledge from the preceding chapters, policy implications are outlined in the last chapter, where SWOT analysis and policy recommendation are provided. The last chapter forms the major contribution of this thesis, because the SWOT analysis as well as policy recommendations can be directly used by the relevant policy actors as a guide for promoting sustainable mountain tourism in Tajikistan.

## Methodology

---

The thesis addresses the research question from both a theoretical and an empirical perspective. The theoretical part builds on the relevant and updated information through reviewing available literature and research studies. It is based predominantly on the publications and documents of international organisations such as CoR (2006), GIZ (former GTZ, 1999), OECD (2010), UN (2011, 2012) and UNWTO (2012). These documents together with books by Hall and Lew (2009) or Scheyvens (2011) and the book edited by Harrison (2001) are good sources of comprehensive knowledge about the relation of sustainable tourism to development. An interesting, but rather outdated insight into challenges of tourism in transition context is provided by Hall (1991). Particularly important for the examination of tourism in mountainous areas are publications of ICIMOD (2007a, 2007b), the policy report Abisko Agenda (2002), articles by Lama and Sattar (2004) and Price (2004), as well as the edited book by Godde et al. (2000).

The more practically-oriented case study attempts to analyze the conditions and potential of tourism in Tajikistan. The general background capitalizes especially on the literature connected to Central Asian and Tajik context. The most notable pieces of literature are books by Kokaisl et al. (2007) and Abdullaev and Akbarzadeh (2010), together with the edited book by Sahadeo and Zanca (2007). In order to gain a full picture of the situation of tourism policy in Tajikistan, the sources of the analytical part of the case study include official policy documents (MFA, 2009b-d), information published by the governmental body dealing with tourism policy (CYAST, 2010, 2011, 2012), reports and studies of international organisations active in Tajikistan (AKF, 2012; EuropeAid 2008; OSI 2010; UNWTO, 2006; ZOI, 2012) as well as online media reports (Chorshanbiyev, 2012; Hasanova, 2010a-e; Ergasheva, 2010; Lekarkin, 2010; Naumova, 2012).

In addition to the review of relevant policy documents, qualitative methods such as personal observations, informal interviews and field visits supplement the factual perspective and add empirical knowledge to the case study where appropriate. The qualitative methods were used during the field research that was carried out in Tajikistan at the beginning of the year 2011. The author of the thesis has undertaken this field research as part of the project TajikTour aimed at promoting tourism potential of the country among university students in Dushanbe. Discussions with students, ordinary citizens of the country, as well as informal communication with tourism operators provided

deeper insight into the real situation and revealed several interesting findings that are included in the case study. Integral to the project were also study trips to several tourism sites in the country. Moreover, a direct encounter with the Tajik lifestyle through a home-stay in a Tajik family was very beneficial for understanding key assets and obstacles of tourism in the country. Hence, in light of the purposes of this thesis, the empirical knowledge based on the author's practical experience helps to identify "real challenges" related to tourism development in Tajikistan and thereby adds value to the whole thesis.

The key outcome of the case study is the SWOT analysis and related policy recommendations. SWOT analysis is employed as a "strategic planning tool used to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats" (ICIMOD, 2007b: 40-42) through identifying favourable and unfavourable conditions, uncovering opportunities and understanding the potential threats. Using the knowledge gained through SWOT analysis, the main research question of the thesis, "*How should tourism policy be designed in order to enhance sustainable local development in Tajikistan?*", will be addressed by the policy recommendations through answering additional, more concrete questions (ICIMOD, 2007b: 40-42):

1. How can relevant policy actors use strengths?
2. How can relevant policy actors stop weaknesses?
3. How can relevant policy actors exploit opportunities?
4. How can relevant policy actors defend against threats?

As for the limitations of the methodology, it may be argued that the results of the field research are subjective and not representative. However, the main purpose of the thesis originating in the research question is to assess the overall situation in Tajikistan and provide suggestions for improvement based on the available literature as well as author's personal experience and expertise. Hence, a certain level of subjectivity is unavoidable and therefore the outlined methodology is appropriate and justified.

Moreover, the selection of the literature may appear to be predominantly English-oriented, excluding other important sources in Russian or some other language. This objection is valid, yet the majority of sources used in the theoretical part were developed by international organizations that publish documents in English. Moreover, all relevant official documents available in Russian are included in case study and the qualitative research was carried out in Russian as well.

# **PART I: Sustainable tourism in mountain areas as a factor of local development**

## **Chapter 1: Tourism and development**

---

This chapter attempts to set a general ground for the following, more specifically-oriented chapters. The broader issue of tourism and development is firstly reviewed in a global perspective; looking at general trends and the importance of tourism for development followed by the specificities of post-socialist countries in transition. Overarching terms of tourism and development are narrowed down to more concrete concepts of sustainable tourism and sustainable local development. These two concepts form the central focus of this thesis and are applied to mountainous settings in the subsequent chapters.

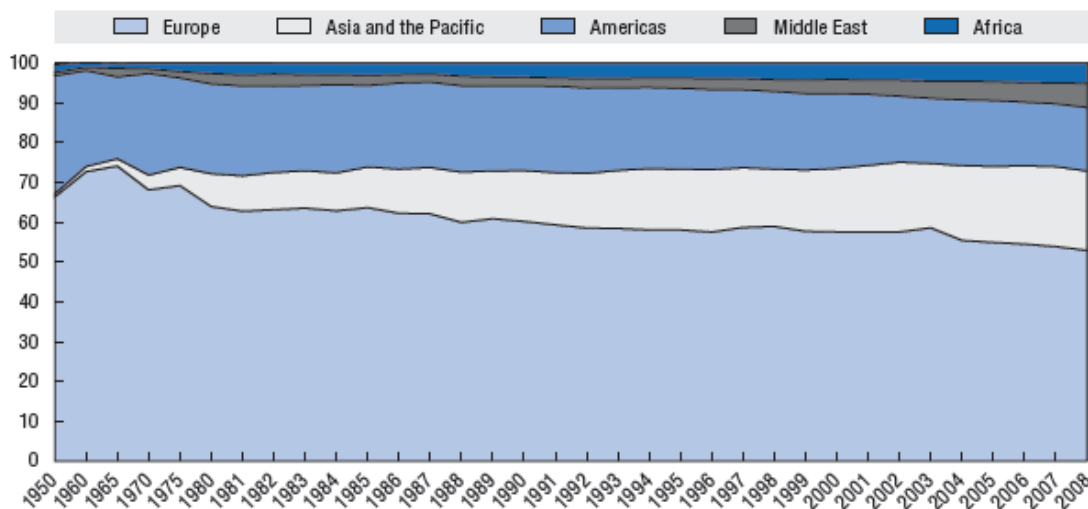
### ***1.1 Global tourism trends***

Tourism is the biggest and also the fastest growing industry in the world (GTZ, 1999; ICIMOD, 2007a; Bolwell & Weinz, 2008; OECD, 2010; UNWTO, 2012). Since the last century, a tremendous progress has occurred when international tourist arrivals increased from 25 million in 1950 to 760 million in 2004 (ICIMOD, 2007a: 21).

Despite the recession caused by the economic crisis in 2009, the year 2010 was characterized as “the year with multi-speed recovery”, owing to the 6.4% increase in international tourist arrivals. The trend continued in 2011 with an increase of 4.6% still exceeding the long term average of 4%, reaching 983 million arrivals worldwide (UNWTO 2012: 2-3). The prospects for 2012 are positive, predicting growth between 3% to 4% (UNWTO 2012: 2). Long-term forecasts (ICIMOD, 2007a: 24) estimate an average annual growth rate higher than 4% over the next 20 years whereas international arrivals could rise to 1,600 million by the year 2020. There is even a prediction that “the numbers of potential travellers are so huge and the logic of targeting tourism for development so pervasive that long-term growth prospects will remain substantial by any measure” (Bolwell & Weinz, 2008: 7).

In terms of employment and economic impact, tourism provides around 74 million jobs worldwide that count for approximately 8% of the total world's jobs. Millions of additional jobs are produced indirectly via the multiplier effect in other sectors (UNEP & UNWTO, 2005: 8). Interestingly, international tourism receipt represented in 2003 around 6% of total world exports, yet if considering only exports of services, tourism counted for almost one third of all exported services (ICIMOD, 2007a: 25). Worth noting, the statistics show that the growth of tourism is positively correlated with the global economic growth (ICIMOD, 2007a: 25).

Considering the issue of tourism and development, the tourism industry has high importance in poor countries. In 2007, tourism generated more than 260 billion US dollars in the developing world (Bolwell & Weinz, 2008: 6). Tourism “is one of the major export sectors of poor countries and the leading source of foreign exchange in 46 of the 49 least developed countries” (Bolwell & Weinz, 2008: 1). As *Figure 1* illustrates, long-term tourism distribution according to regions shifts towards tourism destinations in “the South and the East” (OECD, 2010: 26).



**Figure no. 1:** International tourism market share by region during 1950-2008 measured in terms of tourist arrivals, (OECD, 2010: 26)

According to UNWTO (2012: 2-3) statistics, the tourism industry in developing countries grows faster than in developed countries. Despite the reversed trend in 2011, wherein destinations in the developing world reported slower growth at 4.3% compared to 4.9% in the developed world, long-term forecast for the time period between 2010 and 2030 (UNWTO, 2012: 2) predict twice as high growth in international tourist arrivals in developing countries (4.4% per year) than in developed

countries (2.2% per year). As a result, the tourism market share of developing countries is expected to increase from 47% in 2011 to 57% in 2030 (UNWTO, 2012: 2).

Besides the international tourism figures, it must be noted that the context of a particular country is also essential for assessing general tourism patterns. As Scheyvens (2011: 9) points out, some studies suggest that domestic tourism is ten times larger than international tourism as approximately 80% of tourists travel inside their own country or region. This trend is particularly visible in some countries with a growing middle-class population and should be taken into account accordingly.

## ***1.2 Importance of tourism for development***

The facts outlined above demonstrate that the tourism industry plays an important role in the global economy, and more importantly in the developing world. Besides being the key area of services export for many developing states, tourism significantly contributes to their national economies and represents considerable competitive advantage on the global market (Bolwell & Weinz, 2008: 6-7). It enhances creation of jobs, generation of income, and is an important source of foreign currency income (GTZ, 1999: 7). In addition, tourism promotes positive improvements in local infrastructure - it creates a multiplier effect establishing links with other sectors, helps preserve traditional local culture, and prevents the implementation of other more harmful forms of land use (Beyer et al., 2007: 20-23).

Outlined arguments are a strong justification why tourism should be recognized as a tool for enhancing well-being in the developing world. Yet, Beyer et al. (2007: 20) point out that there are several cons of tourism such as the considerable uncertainty of tourism demand, the domination of market by transnational companies, and the seasonal and low-paid nature of tourism related jobs. As regards environmental and social effects, tourism may cause environmental degradation and in some cases can be considered “modern-day cultural imperialism” (Beyer et al., 2007: 21-23). Moreover, looking at experiences from previous decades marked mainly by profit maximization as well as considering fluctuations on international, national and regional tourism markets, tourism cannot always be considered an exclusively beneficial phenomenon for poorer countries (Scheyvens, 2011: 1).

There have been attempts to tackle the negative effects of tourism by the introduction of the concept of “Pro-Poor Tourism”. This specific approach is aimed at making tourism an anti-poverty

tool which is associated with several note-worthy non-economic benefits depicted in *Table 1*. However, as critics argue, it appears to be only a formal tourism relabeling “intended mainly to reduce costs and/or enhance the positive publicity for the agencies concerned” (Scheyvens, 2011: 4).

Strategy focus	Examples
Economic benefits	Expansion of employment and wages through job creation and training for the poor. Expansion of business opportunities for the poor through entrepreneurial opportunities. Development of collective community income through e.g. lease fees, donations, equity dividends and cooperatives.
Non-cash livelihood benefits	Capacity building, training and empowerment. Mitigation of environmental impacts of tourism on the poor. Equitable management of resources between tourists and local people. Improved access to services and infrastructure.
Policy, process and participation	Supportive policy frameworks at the national and local level that enable participation by the poor. Increased participation by the poor in decision-making. Encouragement of partnerships between public and private sectors. Enhancement of communication and the flow of information among all stakeholders.

*Source:* Based on Ashley (2002: 20)

**Table no. 1:** The scale of benefits from “pro-poor” tourism (Scheyvens, 2011: 4)

Nevertheless, it should not be forgotten that effects of tourism significantly vary depending on the country context. Harrison (2001: 39-41) argues that especially in the context of least developed countries, several additional factors such as the role of the state need to be considered in order to assess the link between tourism and development. He notes that the state has definitely a role to play, yet its incentives and competences vary among countries, depending on the importance of tourism in national economy and other variables such as the condition of markets, infrastructure, human resources, level of corruption, special interest groups, and so on.

### ***1.3 Transition context***

Having defined the general relation between tourism and development, more detailed attention should be paid to specificities of countries in transition that are especially relevant for the purposes of the thesis’ case study.



It must be noted that post-socialist countries have to deal with the post-communist legacy, which might hinder the efforts to exploit tourism potential in this particular region. As Hall argues (1991: 11), “neither Marx nor Lenin provided any guidelines for [tourism] development” and hence tourism was in former “Soviet bloc” a rather marginal industry used predominantly for “the well-being and consciousness of new socialist man” (1991: 114-115) through domestic or international intra-bloc travel. As Shaw (1991: 140) points out, the policy of the Soviet Union towards tourism, even though well-planned and administered, failed to sustain sufficient long-term investments necessary for adequate tourism infrastructure.

The main cause is the nature of centralized socialist economy that is rather oriented on heavy industries and is in opposition to entrepreneurial and flexible practices demanded by tourism (Hall, 1991:11). Hall (1991) further mentions that the biggest obstacles for the development of a modern tourism industry are “internal security questions, inert bureaucracies, inflexible economic response mechanism and inappropriate infrastructure” (1991: 3). Regulation of travel, fiscal constraints and polluted environment (1991: 53-78) can be seen as additional limitations of countries under political and economic transformation.

Some of these practices have remained unchanged in succession states until now, especially in case of the former members of the Soviet Union. Even though the traditionally closed economies were given the chance to be more liberalized after the fall of the Soviet Union and prioritize tourism on their policy agendas, a free-market economy and democratization were not established in some succession states of the Soviet Union, especially in the Central Asian republics (Schofield, 2004: 108-109). Hence, the post-communist transition did not lead to significant reforms of old-fashioned tourism practices. As a result, there is an even greater need for the design and implementation of well-targeted and flexible tourism policies that are aimed at exploring the potential of tourism to the best possible extent in this region and making it a crucial factor of development.

#### ***1.4 Concepts related to sustainability***

There are several definitions of **sustainable tourism**. The most quoted one, according to the EU Committee of Regions, is the definition by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). It describes sustainable tourism as:

*“sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way*

*that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems.” (CoR, 2006: 32)*

Taking the academic perspective, as Smith et al. (2010:171) point out, the need for more sustainable practices in tourism evolved already in 1960s with the emergence of several alternative approaches such as “green tourism”, “responsible tourism” or “soft tourism”. These concepts are still being used interchangeably and they are all embraced in the general definition of sustainable tourism:

*“sustainable tourism applies the concept of sustainable development to the tourism industry and strives towards tourism that has the least possible impact on host communities and the environment, while maintaining economic viability” (Smith et al., 2010: 169).*

More policy-oriented definition outlined by OECD (2010: 56) highlights the fact that the sustainability of destination depends on

*“the ability of a diverse range of stakeholders, across levels of government, business and local communities, to work together to implement suitable measurement and regulatory instruments for ensuring community- and environment-friendly outcomes.”*

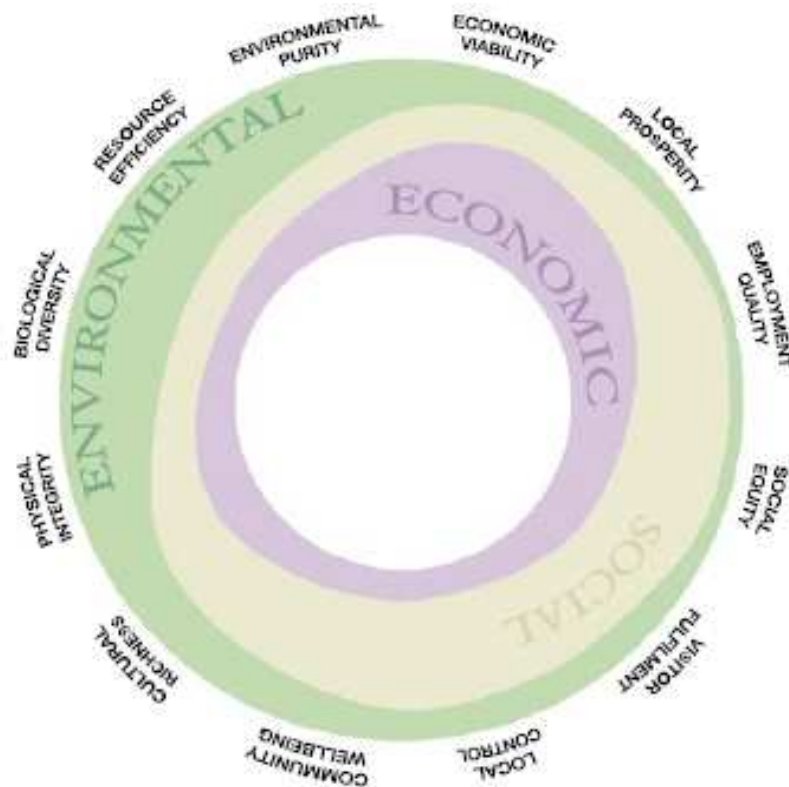
Yet, it is important to note that a sustainable tourism policy should not be focused only on avoiding potential negative impacts. Relevant policy actors should employ proactive and integrated approach. Moreover, sustainable tourism is not one distinct form of tourism, and therefore a common confusion with ecotourism which is a particular form of tourism related to natural areas should be avoided (UNEP & UNWTO, 2005: 2, 12). In addition, it should not be understood as a finite state of tourism, because sustainable development of tourism is a “continuous process of improvement” (UNEP & UNWTO, 2005: 12).

