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**IMPACT OF TOURISTIC ACTIVITIES ON ENVIRONMENT AND  
NEED'S OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT. SHAQLAWA  
CITY / STUDY AREA**

**Abstract:**

Impact of touristic activities on environment and need's of sustainable tourism development.  
Shaqlawa City / study area

This study aims at the:

- 1 - Definition of touristic activities and determination of its impact on environment.
- 2 - Definition of sustainable tourism development and clarifying its role in conservation of environment problems.
- 3 - Determination of environmental problems caused by touristic activities in Shaqlawa city and needs of sustainable tourism development.

To achieve aims the of the study and because of its nature, in addition to introduction and conclusions, divided into the following themes:

First: Definition of touristic activities and determination of its impact on environment. Second: Definition of sustainable tourism development and clarifying its concept.  
Third: Tourism in Shaqlawa and environmental problems caused by touristic activities in the city.  
Fourth: Needs of sustainable tourism development.

**Keywords:**

sustainable development, environmental problems, tourist activity, Shaqlawa

**JEL Classification:** Q56

## **Introduction**

Tourism's relationship with the environment is complex. On the one hand, tourism has the potential to create beneficial effects on the environment by contributing to environmental protection and conservation. On the other hand, it involves many activities that can have adverse environmental effects.

Tourism's relationship with the environment depends on the why or manner of tourism development, sustainable or ordinarily, (traditional), tourism development. For the foregoing, this study aims to:

- 1 – Definition of touristic activities and determination of its impact on environment.
- 2 - Definition of sustainable tourism development and clarifying its role in conservation environment problems.
- 3 – Determination of environmental problems caused by touristic activities in Shaqlawa city and needs of sustainable tourism development.

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Second: Definition of sustainable tourism development and clarifying its concept.

Third: Tourism in Shaqlawa and environmental problems caused by touristic activities in the city.

Fourth: Needs of sustainable tourism development.

### **First: Definition of tourism activities and environmental problems resulting from it**

Tourism is the movement of the tourists from one place to another. It is the temporary short-term movement of people to destinations outside the place where they normally live & work, includes the activities they indulge in at the destination as well as all facilities and services, specially created to meet their needs. Tourism does not only mean traveling to a particular destination but also includes all activities undertaken during the stay. It includes day visits & excursions. The movement can be in your country or the tourists can also travel to the foreign destinations for the tourism purpose. On this basis tourism can be divided into:

1. Domestic Tourism
2. International Tourism

Tourism activities are the activities of tourists who are: "The people traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for leisure, business or other purposes for not more than one consecutive year."

Tourism characteristic activities can be identified as those productive activities whose principal output is characteristic of tourism. The Tourism Satellite Accounts defines

tourism industries as all establishments whose principal productive activity is a tourism characteristic activity.

International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC) recommended a list of activities relevant to tourism which consists of: (Tourism Satellite Account, 2001).

- Hotels and similar.
- Second home ownership (imputed).
- Restaurants and similar.
- Railway passenger transport services.
- Road passenger Transport services.
- Water passenger transport services.
- Air passenger transport services.
- Transport supporting services.
- Transport equipment rental.
- Travel agencies and similar.
- Cultural services.
- Sporting and other recreational services.

Concerning environmental problems resulting from tourism activities, negative impacts from tourism occur when the level of visitor use is greater than the environment's ability to cope with this use within the acceptable limits of change. Uncontrolled conventional tourism poses potential threats to many natural areas around the world. It can put enormous pressure on an area and lead to impacts such as soil erosion, increased pollution, discharges into the sea, natural habitat loss, increased pressure on endangered species and heightened vulnerability to forest fires. It often puts a strain on water resources, and it can force local populations to compete for the use of critical resources.

Impacts of tourism activities on environment, according to its level, can be divided into the local level and global level: (Scheme 1)

#### A – Environment Impacts of Touristic Activities – Local Level

The local level of environment impacts of touristic activities encloses:

##### 1 – Depletion of Natural Resources

Tourism can create great pressure on local resources like water, land, forests, energy, food, and other raw materials that may already be in short supply. Tourism development can put pressure on natural resources when it increases consumption in areas where resources are already scarce. Because of the seasonal character of the tourism, many destinations have ten times more inhabitants in the high season as in the low season. A high demand is placed upon these resources to meet the high expectations tourists often cause its depletion. Depletion of natural resources can be clarifying through the following examples:

## A – Degradation of water resources

Water, and especially fresh water, is one of the most critical natural resources. The tourism industry generally overuses water resources for hotels, swimming pools, golf courses and personal use of water by tourists. This can result in water shortages and degradation of water supplies, as well as generating a greater volume of waste water. Luxury resorts on an East African island are estimated to use up to 2,000 liters of water per tourist per day, almost 70 times more than the average daily domestic consumption of local people. (UNEP, 2011)

In dryer regions like the Mediterranean, the issue of water scarcity is of particular concern. Because of the hot climate and the tendency of tourists to consume more water when on holiday than they do at home, the amount used can run up to 440 liters a day. This is almost double what the inhabitants of an average Spanish city use. (UNEP, 2010)

Golf course maintenance can also deplete fresh water resources and this can result in water scarcity. If the water comes from wells, over pumping can cause saline intrusion into groundwater. An estimated 9.5 billion liters of water are used to irrigate the world's golf courses per day, equivalent to the daily needs of 80 per cent of the global population. An average golf course in a tropical country such as Thailand uses as much water as 60,000 rural villagers. (UNEP, 2010)

## B - Land degradation

Increased construction of tourism and recreational facilities has increased the pressure on the land resources such as soil, forests, wildlife and on scenic landscapes. Direct impact on natural resources, in the provision of tourist facilities can be caused by the use of land for accommodation and other infrastructure provision, and the use of building materials.

Forests often suffer from negative impacts of tourism in the form of deforestation caused by fuel wood collection and land clearing. For example, one trekking tourist in Nepal can use (4 to 5) kilograms of wood a day.

## 2 – Pollution

Tourism can cause some forms of pollution as any other industry. More widely known forms of pollution caused by tourism are:

### A - Air pollution

Transport by air, road, and rail is continuously increasing in response to the rising number of passengers. International tourist air passengers rose from 284 million in 1998

to 495 million in 2010 and international tourist road passengers rose from 269 million to 380 million. One consequence of this increase in air and road transport is that tourism now accounts 52% of international tourist passengers traveled by air and 40% of tourist passengers traveled by road and is therefore responsible for an important share of air emissions. (Khtab, 2014)

Air pollution from tourist transportation has impacts on the global level, especially from carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions related to transportation energy use, and it can contribute to severe local air pollution. (Naqshbandi, 2008)

### B - Noise pollution

Noise pollution from airplanes, cars, and buses, as well as recreational vehicles such as snowmobiles and jet skis, is an ever-growing problem of modern life. In addition to causing annoyance, stress, and even hearing loss for humans, it causes distress to wildlife. For instance, noise generated by snowmobiles can cause animals to alter their natural activity patterns.

### C - Solid waste and littering

In areas with high concentrations of tourist activities and appealing natural attractions, waste disposal is a serious problem and wrong disposal can be a major despoiler of the natural environment - rivers, scenic areas, and roadsides. Every international tourist in Europe generates at least 1 kg of solid waste per day, and up to 2 kg/person/day for the USA. (UNEP, 2011)

Solid waste and littering can degrade the physical appearance of the water and shoreline and cause the death of marine animals. In mountain areas, trekking tourists generate a great deal of waste. Some trails in the Peruvian Andes and in Nepal frequently visited by tourists have been nicknamed "Coca-Cola trail" and "Toilet paper trail". (Gossling & Hall, 2006)

### D - Sewage pollution

Construction of hotels, recreation and other facilities often leads to increased sewage pollution. Wastewater has polluted seas and lakes surrounding tourist attractions, damaging the flora and fauna. Sewage runoff causes serious damage to coral reefs. Changes in salinity and siltation can have wide-ranging impacts on coastal environments. And sewage pollution can threaten the health of humans and animals.