Many studies (CoR, 2006; GTZ, 1999; Bolwell & Weinz, 2008; Smith et al, 2010; UNEP & UNWTO, 2005) point out that the feature of sustainability has in general three aspects: economic, environmental and social. Related key principles of sustainable tourism proposed by UNWTO are:

- “1. to make optimal use of environmental resources;*
  - 2. to respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities; and*
  - 3. to ensure viable, long-term economic operations, providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders.”*
- (Smith et al., 2010:172)*

According to the agenda developed by UNEP and UNWTO, sustainable tourism should be aimed

at twelve following goals: economic viability, local prosperity, employment quality, social equity, visitor fulfillment, local control, community well-being, cultural richness, physical integrity, biological diversity, resource efficiency as well as environmental purity (UNEP & UNWTO, 2005: 18-19). Relationship between these twelve aims and three basic aspects of sustainability is illustrated below in *Figure 2*.



**Figure no. 2:** Twelve aims of sustainable tourism and their relation to environmental, social and economic aspects of sustainability (UNEP & UNWTO, 2005: 20)

If all three aspects of sustainability are considered and a tourism policy is guided by outlined principles, then tourism has a great potential to be a factor of **local development**, therein enhancing the well-being of local communities. Such development is oriented towards groups of individuals and their living environments at the local level, which can be called sustainable if it “meets the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Brundtland, 1987 cited in CoR, 2006: 31). The contribution of tourism to local development is seen mainly in the enhancement of the economies of local destinations as well as in the

establishment of interaction, awareness and dependency between visitors, local communities, local environment and other relevant stakeholders, thus leading to a special relationship which has both positive and negative effects (UNEP & UNWTO, 2005: 9-10). Therefore, an appropriate tourism policy is essential in order to achieve sustainable local development.

As this thesis is predominantly dealing with mountain areas, certain terms such as “local development”, “mountain development” and their variations with the adjective “sustainable” are used interchangeably.

## Chapter 2: Sustainable mountain tourism

---

Having examined general tourism patterns and defined the concepts related to the sustainability of tourism, this chapter is devoted to the focal point of this thesis - mountain areas. In order to gain a complex and updated picture, the global agenda concerned with mountain issues is reviewed at the beginning of the chapter. Afterwards, a brief overview of specific features of mountain areas is provided. Subsequently, basic definitions, facts and principles of sustainable mountain tourism come to the centre of attention.

### *2.1 Global agenda*

Most notable developments related to mountain areas can be traced back to the 1990s, when the Global Action Plan Agenda 21 was endorsed at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992. Its Chapter 13 titled “Managing Fragile Ecosystems: Sustainable Mountain Development” represents an important milestone in the recognition of the global importance of mountains (Price, 2004: 2). Two following programme areas applicable to mountainous environment worldwide were defined: “a) Generating and strengthening knowledge about the ecology and sustainable development of mountain ecosystems; b) Promoting integrated watershed development and alternative livelihood opportunities” (UN, 1992: 2). Importantly, as regards mountain tourism, it was stated that “governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should...diversify mountain economies, inter alia, by creating and/or strengthening tourism, in accordance with integrated management of mountain areas” (UN, 1992: 3). Following years after Agenda 21, the recognition of mountain issues was strengthened by several meetings and conferences bringing together representatives of international organizations, national governments and NGOs. In addition, the Inter-Agency Group on Mountains and the Mountain Forum, “a global network for mountain communities, environments, and sustainable development” (Price, 2004: 2), were established.

On the tenth anniversary of Agenda 21, the Abisko Agenda with the name “Rethinking Agenda 21” was elaborated in 2002. Moreover, several other publications (Price, 2004; Lama and Sattar, 2002) were developed for this occasion and important meetings such as Bishkek Mountain Summit were organized. The year 2002 was also declared the International Year of Mountains

(NORDREGIO, 2004: i) by the UN General Assembly, designating 11<sup>th</sup> December the “International Mountain Day”.

In this connection, ten years after the establishment of the International Year of Mountains and twenty years after the Rio Earth Summit, year 2012 offers according to the recent UN General Assembly Report on Sustainable Mountain Development (2011) an “important opportunity to secure renewed political commitment on sustainable mountain development and review the mountain agenda taking into account recent developments” (UN, 2011:5). Furthermore, several fields of thematic cooperation such as biodiversity conservation, climate change, desertification or disaster risk management are mentioned in the report, stressing the need for international cooperation and inclusion of mountain agenda in the RIO+20 processes (UN, 2011: 5-13). These suggestions were implemented in June 2012 in the Declaration of the Rio+20 Summit. The declaration includes three paragraphs devoted to mountains recognizing their importance for sustainable development and the need to address “poverty, food security and nutrition, social exclusion and environmental degradation in these areas” (UN, 2012: 37). Importantly, the international community encouraged governments, particularly in developing countries, “to adopt a long-term vision and holistic approaches, including through incorporating mountain-specific policies into national sustainable development strategies which could include, *inter alia*, poverty reduction plans and programmes in mountain areas” (UN, 2012: 38). As regards sustainable tourism, the potential of eco- and cultural tourism connected to the creation of small- and medium- enterprises as well as facilitation of the access to finance for local communities were highlighted, stressing the need for appropriate guidelines and legislation (UN, 2012: 23).

Hence, taking into account the recognition of mountain issues at the global level and the efforts to raise awareness through the establishment of special occasions, sustainable mountain tourism as an integral part of sustainable mountain development seems to be popular and a vital policy issue.

## ***2.2 Specific features of mountain areas***

The need to distinguish mountain tourism from other tourism forms originates in the specific characteristics of mountain regions such as isolation, remoteness and related difficult access, wilderness, rich natural and cultural diversity and subsistence way of life (ICIMOD, 2007a: 6). Exact delineation of mountain areas is, however, very challenging because criteria used worldwide significantly differ. Moreover, as pointed out in Abisko Agenda (2002: 60), “definitions are inherently

political” because mountain regions often require special policy measures or extra funding and therefore a global agreement on the delineation of mountains is needed. An attempt to define mountain environments represents the research by Kapos et al., which has delimited the global total area of mountains as 35.9 million km<sup>2</sup> or 24.3% of global land surface, using the criteria such as altitude or slope (Kapos et al. 2000 in Abisko Agenda, 2002: 23).

By contrast, European delineation of mountains uses besides technical criteria related to topography also local climate conditions as these two factors are considered an economic handicap (NORDREGIO, 2004: ii). As a result, mountains in the European Union are also low areas in the Nordic countries with a temperature comparable to that in highest parts of the Alps. Moreover, the political nature of this delineation indicates other additional criteria such as coherence of mountain massifs, the approximation of mountain area to municipal boundaries or the exclusion of small isolated mountain areas (NORDREGIO, 2004: ii).

Despite the differences in the definitions of mountains and varying specificities resulting in their location, their importance can be stated in absolute terms. As Godde et al. (2000: 3-5) argue, mountains have unique biophysical characteristics – possession of water and huge diversity of fauna and flora being some of them. They further mention that one-tenth of the global population live in mountains forming valuable human resources because of their local knowledge, traditional way of life, preservation of indigenous traditions or management of natural environment. The UNEP study (2008) reveals, that besides communities directly living in mountain areas that are mainly rural and ethnically very diverse, another 14% of world’s population depends on resources from mountains. Furthermore, mountains represent spiritual centres as “they evoke the highest values and most sacred of beliefs of many people and cultures worldwide” (Godde et al., 2000: 5).

The study (NORDREGIO, 2004) referring to European mountains has provided four main reasons why mountains are important: “1) as ‘water towers’ supplying much of the continent’s water, especially in summer, and as sources of hydroelectric power; 2) as centres of diversity, both biological and cultural; 3) for providing opportunities for recreation and tourism, based on natural attributes and cultural heritage; and 4) because of their sensitivity to environmental change, as manifest in the melting of glaciers” (NORDREGIO, 2004: i). These distinguished features can be applicable also in the wider global context. In addition, Lama and Sattar (2002: 6) point out that mountains are important natural corridors for migrating animals as well as main locations where natural habitat remains unaffected by human activities.

On the other hand, there are also some characteristics of mountains that are hindering their overall progress such as isolation, limited access, ruggedness, altitude, climate, etc. (Lama & Sattar, 2002: 2). Furthermore, “mountain regions are often the most disadvantaged and least developed places in the world...[being] home to some of the world’s poorest and most vulnerable” (FAO, 2005: 1). As the people living in mountain areas often lack sufficient skills and resources, they have to face social inequality, political marginalization and environmental stress; while the only solution is seen in exodus to lowland urban areas (Lama & Sattar, 2002: 2; FAO, 2005: 1). In addition, there is general lack of suitable data about mountain areas caused by the variations in mountain definitions. As a result, well-targeted policies towards mountain development or evaluations of impacts on mountain environment are rather rare (NORDREGIO, 2004: i).

### ***2.3 Sustainable tourism in mountain areas***

Putting together previously outlined aspects of sustainability and mountainous terrain, the concept of sustainable mountain tourism emerges. According to the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), sustainable mountain tourism refers to

*“approaches and practices that take full account of current and future economic, social, and environmental impacts, while addressing the needs of visitors, the tourism industry, the environment, and host communities, especially the poor and other socially disadvantaged groups such as women and minority mountain people”* (ICIMOD, 2007a: 5).

Based on this definition, sustainable mountain tourism is guided by “pro-poor, pro-local, pro-women, pro-social, pro-environment, and pro-culture inclusion, as well as other sustainability principles” (ICIMOD, 2007a: 5-6). This may to some extent overlap with other frequently used concepts such as pro-poor tourism, community-based or small-scale tourism, ecotourism, green tourism, alternative tourism or responsible tourism.

As regards the importance of sustainable mountain tourism, it very much resembles the general importance of tourism for development with a special emphasis on the local development of mountain areas. In terms of the social importance, “well-managed tourism can be an ally in preserving local culture and values, while at the same time improving the social conditions of the poor and local communities” (UNEP, 2008: 10). Regarding its economic significance, mountain tourism is on the rise (FAO, 2005: 1) and it offers a major source of foreign exchange in some



mountainous countries (Abisko Agenda, 2002: 61). Rough estimates claim that mountain tourism generates approximately 70-90 billion US dollars per year representing 15-20% of global tourism market (UNEP, 2008: 11), making mountain areas the second most popular destination after coastal regions (ICIMOD, 2007a: v).

Yet, unfortunately, a sizeable amount of revenue often ends up outside mountain areas (Abisko Agenda, 2002: 61). Moreover, mountain tourism does not always imply sustainable development of mountain areas because tourism itself is one of the least regulated industries (FAO, 2005: 2). It is also disputable whether “any increase in alternative livelihoods within mountain regions will automatically contribute to the sustainability of mountain communities” (Abisko Agenda, 2002: 25).

Hence, in order to ensure that tourism is being developed in mountain areas in a sustainable manner, several principles should be followed. As Lama and Sattar (2004: 112) argue, there are four major principles focusing specifically on tourism in mountain areas:

- *“tourism should be one, and not the only, means of livelihood and economic development in diversified mountain economies;*
- *the benefits and opportunities arising from mountain tourism must flow consistently and in adequate proportions to mountain peoples;*
- *the impacts of tourism on biodiversity and cultural diversity must be well-documented, minimized, and managed, and a portion of tourism revenue reinvested in conservation and restoration of bio-resources, cultural heritage and sacred sites;*
- *mountain peoples must play an active and responsible role in planning and carrying out mountain tourism, supported by other stakeholders and networks, by government policies and actions, and by technical and capacity building assistance.”*

In addition, according to ICIMOD (2007a: 33), sustainable mountain tourism should:

- *“make optimal use of environmental resources that constitute a key element in tourism development, maintaining essential ecological processes and helping to conserve natural resources and biodiversity;*
- *respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserve their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values, and contribute to intercultural understanding and tolerance;*
- *ensure viable, long-term economic operations, provide socioeconomic benefits to all stakeholders that are fairly distributed – stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services for host communities – and contribute to poverty alleviation.”*

It is important to note that sustainable mountain tourism does not refer to one specific activity, but on the contrary, it embraces

*“any tourism activity that takes place in mountain areas in a sustainable way and includes all tourism activities for which mountains manifest a comparative advantage such as trekking, mountaineering, white water rafting, cultural tourism, and pilgrimages”* (ICIMOD, 2007a: 20).

Hence, sustainable mountain tourism includes wide range of activities and therefore is a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon. Also, its scope varies according to the number of tourists, the size of tourist businesses, domestic/international tourism demand, accessibility and popularity of tourist destinations etc. As per a study conducted by the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP, 2008: 12), mountain tourism can be divided into three categories related to:

- 1) land-based adventure activities that can occur both in summer and winter such as cycling, mountain biking, quadbiking, horseback riding, canyoneering as well as to lesser extent rock climbing, ice climbing, hang gliding and caving;
- 2) freshwater-based recreational activities such as river tours, canoeing sailing, windsurfing, kite surfing, kayaking, rafting and freshwater fishing;
- 3) snow-dependent recreation activities associated with snowfall season and higher alpine areas such as cross country, downhill and glacier skiing, heli-skiing, snow scootering, snowboarding, tobogganing, snowshoe walking and sledding.

Another study made by the ICIMOD (2007a), focused predominantly on the Himalayan region, outlines three most important forms of mountain tourism based on the character of visitors. These are: tourism for free independent travellers, organized groups of tourists and mountaineers. A distinctive feature of the third group is their sole interest in climbing, while the first and second groups are interested in other types of activities related to local culture as well (ICIMOD, 2007a: 20). In addition, it must be highlighted that mountain tourism is not focused solely on international visitors. On the contrary, “domestic tourism...dominates over international tourism in most mountain regions” (Godde et al. 2000: 6). Hence, activities of domestic inhabitants such as short-term recreation, health tourism or pilgrimages should not be neglected.

## Chapter 3: Policies towards sustainable mountain tourism

---

Building on the knowledge outlined in the previous chapters, the main aim of this chapter is to examine the policy setting related to sustainable mountain tourism. After characterizing the key stakeholders, this chapter seeks to investigate the relevant policy measures for sustainable mountain tourism. The outlined framework of appropriate policy actions serves as a guide for policy-makers. In addition, several examples of good practices in sustainable mountain tourism are provided at the end of the chapter.

### *3.1 Relevant policy actors*

There is a wide range of relevant policy actors that are directly or indirectly involved in the process of mountain tourism development. As proposed in the Abisko Agenda (2002: 27), five levels of governance can be distinguished: “i) global institutions; ii) national governments; iii) regional governance and provincial governments; iv) nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society; and v) local governments”.

Examining the global governance level, important actors are mainly international tourism organizations such as the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) together with other global institutions promoting sustainable development such as the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) or the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (Lama & Sattar, 2002: 3). Worth mentioning are also regionally-based funding agencies such as the Inter-American Development Bank and the Asian Development Bank, as well as agencies for development cooperation of donor states (Abisko Agenda, 2002: 28). In addition, several notable global initiatives in the field of tourism were developed that are aimed at mainstreaming sustainability into tourism and other related policies. Worth mentioning is the “Sustainable Tourism – Eliminating Poverty” programme (ST-EP), which was launched in 2002 by the UNWTO (Beyer et al., 2007: 33).

National, regional and provincial governmental levels are decisive stages where policies concerning sustainability and tourism are designed. Yet, the government’s approach to sustainable tourism considerably varies among countries and is influenced by factors such as “the extent to which genuine democratization has occurred...[or] the level of sophistication of more centrally

organized governments” (Abisko Agenda, 2002: 29). Decentralization of the governing power to authorities at the local level should in theory ensure greater sustainability and empowerment of the local communities. Yet in practice, it is rather the other way around because, as Lynch and Maggio (2000: 29-30) note, it is rare that host communities in mountainous regions possess decision-making power. Moreover, financial mechanisms and laws ensuring property rights or promoting sustainable development are often lacking (Lynch & Maggio, 2000: 2), and hence the bargaining power of local communities is rather limited.

Nongovernmental organizations and civil society are also essential for approaching sustainable local development in the tourism sector. Even though they are usually not directly involved in decision-making, they constitute an important advocacy group voicing the interests and needs of indigenous mountain inhabitants. However, it must be noted that this is mostly the case in developed countries, where initiatives empowering mountain people are recognized by policy-makers to a greater extent (Abisko Agenda, 2002: 30).

In addition to the policy actors at the above mentioned levels of governance, tourism providers from the private sector, host communities and tourists themselves are important actors in the tourism sector too. As Godde et al. (2000: 7-9) point out, their motivation might be different; ranging from an economic gain, improved local well-being or respecting indigenous traditions to the interest in the region’s natural environment and culture and escaping hectic lifestyle in the city. The short-term interests of tourists based on demands for high-quality and cheap services “rarely meet the demands for long term viability” (Godde et al. 2000: 8) desired by local communities. As a result, these conflicting goals may lead to an unsustainable situation where the regulation of tourism through appropriate public authorities is necessary.

This is the reason why the state, a key policy actor, plays a critical role in determining the tourism setting in a particular country. This notion is expressed in several studies (Godde et al., 2000; Harrison, 2001; FAO, 2005; UNEP & UNWTO, 2005). Moreover, there are additional arguments confirming the importance of governmental action in achieving sustainable tourism. The tourism industry has many facets, is very fragmented and may cause negative public externalities related to natural environment or cultural heritage (UNEP & UNWTO, 2005: 3). Hence, as a particular government is in charge of the policy setting and has a power to set rules and regulations, it is obvious that its key role is to coordinate the tourism industry and guard the principles of sustainability. For this reason, “there is a clear need for governments to take a leading role if truly

significant progress is to be achieved in making tourism more sustainable” (UNEP & UNWTO, 2005: 3).

### ***3.2 Policy framework***

In light of the previous chapter, national governments seem to play a key role in designing and implementing policies related to sustainable mountain tourism. As the study of the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) highlights, “it is action at the country level that is vital for sustainable tourism in mountain regions. Only countries have the power to build capacities, implement national strategies, develop policies and pass laws that will create conditions in which tourism can work sustainably and benefit local communities” (FAO, 2005: 3). There is also a different, more pragmatic perspective of the importance of governmental action: “Since sustainability has a long term horizon and is costly, it will never be obtained by market forces alone; there is a need for a vision and strategy, with persistence and political commitment” (CoR, 2006: 160). For these reasons, and also for further purposes of the case study, the following text will be predominantly dealing with policy actions at the level of national governments.

The UNWTO has identified five **tasks of a government** that are essential for tourism development as follows:

- government “establishes a framework within which the private and public sectors can cooperate;
- it legislates and regulates to protect the environment and cultural heritage;
- it constructs the infrastructure;
- it develops training and education for tourism;
- and it formulates overall policy and plans for tourism development.” (Harrison, 2001: 34)

In the context of developing countries, the effective role of government consists of an additional task, which is to consider and include the needs of the poor in tourism planning (Scheyvens, 2011: 150). Yet, as Harrison (2001: 34) points out, it is disputable whether governments in least developed countries are able to sufficiently carry out these tasks.

As tourism is a cross-cutting sector with many horizontal and vertical linkages, an appropriate policy is a “whole-of-government” approach to tourism planning and development (OECD, 2010: 9). In addition, involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the design of tourism strategy is of great

importance (OECD, 2010: 9). As Lynch and Maggio (2000: 43) argue, “tourism planning works better when it involves collaborative frameworks that include local community groups as well as external supporting agencies”. However, it must be noted that tourism, being a multi-faceted and uncertain industry, represents a challenge for planning and predicting impacts in the long run (Godde et al., 2000: 20).

Moving away from the general policy setting to more concrete policy measures and actions, the basic concept of sustainable tourism should be recalled. As was already mentioned, sustainable tourism does not represent a specific form of tourism but rather an overarching concept. Hence, it is argued that “appropriate policy strives to enhance sustainability of all forms of tourism” (UNEP & UNWTO, 2005: 2). This task however seems to be too general and wide-ranging, and therefore it is narrowed down to the following steps:

1. Achieving policy goals
2. Fulfilling conditions
3. Implementing policy instruments

Recalling the goals of sustainable tourism developed by UNEP and UNWTO (2005: 18-19) that were mentioned in subchapter 1.4, twelve **goals** of policy aiming at the enhancement of the economic, environmental and social aspects of tourism should be outlined: economic viability, local prosperity, employment quality, social equity, visitor fulfilment, local control, community well-being, cultural richness, physical integrity, biological diversity, resource efficiency as well as environmental purity.

Importantly, several **conditions** need to be fulfilled by policy in order to develop tourism in a sustainable manner. As outlined by GTZ (1999: 17), fulfilment of “framework” conditions is necessary for success in sustainable tourism. Three groups of these conditions can be distinguished. The first group constitutes the fundamental framework conditions, which includes “presence of basic transportation infrastructure, simple immigration and currency regulations, personal safety for the tourist, relatively low health risks and protection of touristic sights against destruction or dilapidation” (GTZ 1999: 17). The second group is formed by the economic policy framework conditions that are mainly connected to entrepreneurial environment, provision of information and training possibilities. Framework conditions for ecological and socially sustainable tourism form the third group related to environmental legislation or property rights of local communities. A clear idea

about the fulfilment of all framework conditions and a brief assessment of the institutional setting in a particular country are integral parts of a successful policy analysis (GTZ 1999: 18).

Furthermore, there are several policy tools for fostering sustainability. The study on sustainable tourism by UNEP & UNWTO (2005) proposes thirteen **instruments** for the disposal of governments. These instruments do not exclude each other and can be grouped according to their main purpose as follows (UNEP & UNWTO, 2005: 71-124):

*-Measurement instruments:*

1. Sustainability indicators and monitoring
2. Identifying the limits of tourism

*-Command and control instruments*

3. Legislation, regulation and licensing
4. Land use planning and development control

*-Economic instruments*

5. Taxes and charges
6. Financial incentives and agreements

*-Voluntary instruments*

7. Guidelines and codes of conduct
8. Reporting and auditing
9. Voluntary certification
10. Voluntary contributions

*-Supporting instruments*

11. Infrastructure provision and management
12. Capacity building
13. Marketing and information services

The above outlined policy instruments together with previously mentioned goals, conditions and governmental tasks form a policy framework, which indicates an appropriate policy for the development of sustainable tourism. This policy framework summarized in Appendix no.1 serves as a “checklist” for planners and managers of sustainable tourism at the national and sub-national levels, who wish to contribute to sustainable tourism in a particular region. The policy framework will be also utilized for the purposes of the practical part of the thesis - the case study.

To sum up, it is clear that the governmental policy should strive to promote sustainable tourism in a country even though it is a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon. The policy framework presented above contains five basic governmental tasks, twelve policy goals, three groups of framework conditions and thirteen policy instruments.

For an overall and summarizing assessment of the governmental policy, two approaches of governments to tourism policy - passive and active, and four different ways of governmental involvement in the tourism sector development that are illustrated in the *Table 2* can be distinguished, taking into account the governmental performance in tasks, goals, conditions and instruments.

Passive	Active
<b>Mandatory</b> Usually legislative, e.g. employment of foreign nationals; investment incentives; air service agreements	<b>Managerial</b> Sets objectives and gives organizational/ legislative support, e.g. facilitating employment of foreign nationals, investment incentives (via Tourist Development Bank); charter agreements
<b>Supportive</b> For example, approval of hotel associations or tourist boards; training courses, e.g. in management	<b>Developmental</b> Government directly involved in tourism industry, e.g. for ideological reasons or where private sector unwilling/unable to invest. Government-run training courses in tourism

Source: Jenkins and Henry (1982: 501–504).

**Table no. 2:** The involvement of government in tourism sector (Harrison, 2001: 34)

In addition to the general policy framework promoting sustainable tourism, governments in mountainous countries should take into account the specific requirements of sustainable tourism in mountain areas. First and foremost, proper planning, together with the participation of local communities is necessary for sustainability of the entire policy. In the words of the UNEP and UNWTO study (2005: 126), “one key to more sustainable tourism is to work in effective partnerships within local destinations. It is at this local level that much of the necessary planning, networking, capacity building and information delivery occur, and where tourism needs to be effectively integrated into local sustainable development”.

According to Lama and Sattar (2002: 15-17), taking into account the unique but also the extremely vulnerable mountain environments, governments should strive to approach mountain tourism in the long-term perspective. Accordingly, as proposed by Lama and Sattar, five to ten year plans for sustainable mountain tourism together with regional and local action plans should be



developed in cooperation with local communities. Such plans should be aimed at “spreading visitors throughout the area in order to share opportunities for benefits and to minimize impacts” (Lama and Sattar, 2002: 15), taking into consideration the full economic and environmental costs and benefits for mountain areas. Moreover, a portion of revenues from tourism should be devoted to conservation and restoration. Plan for sustainable mountain tourism should count mainly on domestic and regional tourism markets (Lama and Sattar, 2002: 16). In addition, locally-based institutions promoting gender-balanced participatory planning should be established so that all relevant tourism stakeholders can be involved in the preparation stages of the plans (Lama and Sattar, 2002: 16-17; ICIMOD, 2007a: 28).

Besides properly designed, implemented and monitored plans of sustainable mountain tourism, tourism services should be provided by members of local mountain communities, as far as possible. This would help establish links between tourist spending and local products/services and retain tourism profit in the local area (ICIMOD, 2007a: 28). In this regard, small or medium scale enterprises owned by local inhabitants should be promoted and supported by governmental financial and technical assistance, because they can directly benefit local communities and are in worse market position in comparison to larger companies and business federations (GTZ 1999: 18).

For a final remark, as mountain ranges are often located in border areas, promoting trans-boundary cooperation has a significant potential in boosting tourism development and making remote areas more accessible (Lama and Sattar, 2002: 16).

### ***3.3 “Good practice” examples***

Having examined the tourism policy framework in general terms, concrete examples of “good practices” illustrate supplementary policy actions that enhance sustainable mountain tourism. There are plenty of interesting and innovative initiatives from all over the world. Yet it may be argued that mountain areas are different and incomparable, varying from huge ski resorts in European Alps to “horse-back riding among the nomads of Central Asia” (Lama & Sattar, 2002: 4). Therefore, as Lama and Sattar (2002: 4) note, “it is useful to recognize commonalities in mountain issues when looking for other mountain tourism experiences from which to learn, while it is important to understand differences when prescribing actions”.

Being aware of both commonalities and differences in the natural, economic, cultural and socio-political context, this sub-chapter does not seek to be prescriptive. On the contrary, it only attempts

to provide brief “tasting” of interesting and innovative actions from various countries that have the potential to be transferred elsewhere. Moreover, these “good practices” will be later applied in the case study, where their potential for transferability in the context of Tajikistan will be discussed.

The promising concept of **community-based tourism** (CBT), “a type of tourism that is owned and managed by the local community” (Baktygulov & Raeva, 2010: 2), is a good example of policy action that is in line with sustainable mountain tourism principles. A “good practice” can be identified in Kyrgyzstan, where CBT has been implemented since 2000 with the support of the Swiss Association for International Cooperation, Helvetas, as well as local communities. Starting in one village, currently eighteen CBT organizations are spread all over Kyrgyzstan, being associated with Kyrgyz Community-Based Tourism Association (KCBTA).

Their main activity is to provide locally-based services such as home-stays, trekking, guided tours or handicrafts production (Baktygulov & Raeva, 2010: 2). In this way, tourists have an opportunity to experience proper life in the mountains and meet local people. CBT also benefits local communities, because it generates income that goes directly to local service providers (ZOI, 2012:115). Moreover, CBT abides the principles of sustainability and hence promotes local development in the long-run. As the report prepared by the non-governmental organization ZOI Environmental Network reveals, environmental issues are regarded through the waste management programme, the use of renewable energy or the investment of 5-20% of the profit made by local communities to the conservation of environment (ZOI, 2012: 115). Even though the state is not directly involved in CBT, according to Baktygulov and Raeva (2010:2), it generally recognizes tourism as an important sector of economy which facilitates favourable conditions for tourism development.

On the other hand, Baktygulov and Raeva also point out that several limitations hampered the realization of the full potential of CBT in the country at the beginning, which later had to be improved by CBT organizations, together with the help of Helvetas. The key obstacles were lack of sufficient knowledge and skills to develop and provide adequate tourism services, very limited information about CBT products, the lack of financial resources among local inhabitants and poorly developed physical infrastructure (Baktygulov & Raeva, 2010:2). These problems should hence be avoided in other countries that are willing to implement CBT successfully.

**Cultural and heritage routes** are becoming increasingly popular and often successfully merge cultural and nature-based tourism. Long tradition of cultural routes can be observed in Europe,

where this initiative was launched in 1987 with the aim of cross-border cooperation to preserve the cultural and natural heritage, strengthen the European cultural identity, and facilitate dialogue and mutual exchange among European countries (CoR, 2006: 108). Managed by the Council of Europe (CoE), 29 theme-based routes have been established, including routes in mountain areas such as Santiago di Compostela pilgrim route or Pyrenean Iron route (CoE, 2012). Staying in Europe but moving from international to national action, an interesting program “Cultural Routes of Switzerland” has been implemented by ViaStoria, Centre of Transport History under the University of Bern and mandated by the state. This program has an aim to capitalize on the routes of historical importance across the county and create added value in these areas (ViaStoria, 2012).

More importantly, this program is underway replication in the Himalayas by the ICIMOD that tries to implement the Swiss experience through the pilot project of the “Himalaya Heritage Routes” in the Kailash Sacred Landscape Region of Nepal (Shrestha, 2010). This pilot project is a part of the wider project that should maintain the thousand years old trade route between India and China passing through Nepal and Tibet. This Himalayan heritage is nowadays endangered by modern construction projects and hence its restoration has a potential to safeguard valuable historical trail as well as benefit local inhabitants living in the region (Shrestha, 2010: 5-7).

Yet the bigger part of the work still remains undone because as Shrestha (2010: 6) points out, the major Trans-Himalayan Heritage Routes need to be identified and promoted, walking trails as well as historical monuments on the way need to be reconstructed and local people should be gradually more involved in the provision of the tourism services. Moreover, Shrestha argues that the current infrastructure of the Himalaya resembles “rapid post-war infrastructure development in the European Alps” (2010: 4). Therefore the governments of participating countries should develop a legislation similar to the Swiss “Federal Law on the Protection of Nature and Cultural Heritage” in order to overcome negative impacts.

## **PART II: Case study of Tajikistan**

### **Chapter 4: Contextual background**

---

The policy towards sustainable mountain tourism can be analyzed only in the context of a particular country. Therefore, this chapter seeks to provide background information about Tajikistan. At the outset, the characteristics of Tajikistan's land, people, brief historical overview and a synopsis of its current political and socio-economic situation are provided. Later on, the country's assets and obstacles with regard to tourism development are examined. Finally, in the last part of the chapter, the general tourism policy is described together with its institutional framework. All in all, knowledge offered in this chapter provides a foundation for better understanding Tajikistan's real potential to develop sustainable tourism in mountain areas.

#### ***4.1 Country profile***

Tajikistan is a landlocked country in the Central Asia that covers an area of approximately 143 000 km<sup>2</sup> and is famous mainly for its mountainous character. Mountains occupy about 93% of the country's total surface (MFA, 2009a: 1; Kokaisl et al., 2007: 195), and more than half of the country is situated in the altitude higher than 3000 meters (Abdullaev & Akbarzadeh, 2010: 2).

Pamir – a large high-altitude plateau located in the eastern part of the country – is geographically the largest mountain range in Tajikistan with the country's highest mountain, the “peak of Ismail Somoni” (former Communism Peak), which is 7495 meters high (MFA, 2009a: 1). Besides Pamir, the Turkistan, Zarafshan and Gissar mountain ranges together with the Fann mountains are located in the western and central part of Tajikistan. These mountains separate two Tajik lowland areas – Fergana valley situated in the North and Kofarnichon and Vakhsh river valleys in the South (Kokaisl et al., 2007: 195).



**Figure no. 3:** The landscape of Tajikistan ranging from valleys (light brown) to high mountains (dark brown), (Geoatlas, 2012)

The country is located between two main rivers of Central Asia, northern Syr Daria and southern Amu Darya, which merges Panj and Vakhsh rivers in its upper part (MFA, 2009a: 1). Tajikistan is the main source of water in the region – water in rivers, together with snow, ice and glaciers of the high mountains represents more than 60% of all Central Asian water resources (Abdullaev & Akbarzadeh, 2010: 2-3). The climate in the majority of the country is continental, with temperatures ranging from -20 Celsius degree in January to 30 Celsius degrees in July, depending on the altitude (Abdullaev & Akbarzadeh, 2010: 2-3). In valleys in the south-western part of the country, the climate is rather subtropical (Kokaisl et al., 2007: 195). Fauna and flora of Tajikistan can be described as diverse and very rich in biodiversity; forests account for 3% of the country’s area (MFA, 2009a: 1).

In 2009, the country had a total population of 7.5 million inhabitants who were concentrated mainly in valleys with lower altitudes (90% of inhabitants) and rural areas (73% of inhabitants)

(Abdullaev & Akbarzadeh, 2010: 6-7). Tajikistan is a multiethnic state. According to the census from 2000, people living in Tajikistan are predominantly Tajiks (approximately 80%), followed by Uzbeks (15%), Russians (1%), Kyrgyz (1%) and others (Abdullaev & Akbarzadeh, 2010: 6-7).