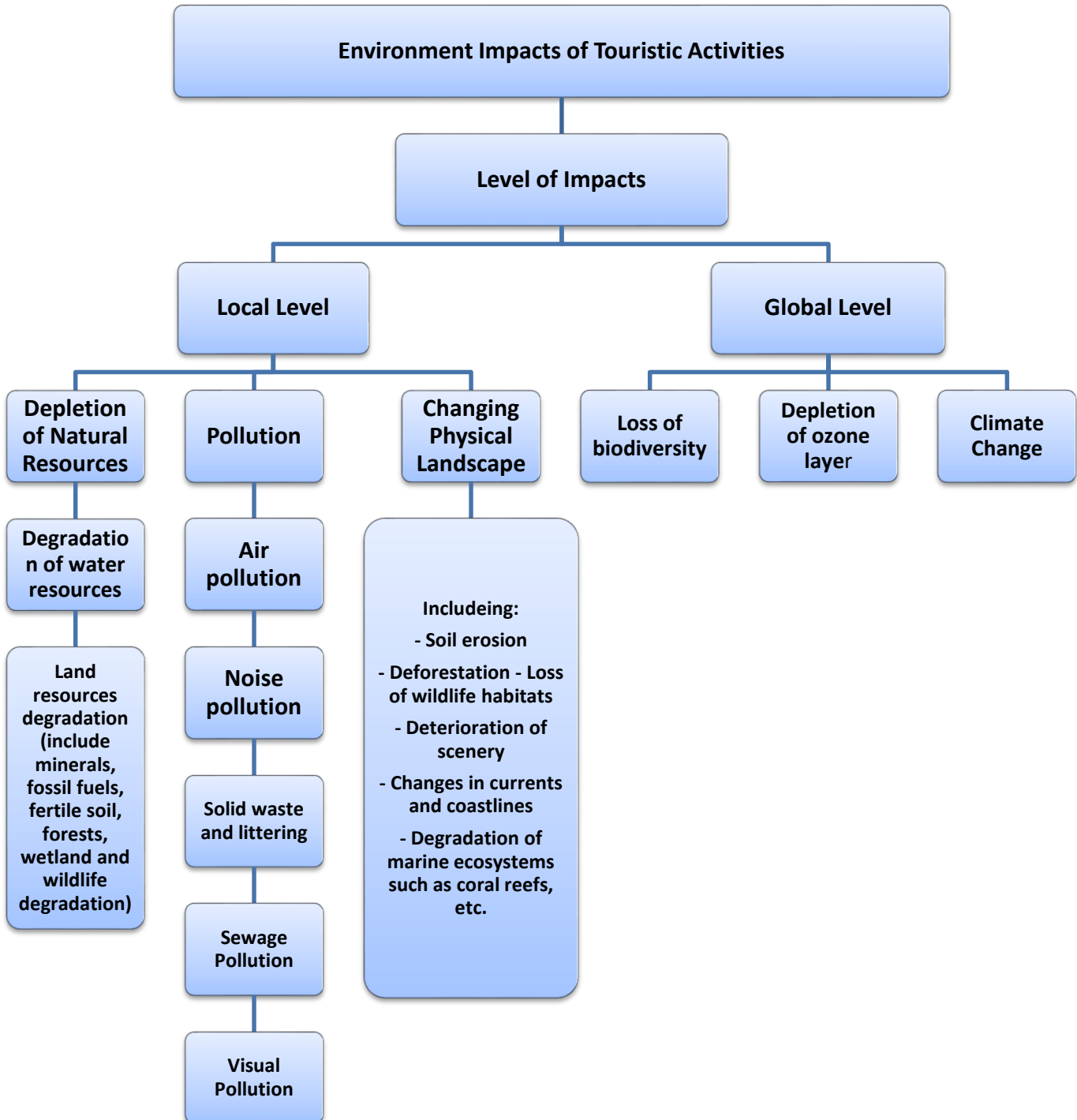
### E - Visual Pollution

Visual pollution may result from following sources: (UNEP, 2003)