Tajiks differ from other ethnic groups in Central Asia in their language and ancestry, which do not have Turkic roots. Tajik language belongs to the Indo-European family of languages and is closely related to Farsi spoken in Iran and Dari spoken in Afghanistan (Abdullaev & Akbarzadeh, 2010: 6). Yet Tajik ethnic group itself is very diverse, embracing many smaller tribes such as Yagnobi in the Yaghnob and Zerafshan valleys, or the Pamiri Tajiks, living in Pamir (MFA, 2009: 5). Hence, in practice different Tajiks speak their own dialect and Russian language that remained in the country from the Soviet Union times is commonly used as “lingua franca” for communication among various ethnic groups (Abdullaev & Akbarzadeh, 2010: 6).

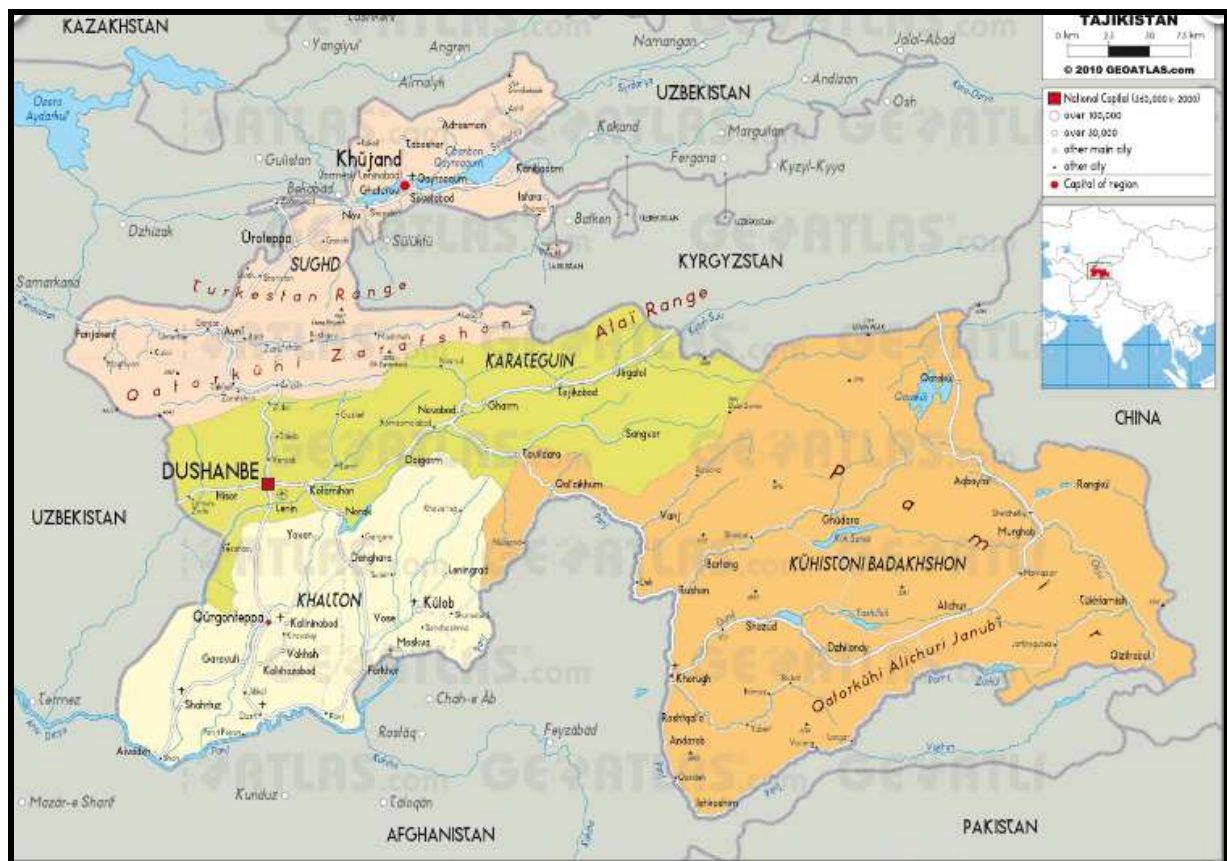
In addition, ethnic Tajiks distinguish one another according to regional affiliation and call themselves with names such as Panshiri, Darwazi etc. (Centlivres & Centlivres-Demont, 1997: 11). As Centlivres and Centlivres-Demont explain, “Soviet[s] ... reduced and integrated Persian- and Iranian- speaking groups into the bosom of the Tajik whole” (1997: 5). This is the reason why Tajik national identity lacks clarity and is more ambiguous other ethnic groups in the region (Centlivres & Centlivres-Demont, 1997: 11). In addition, it should be noted that ethnic Tajiks are present not only within the country. Because of historical reasons and huge economic out-migration, around 5.5 million ethnic Tajiks live in Afghanistan, 1.3 million in Uzbekistan and 1 million people work in Russia. As regards religion, 85% of Tajik inhabitants are Sunni Muslims (Abdullaev & Akbarzadeh, 2010: 6-7).

As descendants of East Iranian tribes who settled in ancient Bactria and Sogdiana in 7<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> century BC (MFA, 2009a: 7), Tajik ancestors are said to inhabit Central Asia before all other nationalities in the region (Sahadeo & Zanca, 2007: 16). Tajik history is closely linked to the “Persian Empire”, the Sasanian era and Zoroastrian religion, which was diminished with the rise of Islam (Sahadeo & Zanca, 2007: 18). After the Arab conquest, the Samanid family took over the ruling power at the end of the first millennium, and strengthened Persian language and culture along with Islamic faith. Bukhara became the great centre of Islamic civilization (Sahadeo & Zanca, 2007: 20). Yet, at the turn of the millennium, Iranian groups were continuously conquered by Turkic tribes and those who were not Turkicized were pushed to mountainous regions surrounding Samarkand, Bukhara and Zeravshan valley. This part of Central Asia later became part of the Emirate of

Bukhara (Bergne, 2007: 3). Later in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, after the agreement of Russia and Britain to divide Pamir along the river Panj, the right part of this mountain range was attached to the Emirate of Bukhara while the left part of Pamir was assigned to Afghanistan (Kokaisl et al., 2007: 20). The former eastern part of the old Emirate of Bukhara thus corresponds to the territory of the Soviet Republic of Tajikistan that was established in 1929 under communist rule, as well as to areas of recent Tajikistan established in 1991 after the fall of the Soviet Union (Djalili et al., 1997: 3).

Tajikistan, with its Iranian heritage and Soviet legacy, experienced the most difficult years after becoming independent in 1991. As a result of power disputes among various regional clans, a civil war broke out in 1992 and had been causing immense economic and social losses for five consecutive years (Kokaisl et al., 2007: 209). The situation was stabilized after Tajikistan's president Emomali Rahmon consolidated power in his hands in 1999, and subsequently strengthened the rule of law, secured protection of civil rights and proclaimed to undertake a comprehensive structural reform of the national economy. However, his efforts to introduce structural reforms and liberalization of the economy were unsuccessful. Moreover, the authoritarian government was not adequately committed to the principles of democracy (Gleason, 2003: 82-98). Therefore, even though the country was "gradually recovering from its war wounds" (Abdullaev & Akbarzadeh, 2010: 34), the transition to market-based economy and democracy was still not accomplished (Gleason, 2003: 98).

The country is nowadays divided into several administrative units: four provinces (out of which one is autonomous), a capital city and seventy-four districts (Gleason, 2003: 95). The governance in the country is to some extent decentralized. The central government has full and direct control only over the capital city, Dushanbe. Other administrative units have certain degree of local self-governance as far as their budgets and provision of local services is concerned, yet the State Tax Committee is in charge of the collection of state taxes. In addition, Pamir has the special status of an autonomous region and is administered by the province "Gorno Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast" (GBAO) (Gleason, 2003: 95).



**Figure no. 4:** The administrative division of Tajikistan- Sughd province in pink, province belonging to capital city Dushanbe in green, Khatlon province in beige and autonomous province GBAO in orange (Geoatlas, 2012)

As a result of all negative circumstances, the current socio-economic situation in the country is worse than during the former Soviet Union period, and Tajikistan belongs to the world poorest counties (Gleason, 2003: 82). “The virtual collapse of economy and ensuing large-scale unemployment” (Abdullaev & Akbarzadeh, 2010: 36) force Tajik inhabitants to earn money abroad. Labour migration is therefore a very common livelihood strategy in Tajikistan – remittances represent around 31% of the country’s annual GDP, which makes Tajikistan rank first in the share of remittances as a percentage of GDP (World Bank, 2012: 2). Even though remittances bring significant financial resources into the economy, high social costs and the loss of productive population must be considered as well (Abdullaev & Akbarzadeh, 2010: 37).

Important source of livelihood in Tajikistan is predominantly subsistence agriculture, however the national economy benefits mainly from the production of cotton and aluminium. Despite its huge



hydro energy potential and sizable deposits of metals and minerals such as gold, antimony, lead or zinc; the country does not fully exploit these resources because of its isolation and underdeveloped infrastructure (Abdullaev & Akbarzadeh, 2010: 4). Notable financial sources come from foreign development assistance and barter trade with neighbouring states (Gleason, 2003: 83), which culminates in the import of oil and gas from Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan in exchange for hydro energy (Abdullaev & Akbarzadeh, 2010: 4).

#### 4.2 Tourism assets

Using the definition from the theoretical part of the thesis, which implies that sustainable mountain tourism embraces “activities for which mountains manifest a comparative advantage” (ICIMOD, 2007a: 20), the aim of this subchapter is to analyze the potential range of activities in Tajikistan.

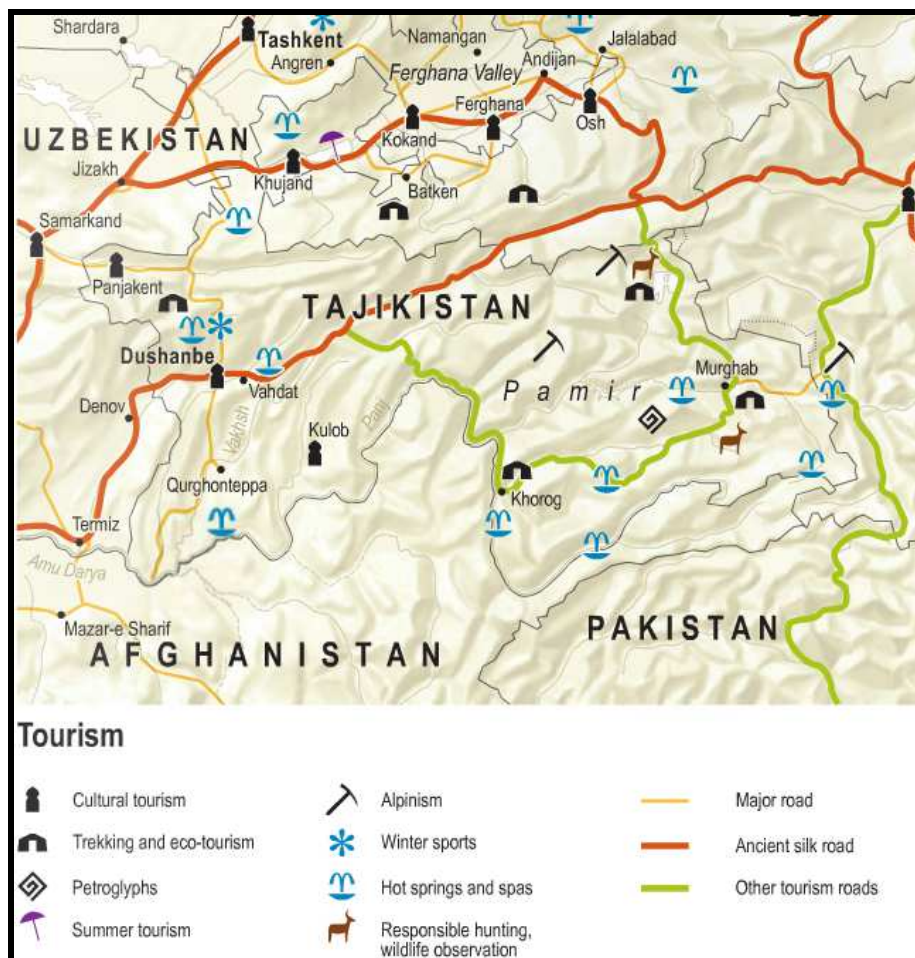


Figure no. 5: The map of tourism assets in Tajikistan (ZOI, 2012: 67)

The following text offers a review of the most important tourism assets of the country based on its natural, historical and cultural resources. However, it should be noted that this review also includes the personal observations of the author of this thesis, and hence the selection of tourism assets may, to some extent, be subjective and not exhaustive. Some of these assets are illustrated in *Appendix 2*.

As already mentioned, 93% of Tajikistan’s area is covered by mountainous landscape. Hence, the biggest tourism assets of the country are mountains with many distinct natural and man-made features. Most attractive locations are mainly the Pamir and Fann Mountains (ZTDA, 2012), nonetheless tourism could also capitalize on other natural sites as well as on several national parks (*Figure 6*).



**Figure no. 6:** The map of protected areas in Tajikistan (ZOI, 2012: 91)

Pamir, locally called “the roof of the world”, remained one of the least explored regions of the world. It offers high mountain peaks, picturesque and unspoiled wide valleys with crystal-clear

streams, and huge variety of rare wildlife animals such as the Marco Polo sheep, snow leopard or ibex (MFA, 2012). In the central part can be found the highest peak in former Soviet Union- the Peak of Ismoil Somoni (7494 meters); one of the world's largest glaciers – Federchenko Glacier; as well as one of the highest lakes on earth – lake Sarez (Hasanova, 2010e). Taking the unique character of this natural area into account, the need for its protection of was recognized in 2002 through the establishment of the Tajik National Park that occupies almost one tenth of the country's area (MFA, 2012; Hasanova, 2010e). Interestingly, this unique piece of Earth is since 2010 on the tentative list of UNESCO World Heritage in the “Natural” category and is expected to be acknowledged as a world natural heritage in 2012<sup>3</sup> (Hasanova, 2010e).

Pamir is an ideal place for hiking, mountaineering, kayaking, white-water rafting or other mountain activities. Besides the area of the Tajik National Park which is used also for mountain climbing (MFA, 2009a: 12), adventurous and extreme sports are practiced in the Muzkol Range in central Pamir, an unexplored and unclimbed tourism site with many unnamed peaks (MFA, 2012). Moreover, regulated hunting of wild animals (Abdullaev & Akbarzadeh, 2010: 4) and jeep tours are popular, especially among foreign tourists.

The Fann Mountains and the Zerafshan Valley located in northwestern Tajikistan, in close proximity to Dushanbe, are popular especially because of the possibilities for trekking, horse trekking and rock climbing. Additional highlights of this area besides mountain peaks are turquoise lakes such as the Iskandarkul, Allaudin or Marguzor lakes, wild rivers, rich fauna and flora, and the traditional lifestyle of local inhabitants which attracts tourists (MFA, 2012).

Other areas of Tajikistan such as the surroundings of Dushanbe (Varzob, Karatigh, Shirkent) or Zerafshan and Gissar ranges are suitable for hiking too (MFA, 2009a: 12). Worth mentioning are also the specially protected natural areas that occupy more than 22% of the country and offer unique natural ecosystems (MFA, 2009c: 2-3). Besides the largest protected area, i.e. Tajik National Park, Tajikistan has three nature reserves and 14 special reserved zones. The most famous “Beshai palangon” (“Tiger Bush”) Nature Reserve in southern Tajikistan, “Sari-hosor” Nature Park as well as other reserves represent places with unique and endangered ecosystems (Abdullaev & Akbarzadeh, 2010: 4).

Natural tourism assets in Tajikistan also include thermal spas and health resorts such as Garm Chashma, Khoja Obigarm or Chili Chor Chashma; that are commonly used for recreation and treatment predominantly by the domestic population (MFA, 2009c:2-3).

---

<sup>3</sup> This site stil remains at the tentative list as for 23<sup>th</sup> July 2012 (source: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/tj/>)

Besides natural assets, Tajikistan has a very rich historical heritage. Even though the former centres of Tajik culture – Bukhara and Samarkand – were assigned during the Soviet Era to Uzbekistan, there are several other sites significant for tourism. The Zerafshan Valley in the northwest of the country (close to the borders with Uzbekistan) embraces cultural and religious sites dating back to the age of the great “Silk Road” (ZTDA, 2012). These include the ancient city of Penjikent as well as the proto-urban site of Sarazm, which is the only Tajik locality inscribed on the World Heritage List<sup>4</sup>. Not far from the capital city is the Hisor Fortress – the former centre of Gissar valley – which is a part of the archaeological complex belonging to the Hisor Historic and Cultural Reserve (MFA, 2012). In addition, the northern Suhgd and the southern Khatlon provinces have also several sites with historical importance.

In addition to the already mentioned natural and historical tourism assets, Tajikistan’s pure richness is in its people. A positive notion was expressed already in 1906 by Snesyareff who described Tajiks as “sympathetic, kind and patient” (Bergne, 2007: 11). This friendly approach to strangers and the immense hospitality of Tajik people excellently contribute to the tourism attractiveness of the country. Moreover, local inhabitants represent the cultural heritage of the country because of their everyday lifestyle and the vivid preservation of traditions. Just to mention few key features, Tajiks are extremely family-based and still resilient to patterns of the globalized world – eating with hands or sleeping on the ground is a widespread practice in Tajikistan.