- Poorly designed buildings, e.g. hotels that are not compatible with local architectural style or Environment.
- Use of large and ugly advertising signs.
- Overhead utility (electricity and telephone) lines and poles.

- Buildings obstructing scenic views.
- Poor maintenance of buildings.

**Scheme 1: Environment Impacts of Touristic Activities**



### 3- Changing Physical Landscape

Attractive landscape sites, such as sandy beaches, lakes, riversides, and mountain tops and slopes, are often transitional zones, characterized by species-rich ecosystems. Typical physical changes include the degradation of such ecosystems. An ecosystem is a geographic area including all the living organisms (people, plants, animals, and microorganisms), their physical surroundings (such as soil, water, and air), and the natural cycles that sustain them.

The ecosystems most threatened with degradation are ecologically fragile areas such as alpine regions, rain forests, wetlands, mangroves, coral reefs and sea grass beds. The threats to and pressures on these ecosystems are often severe because such places are very attractive to both tourists and developers. Tourism development may lead to physical changes and ecological damage because of:

#### -Construction activities and infrastructure development

The development of tourism facilities such as accommodation, water supplies, restaurants and recreation facilities can involve sand mining, beach and sand dune erosion, soil erosion and extensive paving. In addition, road and airport construction can lead to land degradation and loss of wildlife habitats and deterioration of scenery.

#### - Deforestation and intensified or unsustainable use of land

Construction of ski resort accommodation and a facility frequently requires clearing forested land. Coastal wetlands are often drained and filled due to lack of more suitable sites for construction of tourism facilities and infrastructure. These activities can cause severe disturbance and erosion of the local ecosystem, even destruction in the long term.

#### - Development of marinas and breakwaters

Development of marinas and breakwaters can cause changes in currents and coastlines. Furthermore, extraction of building materials such as sand affects coral reefs, mangroves, and hinterland forests, leading to different kinds of erosion and destruction of habitats. Coral reefs are especially fragile marine ecosystems and are suffering worldwide from reef-based tourism developments. Evidence suggests a variety of impacts to coral result from shoreline development, increased sediments in the water, trampling by tourists and divers, ship groundings, pollution from sewage, overfishing, and fishing with poisons and explosives that destroy coral habitat.

#### - Tourist activities, for example:

- Trampling: Tourists using the same trail over and over again trample the vegetation and soil, eventually causing damage that can lead to loss of biodiversity and other impacts.

- Marine activities: Marine activities can cause direct degradation of marine ecosystems such as coral reefs, and subsequent impacts on coastal protection and fisheries. There are 109 countries with coral reefs. In 90 of them reefs are being damaged by cruise ship anchors and sewage, by tourists breaking off chunks of coral, and by commercial harvesting for sale to tourists. (UNEP, 2003)

## B – Environment Impacts of Touristic Activities – Global Level

The environment Impacts of tourism, (global level), can be summarized within following points:

1 – Loss of biodiversity: Tourism activities can cause loss of biodiversity when land and resources are strained by excessive use, and when impacts on vegetation, wildlife, mountain, marine and coastal environments and water resources exceed the carrying capacity. This loss of biodiversity in fact means the loss of tourism potential.

2 – Depletion of the ozone layer: The ozone layer, which is situated in the stratosphere at an altitude of 12-50 kilometers, protects life on earth by absorbing the harmful wavelengths of the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation, which in high doses is dangerous to humans and animals.