As Tajiks embrace diverse ethnic groups, their unique way of life, particularly noticeable amongst the inhabitants of remote mountainous regions, becomes a specific “trade article” in the tourism industry (Kokaisl et al., 2007: 252). Special attention of foreign visitors is directed mainly to local inhabitants of Pamir. According to the census from 1992, there were around 300 000 Pamir people (Kokaisl et al., 2007: 218). While Pamir ethnics related to Tajiks live mainly in the western part of the region, the eastern part is inhabited predominantly by Kyrgyz (Abdullaev & Akbarzadeh, 2010: 2). Mountain people in the GBAO areas are concentrated in *kishlaks* (villages). They live in small houses made out of mud and rocks, which differ from transportable yurts – traditional housing common in Kyrgyzstan. Yurts are used only in mountainous areas close to the borders with Kyrgyzstan with the considerable representation of Kyrgyz ethnic group (Kokaisl et al., 2007: 249-250). Pamir people

---

<sup>4</sup> Currently there are 16 cultural and natural sites of Tajikistan submitted on the tentative list of UNESCO (source: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/tj/>)

earn their living by cattle, sheep or yak grazing; self-subsistence farming or occasional work in Khorog – the centre of GBAO. Moreover, few of them have additional income from accommodating tourists or selling their products at local markets (Kokaisl et al., 2007: 246-254). For example, *kurut* – a small salty white ball made out of dried yogurt, and some other handmade products are even sold at the markets of the capital city Dushanbe. Notable market potential also lies in the knowledge of mountain people pertaining to healing methods, using special herbs or specific minerals such as mumio that are present only in Pamir. When talking about remote mountain communities, worth mentioning are also the Yagnobis. These direct descendants of old Tajik ancestors Sogdians inhabit the Yagnob valley and speak the distinct language of Sogdians (MFA, 2009a: 13-14).

Tourism in the country also capitalizes on the rich variety of traditions that are commonly preserved in many parts of the country. Worth noting are mainly traditional occasions that have religious or secular character and are widely celebrated in a festive atmosphere such as the International Women's Day (8<sup>th</sup> March), Independence Day (9<sup>th</sup> September), and the Zoroastrian New Year called *Navrus* (21<sup>st</sup> March). *Navrus* is widespread in the entire region – it is celebrated in Iran, Afghanistan and other Central Asian countries. It is a wonderful occasion for exploring traditional activities, costumes and meals of Tajik population during celebrations that last several days. Besides many cultural events such as concerts or dancing and singing performances in the cities; celebrating *Navrus* in rural areas is mainly an opportunity for meeting all family members and friends, cleaning houses and surroundings, killing goat, preparing the plate of sprouts or making *sumalak* – a brown paste made out of wheat sprouts and flour that is associated with the renewal of the nature. As Levi points out, “more important than eating *sumalak* is the collective process of making it” (2007:202). This may apply to all traditional habits – getting together and socializing is in general popular among Tajiks. Wearing the nicest traditional dress is also a feature of *Navrus*. Womens' costumes are usually bright, vivid, richly embroidered, and decorated with jewellery; mens' garments are simpler and less fancy, yet their belts are ornamented with silver buckles (MFA, 2012).

Last but not least, there are several distinct activities that are connected to the everyday life of Tajik people and can be attractive for prospective visitors. Wedding celebrations, Tajik national sport *Buzkashi*<sup>5</sup> or everyday's habits connected to tea-drinking or dining can be certainly counted as special tourism assets of the country.

---

<sup>5</sup> “Goat-dragging” (in Persian) takes place occasionally in a special designated places resembling football fields dugged into rocky terrain, while the main aim of the game is to deliver the body of the dead goat from one side of the field to another as the first among hundreds of horse-riders.

After careful and in-depth analysis of tourism assets in Tajikistan, it can be stated that this predominantly mountainous country has a good potential to develop many activities of sustainable mountain tourism, ranging from nature-related adventures to cultural, historical and ethnographical tourism. Since 93% of the country is classified as mountainous, tourism in mountain areas should not be limited only to activities focused on natural areas by confusing sustainable mountain tourism with eco-tourism. The tourism sector should promote all local tourism resources through integrated tourism approach.

Besides all tourism assets mentioned above, the current stable situation in the country contributes to the good prospects of the tourism industry as well. As Johnson (2006: 190) points out, Tajik people prefer to live peacefully because having the “post-war syndrome”. There is a “great fatigue among the population with anything that came close to confrontation and conflict”.

### ***4.3 Tourism obstacles***

In the light of the rich natural, historical and cultural assets of Tajikistan, the tourism sector has a potential to diversify the national economy and benefit livelihoods of local citizens. Yet there are several obstacles that hinder the development of the tourism industry. These obstacles are connected to the old-fashioned tourism practices, obsolete tourism infrastructure, lack of qualified tourism providers, limited entrepreneurial activity, insufficient provision of additional activities supporting tourism as well as other state deficiencies that might negatively affect future tourism development.

During the Soviet Era, the natural and cultural locations attracted many tourists, climbers and hunters mainly from other Soviet countries. As it was already mentioned in the theoretical part, the post-communist legacy can in itself be a limitation. This is because the policy of the Soviet Union was rather oriented towards heavy industries and did not provide flexible conditions and adequate investments in the tourism infrastructure (Hall, 1991: 11; Shaw, 1991: 140). Moreover, tourism was planned and administered centrally without any regards to the local communities. The scope of services was very narrow as well (ZTDA, 2012). As a result, Tajikistan as one of the former entities of the Soviet Union inherited rigid bureaucracies, inflexible economy with poor pro-market orientation, polluted environment, and inappropriate tourism infrastructure (Hall, 1991: 3, 53-78). The independence gained in 1991 did not bring necessary revival of the tourism industry because the

transformation of the country to market economy was heavily affected by the civil war. The war resulted not only in an economic decline, but more importantly it damaged the international image of Tajikistan and isolated it from the global tourism market. As a result, the tourism sector rapidly dropped at the end of millennium and in the following years its development has been rather stagnating because of insufficient financial support.

Presently, the tourism industry is recuperating at a slow pace. As the official document “National tourism development programme” from 2009 states, 80% of tourism facilities do not meet the basic requirements of a modern tourism industry (MFA, 2009d: 3). There are in total twelve tourism resorts in the country - while six are in the central province near Dushanbe, three are in the northern Sughd province, and three in GBAO. As for the tourism services, there are 21 tourism facilities and around 100 hotels in the entire country. Hence, there is already a small number of tourism facilities existent in the country, most of them being outdated and in desolate conditions (MFA, 2009d: 3).

In addition, the physical infrastructure with regard to transportation is also not sufficient. Roads connecting the capital city of Dushanbe with the northern Sughd province and GBAO are in rather bad conditions. Mountain passes are often closed for several months during winter season, making the northern and eastern parts of the country practically accessible only by plane (Abdullaev & Akbarzadeh, 2010: 3). Domestic transport by plane is not very frequent and there is a limited number of international flights into the country (MFA, 2009c: 3-4). There is no direct railway connection in Tajikistan. Even though one railway line links the northern and southern parts of Tajikistan, it has to traverse Uzbekistan territory, which is problematic because of the long distance and hostile relations between these two countries (Gleason, 2003: 87). Hence, in order to encourage tourism in both countries, the cooperation as regards tourism issues should be established and tourism should be promoted through the simplified visa requirements.

To sum up, insufficient physical infrastructure is the key obstacle for the successful development of tourism in the country and hence modernization of the accommodation facilities and transportation network is necessary.

Furthermore, besides technical and material obsolescence of the existent tourism base, modern tourism services require private capital and entrepreneurial activity that brings innovation and more flexibility in responding to the demand of tourists. Tajikistan, like other countries in Central Asia, claims to be in favour of liberalization, privatization and free trade. However, as Gleason (2003: 91)

notes, this claim is true with certain reservations. “Unsatisfactory arrangements regarding governmental subsidies, currency controls, interbank clearing, custom and tax incompatibilities...control over access to markets”, together with cumbersome paperwork are clear impediments for the development of a competitive and effective market. As the Index of the Economic Freedom<sup>6</sup> reveals, the biggest gaps of the country are in the areas of investment, finance, property rights freedom and corruption control. Especially the widespread corruption practices dramatically inhibit the overall progress of the country’s economy. Corruption is perceived as a pressing issue also by citizens. A survey of public opinion revealed that the corruption of public authorities belongs to the four worst problems of the country (Johnson, 2006: 191). In addition, high tax burden does not allow tourism organizations to invest in advertisement or promotional activities at domestic and foreign markets (MFA, 2009d: 3-4). On top of these drawbacks of public administration, ineffective coordination of various state bodies and other stakeholders involved in the tourism sector has led to an incoherent agenda and unnecessary bureaucracy.

A big limitation of tourism development in Tajikistan is the shortage of qualified providers of tourism services. Despite the fact that there are more than five institutions of secondary and higher education that have programs in the field of tourism, most graduates are not sufficiently qualified for the provision of modern tourism services as they have low level of professional and language skills (MFA, 2009d: 3-4). Hence the lack of proper educational and training opportunities gives rise to poor qualifications of potential employees or tourism entrepreneurs, leading to low quality of tourism services. Importantly, even though the usage of generally spoken Russian language is essential for visitors from other former Soviet Union countries, improving the usage of English language by the provision of tourism services will be necessary in order to attract broader international clientele.

Governmental activity should also be improved in terms of additional services that would attract and support tourists. First of all, the lack of state-funded advertisements limits the awareness of potential domestic and foreign clientele about the tourism possibilities in Tajikistan (MFA, 2009c: 3-4). “Tourism guidebooks, brochures and other advertising and information products are limited and

---

<sup>6</sup> The Index of Economic Freedom is the measured by the Heritage Foundation in ten aspects: freedom of property rights, freedom from corruption, freedom from government spending and fiscal, business, labor, monetary, trade, investment, financial freedom (<http://www.heritage.org>). Tajikistan is according to these indicators economically “mostly unfree” country and it is placed on the 129<sup>th</sup> position out of 179 ranked countries



the number does not satisfy the needs of even the diplomatic missions of the Republic abroad” (MFA, 2009d: 3).

Furthermore, poor provision of adequate and up-to-date information for non-native and non-Russian speaking tourists; rather narrow offer of supportive tourism materials such as maps or GPS applications; as well as limited demarcation of hiking routes make the access to several location of the country more difficult.

As regards visa requirements, the only exceptions from the visa duty are citizens of Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Visa procedure has been simplified since 2003 for the citizens of the European Union, United States of America and Japan, who can obtain tourist visa directly upon arrival at the airport, although a visa support letter is required (Travel Tajikistan, 2004). Moreover, the single cost for tourist visa which is the lowest among all Central Asia countries was introduced in 2010 (CYAST, 2010d). However, efforts to make the whole process more effective and tourist-oriented are constrained by additional bureaucratic requirements. In addition to visa, a time-consuming registration at the special office located in Dushanbe, Khorog or Khujand is required within three days of arrival. Moreover, a permit, ecological tax and trekking and high-altitude license are necessary for travelling outside the cities to specific mountain areas such as GBAO. The issuance of all necessary documents that can be, in some cases, administered by a tour company, may take several days (Travel Tajikistan, 2004).

An important issue concerning mountain tourism is personal safety. Unfortunately, Tajikistan, in this regard, does not have an adequate emergency system or a mountain rescue service that is capable of carrying out relief and rescue operations for tourists in need, and hence overcoming fatal accidents and tragedies (MFA, 2009c: 3-4)<sup>7</sup>. Hence, it is necessary to establish an effective rescue system for emergency situations, preferably in cooperation with tour operators.

Having analyzed the key obstacles of tourism in Tajikistan, additional state deficiencies that are either inherent in the state policy or are caused by external factors should be mentioned as well. First

---

<sup>7</sup> This issue is already being addressed by PECTA, Pamirs Eco-Cultural Tourism Association, which has proposed to set up tourist emergency fund by all tourism operators. According to PECTA, the safety of clients is a responsibility of companies that provide service. Moreover, “accidents undermine the image of the tourism sector and the country as a whole” (Lekarkin, 2010). As Lekarkin (2010) further reported, ensuring safety of mountain tourists through an appropriate mechanism should be interest not only of tourism operators but also of a state though. The possibilities for action include the creation of a hotline service and the single database that would be accessible for all interested sides – ministries, tour operators, air carriers and insurance companies. The governmental effort to address this issue has been so far related to the establishment of a coordinating body - tourism council, which should support the relief operations with the state’s defense machines such as helicopters for a certain fee. However, no substantial development in this issue can be currently identified.

of all, as Sievers (2003) argues, prospects for sustainable development in Central Asia are not very promising because “in aggregate, non-discursive, non-ambiguous and welcome reforms for sustainability in Central Asia are almost non-existent” (Sievers 2003: 195). Sievers warns, that all sorts of capital - natural, human, organizational as well as social - are being rapidly deteriorated and they are in a worse condition than during the Soviet Era. The reason is that even though the states proclaim the will to implement various reforms through drafting laws, programmes for development or action plans, in reality they do not adhere to the proclaimed ambitions. In words of Sievers, “despite great hope for the implementation of paper success, the bulk of such paper plans and laws finds very little real world application” (2003: 194). In addition, even if reforms aiming at sustainability are implemented, there is a danger that they will be offset by other, more harmful reforms in the same sector. One instance of this has been the establishment of natural reserves with the simultaneous degradation of existing ones (Sievers, 2003: 195). Hence, the notion of “false commitment to sustainability” should be taken into account by designing policies aiming at sustainable tourism.

One of the external limitations that might hinder tourism development is the fear of an insecure situation concerning the possibility of radical Islamization, which may negatively affect the tourism image of the country. According to Johnson (2006: 191-192), even though the process of Islamization of values has been progressing in Tajikistan, radical Islamist groups have so far attracted only a small number of Tajiks and hence there is no reason for fears. As she further argues, this process will rather go in a less frightening direction of “more cooperation and exchange with Muslim world, including Arab world” (Johnson, 2006: 196). In this regard, the cooperation of Tajikistan with historically close nations, Iran and Afghanistan, might become more important than its previous orientation towards Russia or other Central Asian states (Johnson, 2006: 196).

Interestingly, Johnson also mentions an ongoing “Tajikization” of the society through the nation-building policy of the state (2006: 191). On the one hand, this may be a good impetus for the state to renovate historical sites while building the national consciousness of citizens. Yet there is a danger that other national minorities in the country, such as the Uzbeks, may encounter difficulties, which would not be beneficial for the already tense relations between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Especially in this regard, it should be highlighted that the problematic Tajik-Uzbek relations have very negative impact on the tourism sector in both countries. As tourists prefer to visit Tajik mountains together with Uzbek cities of Samarqand and Bukhara, extensive visa requirements and complicated crossing

of the border, which is periodically closed and opened (Gleason 2003: 91) does not contribute to tourism development in the region.

Another external limitation of tourism development might be the relatively high probability of natural catastrophes in the area related to seismic activity, landslides, floods and avalanches as illustrated in *Figure 7*.



**Figure no. 7:** The map of natural hazards in Tajikistan (ZOI, 2012: 60)

## Chapter 5: Facilitating sustainable mountain tourism

---

Building on the contextual background of tourism in Tajikistan, the country's tourism policy is reviewed in this chapter with special regard to sustainable tourism in mountain areas. In the first step, relevant tourism stakeholders are described. Secondly, general tourism policy is examined through the national legislation, strategic planning and actual policy measures. Subsequently, the aspect of sustainability is analyzed through the utilization of the policy framework designed in the third chapter. The inclusion of mountainous specificities into the governmental policy is examined at this point as well. Last but not least, the description of innovative projects, initiatives and opportunities for knowledge sharing with partners from abroad are drafted at the end of this chapter.

### *5.1 Tourism stakeholders*

The main state body in charge of tourism policy in Tajikistan is the Committee for Youth Affairs, Sports and Tourism under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan (CYAST). This institution is responsible for implementing state policy in the field of youth, sport, tourism as well as ideology (CYAST, 2012a). As for the tourism development, CYAST is according to official information (CYAST, 2012) “committed to provide the best possible working conditions for all stakeholders active in the tourism sector” through facilitating a dialogue among stakeholders, promoting the country at domestic and foreign markets as well as licensing and certification activities.

However, as tourism is a wide-ranging sector of the economy, there are also different state bodies in charge of certain aspects of tourism development such as Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of the Republic of Tajikistan, State Committee on Investments and State Property Management of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Agency for Land Management, Geodesy and Cartography under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, local executive bodies at the level of regions as well as cities and districts (MFA, 2009c: 5). Hence, although there is an institution in charge of tourism development, tourism policy is very much fragmented and divided into jurisdictions of various state actors. Therefore, an improved coordination and communication is a precondition for an effective policy process.

Besides state actors, tourist organizations focused on community-based tourism such as the Mountain Societies Development Support Programme (MSDSP) and The Zerafshan Tourism

Development Association (ZTDA) exist in the country. These organizations seek to involve local communities into the tourism service provision through commercial activities such as home-stays, guided tours and others and therefore they are particularly beneficial for facilitating local development.

MSDSP was founded in 1993 by Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) in GBAO under the former name Pamir Relief and Development Programme, renamed to MSDSP in 1997. The main reason for the establishment of the programme was a sharp decline in the provision of public services by the state after the breakup of the Soviet Union, particularly in remote areas of Pamir (AKF, 2012). The community-based tourism support programme is a part of MSDSP's broader mission to mobilize local communities in Pamir for self-help programmes. Innovative feature of this programmes are village organizations that are facilitating participatory democracy and empowering local inhabitants. Community-based tourism functions through the village organizations, while the inhabitants of villages accommodate tourists and share their culture with them (GTZ, 2004: 14-15; AKF, 2012). An alternative to MSDSP in Zerafshan Valley, ZTDA, was established in 2008 with an aim to develop sustainable tourism in the areas through community-based tourism. Tourism services are provided by ZTDA in tour packages that combine mountain-based activities with exploration of local culture and traditions. Moreover, particular attention is given to the protection of the environment and capacity building of service providers – local families involved in the project (CYAST, 2012e).

In addition to state actors and tourism service providers, several private companies and tour operators are active in providing commercial tourist activities. According to CYAST (2010), 65 tourism agencies are officially registered in Tajikistan and all of them are predominantly oriented on nature-based tourism. Just to mention some of them, META, Tour De Pamir or Zurmich are available for tourists. Interestingly, the tourism company Sarez established by the state in 1991 in order to promote tourism in GBAO was not fully functional during 1990's due to political instability, yet since 2000 it has restarted its activities (CYAST, 2012b).

At the regional level, private tour operators as well as other tourist organizations are represented by the regional associations. Providers of tourism services in Pamir are associated in PECTA, Pamirs Eco-Cultural Tourism Association, which was established in Khorog where it also provides information about GBAO through the Information Centre. The Zerafshan Tourist Board (ZTB) based in Penjikent interconnects all tourism subjects active in Zerafshan Valley and at the same time runs a Tourist Information Centre (CYAST, 2012e). In addition, the Association of Guides that provides guiding and mountaineering services in GBAO was established in 2008 (CYAST, 2012b).

Besides country-based tourism stakeholders, several partner organizations are involved in the development of the tourism industry in Tajikistan. In addition to the Aga Khan Foundation, German Welthungerhilfe together with the European Centre for Eco and Agro Tourism from the Netherlands and other actors have implemented project of the European Commission “Strengthening Tourism Business Intermediary Organizations for Sustainable Economic Development” (EuropeAid, 2008). Furthermore, a German Agency for International Cooperation GIZ is active mainly in technical support of tourism development in Tajikistan through advisory services and coordination of an inter-actor dialogue. It also provides support to ZTDA in Zerafshan Valley (GIZ, 2012: 10). The Tajik branch office of the international organization Open Society Institute has set the development of the private tourism sector in Tajikistan as one of its priorities. Through the Centre for Tourism Development it tries to improve the provision of information to foreign tourism agencies and raise awareness about tourism issues among students and the broader public. The centre is mainly active in forming volunteer clubs for student-guides and organizing the national contest “Seven Wonders of Tajikistan” (OSI, 2010: 151).

## ***5.2 General tourism policy***

Despite the significant touristic potential, Tajikistan does not belong to the main players at the global tourism market. Even when looking only at the Central Asian region, Tajikistan is behind its neighbouring countries when it comes to tourism indicators (MFA, 2009c: 3). Nevertheless, according to official statistics, international tourism is gradually increasing – in 2008 the country was visited by 500 000 foreigners from 94 countries compared to 130 000 visitors from 60 countries in 2003. Interestingly, the estimates for the future predict the capacity of the tourism sector to increase to one million visitors per year (MFA, 2009c: 3). The majority of tourists come because of business or professional purposes (MFA, 2009d: 2-3).

Considering natural and other tourism assets and the growing number of tourists’ arrivals, tourism should be recognized by the government as an important sector of economy and thus put on the overall policy agenda. Some studies argue that tourism is addressed insufficiently by governmental policy due to a negligible contribution of the tourism industry to the overall national (ZTDA, 2008: 1). Yet the existence of legislation and strategic documents related to the tourism sector as well as undertaking several policy measures aimed at tourism development suggest the

opposite.

### **5.2.1 National legislation and strategic planning**

In terms of the legal framework directing the tourism sector in Tajikistan, the most influential is the Law no. 824 “on Tourism” (MFA, 2009b) from 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1999. This law defines the objectives of state tourism policy as follows:

- “1) to ensure citizens' rights to rest, freedom of movement and other rights by the commission of travel;
- 2) to ensure environmental protection;
- 3) to determine the annual list of natural, historical and cultural sites, including protected areas, while their visits should be conducted in accordance with the quota;
- 4) to develop the tourism industry, ensuring citizens' needs when making travel;
- 5) to develop international contacts in the field of tourism;
- 6) to manage natural and cultural heritage. The priority directions of state regulation of tourism activities are to support and develop the internal, inbound, social and economically active tourism.” (MFA, 2009b: 3)

In line with the objectives, the law defines the competencies of the central government and governmental authorities, the certification and licensing procedure, the rights and obligations of tour operators as well as the rights and obligations of tourists. The issue of sustainability is not directly mentioned by in the law, however the economic, environmental and social aspect of tourism are mentioned separately.

Key documents related to the development of tourism are the “Conceptual framework of tourism development in the Tajik Republic for the period 2009-2019” (MFA, 2009c) and the “National Program of the tourism development in the Tajik Republic for the period 2010-2014” (MFA, 2009d).

The former document, the conceptual framework for the long run, defines tourism development as “the formation of the modern tourism industry of the country” and provides general description of the state of tourism globally and in Tajikistan. Besides recognizing the potential of the tourism sector for the national economy, several limitations of the tourism industry are recognized and hence the document seems to be well-balanced and realistic. Importantly, it offers constructive solutions through outlining and elaborating on the following tourism policy targets:

- improvement of the national tourism infrastructure; while several tourism facilities are selected and various state bodies are entrusted to undertake this target;
- improvement of the general organization of the tourism industry and the provision of quality services;
- securing an effective promotion of national tourism products;
- provision of public funding and other policy measures to attract investments in tourism; and
- improvement of inter-agency coordination in the tourism sector.

Also ,worth mentioning is the proposed orientation of the tourism sector in Tajikistan divided into seven priority areas: health resort treatment and recreation; hiking, mountain sports and ecotourism; historical and cognitive and ethnographic tourism; business tourism; white water rafting; alpine skiing; foreign tourist hunting (MFA, 2009c: 2).

The second strategic document, “the National Program of tourism development for the period 2010-2014” includes a more concrete assessment of the tourism situation in the country. Based on the policy directions set in the long-term conceptual framework, this mid-term document gives a more substantial vision of the tourism policy steps for upcoming years. Besides defining key policy tasks that should be set in areas such as state regulation, marketing and promotion, tourism-related training and knowledge base, provision of information, safety of tourists or international cooperation; it also defines the funding system that should be mainly supported by the state budget and extra budgetary funds. Local authorities are responsible for the funding of tourism development at the regional level, including the promotion of their territories through organizing press tours (MFA, 2009c: 8).

This is however the only division of responsibilities available in the document. In general, neither the long-term conceptual framework nor the mid-term program identify policy actors responsible for the implementation of policy tasks. Moreover, specifies indicators, assessment methods, desired outcomes or methods of enforcement are lacking. Hence, even though the strategic documents appear to be well-structured and appropriately concrete with regard to the policy task, they fail to provide adequate information with regard to the implementation of tourism policy. This might lead to a danger, when the policy document is designed “pro-forma”, being only an official policy document without effective implementation.

### **5.2.2 Policy measures**

As already mentioned, the Tajik government has already undertaken some measures to improve



the performance of the tourism sector. In addition to the simplification of the visa procedure that is often reflected as the key achievement of the policy, ongoing actions are focused mainly on improvements in marketing, international cooperation and the expansion of flight connections.

Advertising and informing activities are undertaken predominantly through the participation at the well-known tourism exhibitions and fairs in Berlin (Germany), London (UK), Tokyo (Japan) and Tashkent (Uzbekistan) and others (CYAST, 2012f). Another area is the improvement of the quality of advertising and information products (MFA, 2009d: 2). Moreover, there are ongoing discussions about the development of the tourism industry at various seminars and conferences regularly held in Dushanbe (CYAST, 2011; Hasanova, 2010d).

The increase in the cooperation with several countries is notable from the fact that there are currently twelve ongoing agreements in the field of tourism (CYAST, 2012f). Most noteworthy bilateral agreement was settled between Tajikistan and Iran in 2010. This agreement should address the lack of skilled tourism personnel in the country, while Iran offered assistance with the training and the requalification<sup>8</sup> (Hasanova, 2010a). The bilateral cooperation with Egypt has been also launched in 2010, focusing mainly on the development of tourism infrastructure in Tajikistan (Hasanova, 2010c).

According to official information, there are four international airports in the country located in Dushanbe, Khujand, Kurgan-Tube and Kulyab (MFA, 2009c: 3). The majority of flights operate from Dushanbe to Europe, China, Middle East, Russia, Eastern and South-western Asia through Turkish airlines, Tajik Air and Somon Air (CYAST, 2012d). Currently, regular flights have been launched by the national air carrier Tajik Air<sup>9</sup> that indicates positive development in this area. The expansion of international flights' offer is an important policy step in order to enhance tourism in the country.

Recent developments in the tourism sector imply that there are policy efforts to enhance tourism in the country. Yet, as far as these efforts were reviewed, they are not very much concerned either with sustainability issues or with specificities of mountain areas. Hence, the subsequent chapter

---

<sup>8</sup> Tajikistan and Iran have signed a Memorandum of understanding on tourism cooperation for 2010-2014 and as Hasanova (2010b) reported, "the document provides for exchange of experience between the tourism sector specialists of the two countries, organization of mutual tourist trips, organization of training courses for Tajik tourism specialists in Iran, creation of joint tourist groups for propagation of historical resources of the Silk Road". Moreover, based on the agreement, the International University of Tourism, the first University in Central Asia devoted to tourism issues, should be established in Tajikistan

<sup>9</sup> In June 2012, new regular flight from Khujand to Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan) was opened (Naumova, 2012). Moreover, as Chorshanbiyev (2012) reported, air route from Dushanbe to New Delhi was established in July 2012.

provides in-depth analysis of these two aspects of sustainable mountain tourism.

### ***5.3 Analysis of tourism policy***

All of the efforts of the central government described in the previous subchapter indicate that the government of Tajikistan is aware of the importance of tourism development. However, it is not clear whether governmental policy fulfils the principles of sustainable mountain tourism and whether the country's tourism policy can be actually a factor of local development. For this reason, the policy framework together with other specific policy features related to mountain areas is discussed below.

First of all, looking at the policy framework (*Appendix 1*) that was developed as a tool for policy analysis, five **basic tasks of government** with regard to tourism development seem to be fulfilled only partially. The Tajik national government has established a framework for the cooperation of private and public sectors which is one of the responsibilities of CYAST. Legislation and regulations protecting environmental and cultural heritage are provided through the jurisdiction of several state bodies. Infrastructure is already constructed, yet it is in inadequate conditions and hence its modernization should be a priority on the policy agenda. Training and education in the field of tourism is also available, but again the quality is very poor. The last task, formulation of tourism policy and plans is fulfilled. Nevertheless, as it was pointed out by Sievers (2003), the real implementation of these plans might be very controversial and therefore this task cannot be assessed unambiguously according to the existence of strategic plans, especially in the context of Central Asia (Sievers, 2003:195). Moreover, the fulfilment of basic tasks is more effective when the “whole-of-government” approach together with participatory planning are employed. Regrettably, these two aspects remain neglected in Tajikistan and more needs to be done to improve coordination among various state bodies and involving all relevant stakeholders, including local communities, into public dialogue about tourism development.

Recalling the policy framework designed in the subchapter 3.2 and in *Appendix 1*, facilitating sustainable tourism in a country also involves the fulfilment of twelve **policy goals** leading to sustainability. In the context of Tajikistan, only a few goals seems to be followed by the governmental policy, particularly employment quality through the establishment of cooperation with Iran in this area; visitor fulfilment through simplifying the visa procedure, cultural richness through

safeguarding human rights and the freedom of religions and biological diversity through the establishment of protected areas and issuance of permits to unique environments. All other policy goals are followed either only partially or not at all. Particularly goals related to the local level such as local prosperity, local control or community well-being are neglected by state legislature, strategic documents and policy measures.

With regard to the **framework conditions** described in the subchapter 3.2 and illustrated in *Appendix 1*, Tajik tourism policy fails to fulfil them in all three aspects. Fundamental framework conditions such as tourism infrastructure and safety of tourists are not satisfactory; entrepreneurial environment, provision of information and training possibilities are also inadequate. As for the social framework conditions, this area is rather unambiguous as the rights of local communities are not specifically defined.

In terms of **policy instruments** introduced in the subchapter 3.2, measurement instruments are used only partially – limits of tourism are identified through quota setting, but sustainability indicators and monitoring are completely lacking in relevant policy documents. Command and control instruments seem to be well-employed through the legislation, regulation and licensing, yet employment of land use planning and development control is rather unclear due to the lack of relevant information. Economic instruments are employed through state taxes and charges as well as agreements on charter flights; financial incentives seem to be rare though. A big gap in governmental policy appears to be in the usage of voluntary instruments - only one instrument, certification, is implemented in practice. With regard to supporting instruments, the governmental efforts are noticeable in the areas of capacity building as well as marketing and information services, however, infrastructure provision and management remains neglected.

Putting all these fragments of policy framework together, it can be stated that there are some positive governmental efforts to develop the tourism industry in the country, yet these efforts are rather focused on the basic tasks and stay behind in terms of actions that facilitate sustainable tourism. The most pressing limitation, an insufficient tourism infrastructure, is urgent governmental task. Also, more needs to be done especially regarding the involvement of local communities into policy process. The employment of voluntary policy instruments would also incentivize several policy stakeholders to pay more attention to the issues of sustainability.

Based on this assessment, **the overall involvement** of the Tajik government in tourism development can be according to the policy framework (*Appendix 1*) classified as passive with the

provision of supportive measures. Hence there is significant potential for policy improvement. This potential is recognized also in the realistic and well-prepared strategic documents. Unfortunately, an impression that strategic documents are only “pro-forma” is unavoidable. Therefore, only if the government firmly sticks to the implementation of the strategic documents and chooses a pro-active approach through specifying performance indicators, assessment methods, desired outcomes and methods of enforcement, can an effective and sustainable tourism development in Tajikistan have good prospects for the future.

Moving from the issue of sustainability to specific policy features related to mountain areas, the requirement for participatory planning might be fulfilled by community-based organizations, but not from the side of the government. It can be argued that this shortcoming can be fixed by decentralization of the governing power to lower level. Yet as Lynch and Maggio (2000: 29-30) note, this is a good solution only if the real decision-making power together with appropriate financial and legal mechanisms are at the disposal of local communities, which is not the case of Tajikistan. Therefore, the proper legislative measure and supportive financial mechanisms should be established in order to ensure the real empowerment of local communities.

Furthermore, preparation of longer term plans concerned with mountain development appears to be partially fulfilled in the case of Tajikistan. Despite the fact that such strategic planning exists and eco-tourism is specifically acknowledged (MFA, 2009d: 5-6), several important issues are not regarded by the plans. First of all, spreading the visitors across the mountain area “in order to share opportunities for benefits and minimize impacts of tourism” (Lama and Sattar, 2002:15) is not maintained. In addition, an allocation of certain amount of revenues to the conservation and restoration of mountain environments, the orientation of tourism on domestic clientele as well as using the gender balanced participatory methods during the preparatory stages of the plans are not regarded either.

Preferring local small and medium enterprises is especially important in remote mountain areas. This requirement is however regarded mainly by the community-based tourism organizations. More incentives and support for local service providers provided by Tajik government are needed in order to improve overall situation and achieve more substantial results.

Last but not least, in the case of Tajikistan, a trans-boundary cooperation based on the mountain ranges should be considered especially in liaison with Kyrgyzstan, which is directly connected to Tajikistan through mountains and shares very similar characteristics of these areas.