Ozone depleting substances such as CFCs (chlorofluorocarbon) and others contain ODSs have contributed to the destruction of this layer. The tourism industry may be part of the problem; direct impacts start with the construction of new developments and continue during daily management and operations. Refrigerators, air conditioners and propellants in aerosol spray cans, amongst others, contain ODSs and are widely used in the hotel and tourism industry. (Naqshbandi, 2007)

3 – Climate Change: Climate scientists now generally agree that the Earth's surface temperatures have risen steadily in recent years because of an increase in the so-called greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, which trap heat from the sun. One of the most significant of these gases is carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), which is generated when fossil fuels, such as coal, oil and natural gas are burned (e.g. in industry, electricity generation, and automobiles) and when there are changes in land use, such as deforestation. Global tourism is closely linked to climate change. Tourism involves the movement of people from their homes to other destinations and accounts for about 50% of traffic movements; rapidly expanding air traffic contributes about 2.5% of the production of CO<sub>2</sub>. Tourism is thus a significant contributor to the increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. (PSHE, 2013)

Air travel itself is a major contributor to the greenhouse effect. Passenger jets are the fastest growing source of greenhouse gas emissions.



## **Second: Definition of sustainable tourism and clarifying its concept**

The UN World Commission on Environment and Development adopted the idea of sustainability in the "Brundtland report" in 1987 and defined "sustainable development" as follows:

"Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of present without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs". (NFI, 2008)

As concerns the "sustainable tourism and sustainable tourism development" there are several definitions here we point to some of them.

The World Tourism Organization (WTO) defines sustainable tourism as: "tourism that meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing the opportunity for the future", (WTO, 2004)

Sustainable tourism is the concept of visiting a place as a tourist and trying to make only a positive impact on the environment, society and economy. A key aspect is respect for the people who call the location home, the culture and customs of the area, and the socio-economic system. (Lisse, 2013)

Sustainable tourism is: "an industry committed to making a low impact on the environment and local culture, while helping to generate future employment for local people". (Jenner & Smith, 1992)

John Beech and Simon Chadwick, defines sustainable tourism: Tourism that is economically, socio culturally and environmentally sustainable. With sustainable tourism, socio cultural and environmental impacts are neither permanent nor irreversible. (Fien, Calder & White, 2012)

Sustainable tourism: "Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities". (Mowforth & Munt, 2008)

The German Forum on Environment and Development presented the following definition for "Sustainable Tourism" in 1999 at a UN Conference in New York: "Sustainable Tourism has to meet social, cultural, ecological and economic requirements, Sustainable Tourism holds a long-term view, for present and future generation, ethically and socially just and culturally adapted, ecologically viable economically sensible and productive." (NFI, 2008)

The European Union for the environment and national parks (EUENP) defines sustainable tourism development as: "Activity preserves the environment and achieves economic and social integration, and rise environment architecture. (Semire, 2008)

The European Commission has adopted its own definition for sustainable tourism, according to which it is „any form of development, improvement or tourism activity that respects the environment, preserves in the long term the natural and cultural resources and is socially and economically durable and equitable". (Juganaru, M. Juganaru & Anghel, 2009)

In our opinion, tourism development is: orderly change process paint future events and their potential impact and runs from the organization capacity to attract the largest number of tourists. It is important in the development of tourism preservation of the environment and its natural and human resources which form the tourism development

capital, so the required development is sustainable tourism development and that is: "development that meets the tourist needs of the community and its aspirations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet those needs and achieve those ambitions."

### **Third: Tourism in Shaqlawa and environmental problems caused by touristic activities in th city**

#### **A - Introducing Shaqlawa**

Shaqlawa is a famous resort in Iraqi Kurdistan Region situated to the north versant of Mount Safin. The town of Shaqlawa is the center of Shaqlawa District and during the reign of the Ottoman Empire it became a sub district and in the year 1952 it became a district. Shaqlawa's coordinates are 36°23'58" N and 44°20'32" E in DMS (Degrees Minutes Seconds).