#### ***5.4 Suggestions for knowledge sharing and innovations***

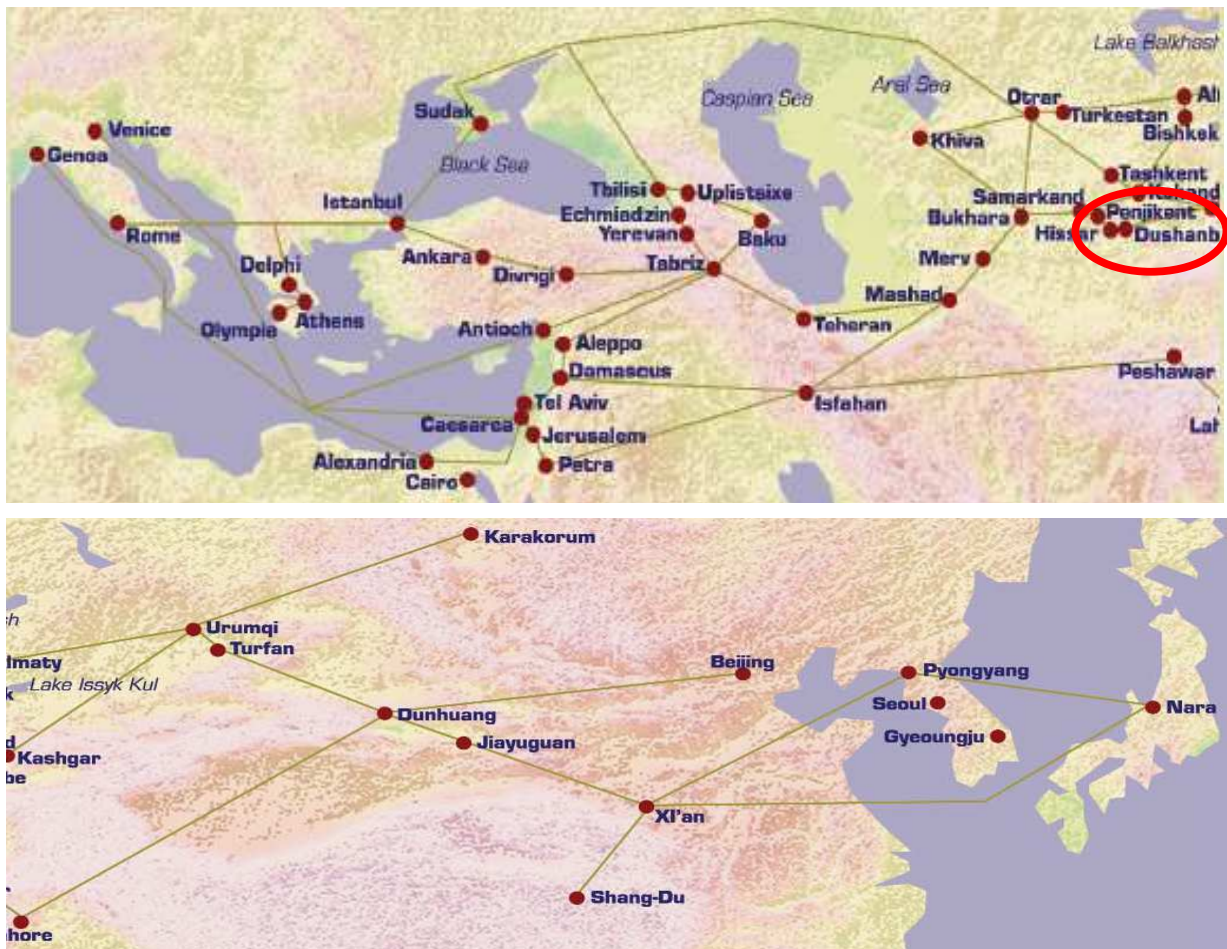
In addition to actions that would improve general tourism policy in Tajikistan in terms of sustainable mountain tourism, the facilitation of knowledge sharing with other countries might be beneficial for learning attested practices and overcoming potential obstacles that occurred elsewhere. Lama and Sattar (2002: 4) argue that several aspects of tourism in mountainous regions such as tourism intensity, approach to monitoring and management, level of local participation, inaccessibility and remoteness as well as existence of mountain tourism plans, regulations and enforcement should be taken into account when initiating knowledge sharing (Lama & Sattar, 2002: 4). Hence, a policy practice selected for an effective knowledge sharing should be located in the country with comparable tourism context.

Considering all these aspects, both initiatives mentioned as the “good practices” in the subchapter 3.3, community-based tourism in Kyrgyzstan and Trans-Himalayan Heritage Route in Nepal, are being implemented in relatively comparable environment and therefore are suitable for knowledge sharing with Tajikistan. Hence, informative suggestions for their transferability and lessons-learned are discussed below.

As regards community-based tourism (CBT), Tajikistan has already two existent tourism organisations dealing with CBT, namely MSDSP in Pamir and ZTDA in Zerafshan Valley that are supported by AKF and GIZ. The implementation of CBT is in line with sustainability principles. Yet, looking at neighbouring country Kyrgyzstan where CBT has a longer tradition, a wider network of CBT tourism organizations and even the CBT association; Tajikistan could use the advantage of a “late-comer” and learn from the Kyrgyz experience. In particular, key obstacles identified in the initial year of CBT implementation in Kyrgyzstan should be taken as lessons-learned and they should be avoided in Tajikistan. These obstacles mentioned in the subchapter 3.3 represent a call for action addressed to the Tajik government, which plays an important role in facilitating favourable tourism environment in the country. Training and requalification courses, the support of CBT advertisement activities, the provision of initial funding for local communities and the reconstruction of physical infrastructure are the most important tasks that were in the Kyrgyz case the limiting factor of CBT development. Moreover, Tajik governmental actors related to tourism should perceive Kyrgyzstan not as a competitor, but as an experienced partner who might be helpful in CBT development. Nowadays the cooperation among CBT actor exists only at the level of non-state actors, for an instance through exchange visits initiated by the Kyrgyz CBT association KCBTA (ZTDA, 2008: 2).

Hence, the stable cross-border Tajik-Kyrgyz CBT cooperation network should be established in order to share best-practices in this field.

The cultural and heritage route is also applicable in the context of Tajikistan, because an ancient “Silk road” facilitating trans-Eurasian trade from Europe to the Far East crossed this region (UNWTO, 2006: 6). Most notable cities on the road that belong to the present territory of Tajikistan were Penjikent, Hissor and Dushanbe illustrated by *Figure 8*, where all varieties of valuable commodities such as precious stones from Pamir Mountains were sold (Sahadeo & Zanca, 2007: 18).



**Figure no. 8:** “Silk road” routes leading from Europe to the Central Asia (first picture) and from Central Asia to the Far East (second picture) with the approximate territory of Tajikistan in the red circle (UNWTO, 2006: 10-11, own modification)

Nowadays, even though the “Silk road” is not used for trade any more, it forms a unique tourism resource for all countries along the route, including Tajikistan. Yet, despite the initiative of UNWTO

aimed at promoting the “Silk road” as a marketing brand and strengthening cooperation of involved countries through conferences and declarations (UNWTO, 2006: 7), no specific action at the national level of Tajikistan can be observed.

Compared to the “good practice” from Nepal, where the Swiss experience is being replicated through the pilot project “Himalaya Heritage Route” by the nongovernmental organisation ICIMOD, Tajikistan is not undertaking any specific actions to promote the “Silk road” route even though it could benefit from UNWTO “umbrella” and related marketing support. The main reason for the disinterest of Tajik non-governmental tourism actors in developing a heritage route is predominantly the lack of financial resources that are required for the building of the initial infrastructure. This should be amended by the governmental action, whereas the limitations identified in Nepal should be tackled at the first stage. The Tajik government should identify the exact “Silk road” routes in the country, reconstruct walking trails and historic monuments along these routes, involve local people in the provision of services and appropriately promote this tourist product. Moreover, the existence and the enforcement of appropriate legislation should be ensured and all actions should be coordinated with other countries participating in the “Silk road” initiative.

In addition to programmes suitable for knowledge sharing, a specific type of sustainable mountain tourism is also worth mentioning, namely the newly emerging geological tourism in Tajikistan. This niche tourism capitalizes on various landforms such as rock formations, caves, mines and so on (Ergasheva, 2010). It seems to be an innovative way how to attract specific groups of tourists and facilitate nature-based tourism in a sustainable way. As Ergasheva (2010) reported, the Main Geology Directorate of Tajikistan has received a license for undertaking activities connected to geological tourism and they have already developed fourteen routes all over the country. Yet the lack of skilled specialists and the need for initial investments hampers further development of a high-quality tourism product. Therefore, in order to make out of this specific tourism activity a comparative advantage of Tajikistan, the bigger state support is necessary.

## Chapter 6: Implications for the policy

---

The last chapter seeks to interconnect theoretical knowledge from the first part of the thesis with the current tourism policy in Tajikistan through practically oriented implications for policy practitioners. Firstly, key factors affecting tourism in Tajikistan are summarized in the SWOT analysis. Subsequent policy recommendations are directed towards relevant government authorities. They are aimed at improving tourism policy in Tajikistan in line with the concept of sustainable mountain tourism. In this way, the research question of the thesis “*How should tourism policy be designed in order to enhance sustainable mountain development in Tajikistan?*” is addressed. While the SWOT analysis has a rather informative character, the policy recommendations highlight the most important aspects and prescribe the most appropriate policy action.

### ***6.1 SWOT analysis***

This brief but complex SWOT analysis provides a schematic overview of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats as regards tourism in the country. In fact, it is a summary of all findings that have been already described in detail in the previous subchapters of the case study. Factors are evaluated with the consideration of the key objective – the facilitation of sustainable mountain tourism policy in Tajikistan, which originates in the research question. Each factor is attached to a specific category based on the following criteria (ICIMOD, 2007b: 40):

- Strengths represent factors of internal origin that are helpful for achieving the objective
- Weaknesses are factors of internal origin that are harmful for achieving the objective
- Opportunities represent factors of external origin that are helpful for achieving the objective
- Threats are factors of external origin that are harmful for achieving the objective

The selection of factors and their classification into categories is based on the application of the outline criteria to the key findings of the preceding part of the case study (Chapter 5 and Chapter 6). Hence, the content of the SWOT analysis greatly depends on the author’s judgement and therefore it is to some extent subjective. Importantly, the SWOT analysis serves as a basis for the policy recommendations outlined in the second part of this chapter.



<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>
Natural assets	Insufficient physical infrastructure
*mountains as a comparative advantage in Central Asian region	*inadequate transport infrastructure
*possibilities for wide-range of activities such as hiking, trekking, climbing or mountain-based sports	* obsolete accommodation inherited from the Soviet times
*exceptional mountain peaks, lakes, glaciers etc.	Soviet legacy
*distinctive fauna and flora, huge biodiversity	*limited investments in tourism sector
*thermal and healing springs	*narrow offer of tourism services
Historical assets	*inflexible and non-diversified economy
*sole non-Turkic nation of the region	*rigid bureaucracy
*rich historical heritage connected to "Persian" ancestors	*ineffective coordination of state bodies related to tourism
Cultural assets	*polluted environment
*vivid preservation of unique traditions	Incomplete economic and political transformation
Local inhabitants	*unfavourable business environment
*variety of ethnic groups, specific local knowledge	Shortage of qualified tourism personnel and low quality of tourism services
*hospitality of local population	Inadequate provision of supportive tourism services
Relatively stable political situation	*lack of domestic advertisement
Positive developments in tourism policy	*lack of adequate information and supportive materials (maps, GPS applications)
*Simplification of visa procedure	*tedious bureaucracy by the acquisition of visas and permits
*Expansion of the flights offer	*limited demarcation of hiking routes
*Improved marketing and international advertisement	*ineffective emergency rescue system
*International cooperation with Iran, Egypt and several development organizations	Inherent state deficiencies
Existence of tourism legislation and strategic documents	*corruption
Existence of a broad variety of tour operators and providers of tourism services who form regional associations	*only "formal" adherence to plans and legislature aiming at sustainability
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
Knowledge-sharing with Kyrgyzstan about community-based tourism	Radical Islamization
Development of niche tourism markets with comparative advantage	Tense relations with neighbouring countries, particularly with Uzbekistan
*Silk road revival, geological tourism	Risk of natural disaster (earthquake, flood)

## ***6.2 Policy recommendations***

Tajik government authorities in charge of tourism policy should:

1. in order to use strengths:

*-Use all assets of mountain areas - natural, historical and cultural in an integrated and sustainable way.* As mountains are covering the majority of the country's territory, the tourism industry should not be limited only to nature-based attractions. On the contrary, it should integrate all tourism assets under the mountainous "trademark". At the same time, sustainability of tourism in all three aspects- economic, environmental and social should be maintained.

*-Capitalize on the knowledge and hospitality of local communities through their empowerment.* In this regard, well-designed decentralization and participatory planning might be very helpful for the involvement of local communities into decision-making. Moreover, the government should encourage the local population to be involved in tourism service provision by offering financial support such as micro-credit and ensuring appropriate training opportunities.

*-Advertise stable political situation in the country.*

*-Maintain tendency of positive developments in the field of tourism.* State actors should not be satisfied with recent achievements connected to the simplified visa procedure, expanded flights offer, improved marketing and strengthened international cooperation. They should keep this positive tendency and continue in gradual improvements of other tourism aspects as well.

*-Benefit from the existence of strategic documents.* The government should make an effort to stick to these documents, ensure their firm implementation and specify performance indicators, measurement methods or task division among various actors.

*-Encourage cooperation and knowledge sharing among all actors related to the tourism industry.* Mutual dialogue between the state and the tourism service providers/tour operators should be ensured in order to share information effectively and identify potential problems that need to be tackled.

2. in order to stop weaknesses:

*-Improve the physical tourism infrastructure of the country.* As the basic precondition of a successful tourism industry - an adequate physical infrastructure is currently lacking, the government must build an effective transportation network and modernize obsolete accommodation facilities at the earliest convenience.

*-Implement modern and flexible policy practices.* Rigid and inflexible policy should be replaced with a

progressive approach that would allow greater investments in the tourism sector, diversification of the economy, a broader scope of services, simplified bureaucratic procedures and better coordination among several governmental bodies. Preferably, one specialized governmental body should be in charge of the tourism industry and should have appropriate competencies, because the state body CYAST has several fields of action and only limited competencies in the field of tourism. Moreover, more attention should be paid to environmental protection.

*-Provide favourable business environment.* The small and medium enterprises are of particular importance for the effective tourism industry and hence the government should pay more attention to their support. In addition, financial or other incentives for maintaining sustainability as well as public recognition for tourism service providers committed to sustainable practices should be provided.

*-Guarantee high-quality training and requalification for the local tourism personnel.*

*-Improve provision of supportive tourism services.* Governmental actors should be more active as regards domestic advertisement, provision of information for tourists, further simplification of visa procedure, well-arranged demarcation of hiking trails as well as an effective emergency rescue system.

*-Avoid corrupt and “pro-forma” practices*

3. in order to exploit opportunities:

*-Initiate cooperation with Kyrgyzstan in the field of community-based tourism.* The establishment of a knowledge sharing platform, exchange trips or other mutually beneficial activities should be designed and discussed with Kyrgyz partners.

*-Focus on the promising niche markets.* In this regard, especially the “Silk road” tourism route and geological tourism are prospective niche products and therefore should be promoted by the state.

4. in order to defend against threats:

*-Overcome negative trends that may affect the stability of the country and damage its international image*

*-Improve cooperation with neighbouring countries, particularly Uzbekistan, in term of cross-border tourism issues*

*-Ensure an appropriate and reliable warning system for unexpected natural disasters*

## Conclusion

---

The main concern of the thesis - sustainable mountain tourism - represents a vital policy issue especially because of its potential to contribute to local development. The puzzle whether sustainable mountain tourism can be a factor of local development was addressed through the examination of underlying theories and the case study of Tajikistan. The main question guiding the thesis was as follows: *“How should tourism policy be designed in order to enhance sustainable mountain development in Tajikistan?”*.

As the thesis has revealed, tourism in Tajikistan may capitalize on many assets, yet it may also face several obstacles. Although there is a wide variety of tourism-related actors, the state has the most important but also very responsible task to develop suitable tourism policy and thereby shape the entire tourism environment in the country. However, the analysis of the current policy approach has showed that Tajik government has only a passive role in the facilitation of sustainable mountain tourism. Even though it has developed appropriate legislation and documents for strategic planning, their implementation in practice is rather unclear. Furthermore, the provision of general supportive policy measures is not sufficient for the development of the modern and progressive tourism sector that abides to the principles of sustainability and takes the specificities of mountain areas into account.

This thesis has provided the careful analysis of factors that might play important roles in the shaping of sustainable tourism practices in Tajikistan. As the in-depth examination shows, effective and coordinated governmental action is needed instead of “pro-forma” plans. Moreover, the involvement of local communities that is essential for local development should not be neglected by the state, leaving the developments at the local level in hands of tourism service providers, nongovernmental organizations and international donors. Building on these and several other key findings that are summarized in the SWOT analysis, policy recommendations are provided for the disposal of all relevant tourism-related state authorities in Tajikistan.

In addition to the knowledge offered in this thesis, several topics suitable for future research appeared. First and foremost, the ways of empowerment of local communities seem to vary across countries and hence their research in a comparative perspective might be a good basis for an effective sharing of best practices. As for the current trends in the tourism sector, the use of

information-communication technologies in tourism, innovative sources of renewable energy used by tourism facilities in remote areas or new forms of sports in the mountain areas appear to be interesting issues with research potential as well.

To conclude, sustainable mountain tourism has the potential to become a factor of local development if the government of a particular state is committed to this mission and takes all necessary steps in order to facilitate a favorable environment for tourism. This is however, as the case study revealed, not yet true in Tajikistan, where significant space for improvement still exists.

## References

---

- Abdullaev, Kamoludin and Shahram Akbarzadeh (2010): Historical Dictionary of Tajikistan, Second Edition, Plymouth, UK: Scarecrow Press, ISBN 97808810860612
- Abisko Agenda (2002): Research for Mountain Area Development: Rethinking Agenda 21, Chapter 13: Managing Fragile Ecosystems; Sustainable Mountain Development; a Contribution to the United Nations Year of Mountains 2002, Ambio Special Report Number 11, Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, ISSN 0044-7447, pp. 3-103.
- AKF (2012): Rural development in Tajikistan, Available on:  
[http://www.akdn.org/rural\\_development/tajikistan.asp](http://www.akdn.org/rural_development/tajikistan.asp) [13th June 2012]
- Baktygulov, Sheradil and Damira Raeva (2010): Creating Value for All: Community-Based Tourism. Central Asia - Kyrgyzstan. New York: UNDP.
- Bergne, Paul (2007): The Birth of Tajikistan: National Identity and the Origins of the Republic. London, New York: I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd. ISBN 9781845112837
- Beyer, Matthias; Häusler, Nicole and Wolfgang Strasdas (2007): Tourism as a Field of Activity in German Development Cooperation: A Basic Overview, Priority Areas for Action and Strategic Recommendations. Eschborn: GTZ.
- Bolwell, Dain and Wolfgang Weinz (2008): Reducing poverty through tourism – Sectoral activities programme working paper, Geneva: ILO. ISBN: 9789221216469, pp.66, Available on: [www.ilo.org/publns](http://www.ilo.org/publns)
- Byers, Elizabeth (1995): Mountain agenda: Environmentally sustainable and equitable development opportunities. Franklin, USA: The Mountain Institute.
- Centlivres, Pierre and Micheline Centlivres-Demont (1997): Tajikistan and Afganistan: The Ethnic Groups on Either Side of the Border. In Djalili, Mohammad-Reza, Grare, Frederic and Shirin Akiener (1997): Tajikistan: The Trials of Independence. New York: St. Martin's Press. ISBN 0312161433
- CoR (2006): Sustainable Tourism as a factor of Cohesion Among European Regions. Brussels: CoR. ISBN 92-895-0378-5
- Chorshanbiyev, Payrav (2012): Tajik Air launches air route from Dushanbe to New Delhi, Published on 07.07.2012 at Asia-Plus, Available on: <http://news.tj/en/news/tajik-air-launches-air-route-dushanbe-new-delhi> [15th July 2012]

- CoE (2012): Culture, heritage, diversity: Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe. Available on:  
<http://www.coe.int/routes> [20th June 2012]
- CoR (2006): Sustainable Tourism as a factor of Cohesion Among European Regions. Brussels: CoR.  
 ISBN 92-895-0378-5
- CYAST (2010): Official Website of the Tourism Authority of Tajikistan- News: Tajikistan has set single cost for tourist visa, published on 01.08.2010, Available on:  
[http://www.visittajikistan.tj/en/news/?ELEMENT\\_ID=457](http://www.visittajikistan.tj/en/news/?ELEMENT_ID=457) [13th June 2012]
- (2011): Official Website of the Tourism Authority of Tajikistan- News: Second National Tourism Conference of Tajikistan 2011, published on 28.09.2011, Available on:  
[http://www.visittajikistan.tj/en/news/?ELEMENT\\_ID=495](http://www.visittajikistan.tj/en/news/?ELEMENT_ID=495) [13th June 2012]
- (2012): Official Website of the Tourism Authority of Tajikistan, Available on:  
<http://www.visittajikistan.tj> [13th June 2012]
- EuropeAid (2008): Tajikistan- Strengthening Tourism Business Intermediary Organisations for Sustainable Economic Development, Available on:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/asia/regional-cooperation/trade-business/ca\\_invest\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/asia/regional-cooperation/trade-business/ca_invest_en.htm) [13th June 2012]
- Ergasheva, Zarrina (2010): Geological tourism organization established in Tajikistan, Published on 15.07.2010 at Asia-Plus, Available on: <http://news.tj/en/news/geological-tourism-organization-established-tajikistan> [13th June 2012]
- FAO (2005): Mountain tourism: Making it work for the poor – Brochure, Rome, Available on:  
[http://www.fao.org/mnts/intl\\_mountain\\_day\\_en.asp](http://www.fao.org/mnts/intl_mountain_day_en.asp) [29th March 2012]
- Geoatlas (2012): Countries – Tajikistan: Physical and Political map, Available on:  
<http://www.geoatlas.com> [13th July 2012]
- GIZ (2012): Tourism-projekte der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit [Tourism-related projects of the development cooperation]. Available on: <http://www.giz.de/Themen/en/dokumente/de-tourismus-projekte.pdf> [13th July 2012]
- Gleason, Gregory (2003): Markets and Politics in Central Asia: Structural reform and political change. Chapter 5: Civil war and reconstruction in Tajikistan. ISBN 041527396. p.82-98
- Godde, Pamela M.; Price, Martin F. and Friedrich M. Zimmermann (2000): Tourism and Development in Mountain regions: Moving Forward into the New Millenium. In Godde, Pamela M.; Price, Martin F. and Friedrich M. Zimmermann (eds.) (2000): Tourism and Development in Mountain Regions, Oxon, UK: CABI Publishing, ISBN 0851993915

- GTZ (1999): Sustainable tourism as a development option: Practical guide for local planners, developers and decision makers, Eschborn: 1999, Available on: <http://www.gtz.de/de/dokumente/en-tourism-sustainable-development.pdf> [29th March 2012]
- Hall, Derek R. (1991): Tourism and economic development in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. London: Halsted Press, ISBN 0470217588
- Hall, C. Michael and Alan A. Lew (2009): Understanding and Managing Tourism Impacts: An integrated approach. Oxon, UK: Routledge. ISBN 13: 978-0-415-77132-0
- Harrison, David (ed.) (2001): Tourism and the Less Developed World: Issues and Case Studies, Oxon, UK: CABI Publishing, ISBN 0 85199 433 4
- Hasanova, Mavjouda (2010a): Iran to assist Tajikistan with development of its tourism sector. Published on 09.04.2010 at Asia-Plus, Available on: <http://news.tj/en/news/iran-assist-tajikistan-development-its-tourism-sector> [13th June 2012]
- (2010b): Iran Tajikistan, Iran sign MoU on tourism cooperation. Published on 10.04.2010 at Asia-Plus, Available on: <http://news.tj/en/news/tajikistan-iran-sign-mou-tourism-cooperation> [13th June 2012]
- (2010c): Tajik-Egyptian bilateral tourism cooperation discussed in Dushanbe. Published on 10.02.2010 at Asia-Plus, Available on: <http://news.tj/en/news/tajik-egyptian-bilateral-tourism-cooperation-discussed-dushanbe> [13th June 2012]
- (2010d): Tourism development issues to be discussed in Dushanbe tomorrow. Published on 05.07.2010 at Asia-Plus, Available on: <http://news.tj/en/news/tourism-development-issues-be-discussed-dushanbe-tomorrow> [13th June 2012]
- (2010e): Tajik National Park expected to be put on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2012. Published on 22.09.2010 at Asia-Plus, Available on: <http://news.tj/en/news/tajik-national-park-expected-be-put-unesco-world-heritage-list-2012> [13th June 2012]
- ICIMOD (2007a): Facilitating Sustainable Mountain Tourism Volume 1: Resource Book, Available on: <http://books.icimod.org/demo/index.php/search/subject/20> [29th March 2012]
- (2007b): Facilitating Sustainable Mountain Tourism Volume 2: Toolkit, Available on: <http://books.icimod.org/demo/index.php/search/subject/20> [29th March 2012]
- Johnson, Lena (2006): Tajikistan in the New Central Asia: Geopolitics, Great Power Rivalry and Radical Islam. London, New York: I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd. ISBN 101845112938
- Kokaisl, Petr; Pargac, Jan et al. (2007): Lidé z hor a lidé z pouští: Tádžikistán a Turkmenistán [People from mountains and people from deserts: Tajikistan and Turkmenistan], Praha: Univerzita



Karlova, ISBN 9788073081676

- Lama, Wendy B. and Nick Sattar (2002): Mountain Tourism and the Conservation of Biological and Cultural Diversity: Case study - Mountain Forum Thematic Paper for the Bishkek Global Mountain Summit. UNEP (draft). 23-28 April 2002. Available on:  
<http://lib.icimod.org/record/10888> [19th May 2012]
- Lama, Wendy B. and Nick Sattar (2004): Mountain Tourism and the Conservation of Biological and Cultural Diversity. In Price, Martin F.; Jansky Libor F. and Andrei A. Iatsenia (eds)(2004): Key Issues for Mountain Areas, United Nations University Press: Tokyo, 111-148.
- Lekarkin, Igor (2010): PECTA offers setting up tourist emergency relief fund, Published on 19.08.2010 at Asia-Plus, Available on: <http://news.tj/en/news/pecta-offers-setting-tourist-emergency-relief-fund> [13th June 2012]
- Levi, Scott (2007): Turks and Tajiks in Central Asian History. In Everyday Life in Central Asia: Past and Present. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press. ISBN 9780253348838. p. 15-31
- Lynch, Owen J. and Gregory F. Maggio (2000): Mountain Laws and Peoples: Moving Towards Sustainable Development and Recognition of Community-Based Property Rights, A General Overview of Mountain Laws and Policies with Insights from the Mountain Forum's Electronic Conference on Mountain Policy and Law. Washington, DC, USA: Center for International Environmental Law. Available on:  
<http://www.mtnforum.org/sites/default/files/pub/mountainlawsandpeoples.pdf>
- MFA (2009a): Information on Tourist Industry in Tajikistan- A guide to Tajikistan, Available on:  
<http://mfa.tj/index.php?node=article&id=179> [13th June 2012]
- (2009b): Information on Tourist Industry in Tajikistan- Закон Республики Таджикистан "О туризме", 3 сентября 1999 года № 824 [Law no. 824 „on Tourism“ of the Tajik Republic from 3rd September 1999], Available on: <http://mfa.tj/index.php?node=article&id=179> [13th June 2012]
- (2009c): Information on Tourist Industry in Tajikistan- Концепция развития туризма в Республике Таджикистан на 2009-2019 годы, Утверждено постановлением Правительства Республики Таджикистан от «2» апреля 2009 г. №\_202 [Conceptual framework of tourism development in the Tajik Republic for the period 2009-2019, Resolution № \_202 of the Government of the Tajik Republic from "2" in April 2009], Available on:  
<http://mfa.tj/index.php?node=article&id=179> [13th June 2012]

- (2009d): Information on Tourist Industry in Tajikistan- Государственная программа развития туризма в Республике Таджикистан на период 2010-2014 годов, Утверждено постановлением Правительства Республики Таджикистан от «28» мая 2009 № 299 [National Program of the tourism development in the Tajik Republic for the period 2010-2014, Resolution № 299 of the Government of the Tajik Republic from "28" in May 2009], Available on: <http://mfa.tj/index.php?node=article&id=179> [13th June 2012]
- (2012): Tourism in Tajikistan, <http://mfa.tj/index.php?node=article&id=179>
- Naumova, Victoria (2012): TajikAir launches new regular flight Khujand-Bishkek, Published on 06.06.2012 at Asia-Plus, Available on: <http://news.tj/en/news/tajikair-launches-new-regular-flight-khujand-bishkek> [13th June 2012]
- NORDREGIO (2004): Mountain Areas in Europe: Analysis of mountain areas in EU member states, acceding and other European countries (European Commission contract No 2002.CE.16.0.AT.136)
- OECD (2010): OECD Tourism Trends and Policies 2010. Paris: OECD Publishing. Available on: <http://www.ucdc.info/cd/doc/1021/OECD%20Tourism%20Trends%20and%20Policies%202010.pdf> [13th June 2012]
- OSI (2010): Branch office of the International Organization of Open Society Institute – Assistance Foundation in Tajikistan: Annual report 2010, Available on: <http://www.soros.tj/en/annual-reports> [13th June 2012]
- Price, Martin F. (2004): Introduction: Sustainable mountain development from Rio to Bishkek and beyond. In Price, Martin F.; Jansky Libor F. and Andrei A. Iatsenia (eds)(2004): Key Issues for Mountain Areas, United Nations University Press: Tokyo, 1-17.
- Sahadeo, Jeff and Russell Zanca (eds.) (2007): Everyday Life in Central Asia: Past and Present. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press. ISBN 9780253348838
- Shrestha, Chandra (2010): Why Should We Preserve Trans-Himalaya Heritage Routes?. An International Workshop „Transport in Mountains“, 21-27 November, 2010, Kathmandu, Nepal Nepal Engineering College, Available on: <http://www.ifrtd.org/mountains/docs/03%20Why%20Should%20We%20Preserve%20Trans-Himalaya%20Heritage%20Routes.pdf> [20th June 2012]
- Scheyvens, Regina (2011): Tourism and Poverty. New York: Routledge. ISBN13: 978-0-415-99675-4
- Sievers, Eric W. (2003): The Post-Soviet Decline of Central Asia: Sustainable development and comprehensive capital. London, New York: Routledge Curzon. ISBN 0700716602

- Smith, Melanie; Macleod, Nicola and Margaret H. Robertson (2010): Key concepts in tourism studies. London: SAGE Publications Ltd. ISBN 978-1-4129-2104-6
- Travel Tajikistan (2004): Visas and Arrival Formalities, The Great Game Travel Company, Available on: <http://traveltajikistan.com/> [13th June 2012]
- UN (1992): Chapter 13 of Agenda 21, Available on: <http://www.mtnforum.org/au/Chapter13Agenda21.pdf> [13th June 2012]
- (2011): Sustainable Mountain Development: Report of the Secretary-General, A/66/100, United Nations General Assembly. Available on: [http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/resources/res\\_pdfs/ga-66/SG%20report\\_Sustainable%20Mountain%20Development.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/resources/res_pdfs/ga-66/SG%20report_Sustainable%20Mountain%20Development.pdf) [20th June 2012]
- (2012): Our Common Vision- The Declaration of the Rio+20 Summit, Available on: <http://www.regeringen.se/content/1/c6/19/56/70/de38fd76.pdf> [15th July 2012]
- UNEP and UNWTO (2005): Making Tourism More Sustainable: A Guide for Policy Makers. Available on: <http://www.unep.fr/shared/publications/pdf/DTIx0592xPA-TourismPolicyEN.pdf> [13th June 2012]
- UNWTO (2006): The Silk Road. Madrid, Spain: UNWTO. Available on: <http://silkroad.unwto.org/en/content/publications> [13th June 2012]
- (2012): UNWTO Tourism Highlights, 2012 Edition, Madrid: 2010, Available on: [www.unwto.org](http://www.unwto.org) [19th May 2012]
- ViaStoria (2012): Cultural routes of Switzerland: About us- Goals, Available on: <http://www.kulturwege-schweiz.ch> [20th June 2012]
- World Bank (2012): Migration and development brief no.18: Remittance flows in 2011 – an update. Available on: <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/334934-1110315015165/MigrationandDevelopmentBrief18.pdf> [20th June 2012]
- ZOI (2012): Central Asia Mountains: Sustainable Mountain Development – From Rio 1992 to 2012 and Beyond, Bishkek: ZOI Environmental Network, University of Central Asia, Mountain Partnership, GRID - Arendal, Available at: <http://www.zoinet.org/web/central-asia-mountains> [15th July 2012]
- ZTDA (2008): Project “Community based tourism in the Zerafshan valley”, Available on: <http://www.ztda-tourism.tj> [13th June 2012]

## Appendixes

### Appendix no.1: Policy framework

		Parameters	
Basic tasks of government			Establishment of a framework within which the private and public sectors can cooperate
			Provision of legislation and regulation to protect the environment and cultural heritage
			Construction of the infrastructure
			Development of training and education for tourism;
			Formulation of overall policy and plans for tourism development
Policy goals			1. Economic viability
			2. Local prosperity
			3. Employment quality
			4. Social equity
			5. Visitor fulfilment
			6. Local control
			7. Community well-being
			8. Cultural richness
			9. Physical integrity
			10. Biological diversity
			11. Resource efficiency
			12. Environmental purity
Framework conditions			Fundamental framework conditions
			Economic policy framework conditions
			Framework conditions for ecological and socially sustainable tourism
Policy instruments	Measurement instruments	1. Sustainability indicators and monitoring	
		2. Identifying the limits of tourism	
	Command and control instruments	3. Legislation, regulation and licensing	
		4. Land use planning and development control	
	Economic instruments	5. Taxes and charges	
		6. Financial incentives and agreements	
	Voluntary instruments	7. Guidelines and codes of conduct	
		8. Reporting and auditing	
		9. Voluntary certification	
		10. Voluntary contributions	
	Supporting instruments	11. Infrastructure provision and management	
		12. Capacity building	
		13. Marketing and information services	
Overall involvement of government	Passive	Mandatory	
		Supportive	
	Active	Managerial	
		Developmental	

## Appendix no. 2: Photo illustrations



**Picture no. 1:** Mountainous terrain is the main feature of the Tajik landscape (Author: Veronika Korčeková)



**Picture no. 2:** Traditions are vital part of the Tajik lifestyle - the match of the national sport Buzkashi (Author: Veronika Korčeková)



**Picture no. 3:** Mountain inhabitants often sell their product in the bigger cities- old man selling rare mineral Mumio available only in Tajik mountains (Author: Veronika Korčėková)



**Picture no. 4:** Pamir people are preserving traditions since young age- boys playing lute, most common musical instrument in Pamir (Author: Veronika Korčėková)



**Picture no. 5:** Tajik costumes are unique for each region – small girl dressed in dress from Kuljab (Author: Veronika Korčeková)



**Picture no. 6:** The plate of sprouts is a symbol of spring characteristic for Navrus, the biggest celebration in Tajikistan (Author: Veronika Korčeková)