It has been visited by tourists since old times because it is a touristic city par excellence and a large part of its citizens make their living from the sector of tourism. They sell a lot of local products and crops, namely, the fruits that grow in Shaqlawa's gardens and the neighboring grow regions. It is a typical resort in terms of availability of touristic places and various services; it is probably the ideal tourism city in all Iraq. Restaurants, hotels, casinos, motels, and resorts are numerous in Shaqlawa.

The area of Shaqlawa amounts to (6.15) sq km and the population of its inhabitants amounts to (27,336) person 1n 2014. Most the population of Shaqlawa are Kurds and Assyrians who belong to the Chaldean Church. Shaqlawa is a predominantly Assyrian Christian town with several new churches. So traditionally the city has a multicultural, peaceful, tolerant society and is friendly towards foreigners.

The climate of Shaqlawa is characterized by wet and cold winter dry and temperate in summer especially at the night time when there is mountain breeze. Shaqlawa climate, according to Koppen Climate Classification, has been classified as Mediterranean Climate (Cs).

Shaqlawa and its surrounded area have beautiful scenery and a place to stop and enjoy lunch or a drink at the outdoor restaurants or simply sit down to enjoy your own picnic in a quiet spot.

#### **B - Tourism in Shaqlawa**

As indicated before, Shaqlawa has been visited by tourists since old times and it is the more famous resort in Iraq and Kurdistan Region. Shaqlawa has great potentialities for touristic activities. More important of these potentialities are: (Naqshbandi & Al – Omer, 1982)

1 – Its geographical location in the middle of many touristic resorts, (Gali Ali Beg and Bekhal waterfalls, Jundyan, Hiran, Sheraswar, Tawska and so on). Shaqlawa's proximity from the capital of Kurdistan Region, Erbil city, ( in distance 50 km from the capital Erbil)

and its proximity from the location of Erbil's tourist city, which will be built on the peak of Mount Safin, (2000 m high from the sea level).

2 – Presence of comfortable climate, at 966m above sea level, the cool temperatures in summer, (especially at the night time with mountain breeze), and snowfall in winter have long attracted Iraqi tourists from the hotter Arab regions of the country.

3 – Shaqlawa has beautiful physical landscapes. The city itself is seen as very green and full of trees in it with green pastures areas around.

4 -There are many ancient places and old tools visible around the city environment, ( especially on mountain area), like; Shekh Wasoraman Cave (Mar Raban Boya), Kotran Cave, Kona Peast Cave, Brdi Konta Cave, Dangara Cave, Khanzad Citadel, Dwayne Castle, Mar Yuhana, Mar Yagup, and so on.

(Picture – 1 - ) Shaqlawa – location and snowfall in winter



5 - Existence of hotels and similar, Second home ownership (imputed), restaurants and similar, supermarkets and so on. For example, there are (5,400) rooms available a night in Shaqlawa, which is far below the demand, especially during weekends and public holidays. Some (18) hotels are being built in the town, (12) of which are almost finished and the other (6) are still under construction. Upon completion of all these hotels, the number of rooms available in the town would increase to (7000). (KRG, 2011)

(Picture – 2 - ) Shaqlawa physical landscapes



6 – Shaqlawa, is renowned as a city of peace and for the co-existence of its different religions and ethnicities, where everyone respects the beliefs of the other. There are

some sacred places where both Muslims and Christians visit. For instance the Sheikh Wasso Rahman Grave is a sacred place for Muslims, which is also called Mar Raban Boya by the Christians and every year Christians from around the Region visit the place two weeks after Easter.

### C - Shaqlawa's Tourists and Visitors

Each year, the number of Shaqlawa Tourists and Visitors is increasing dramatically. The people visiting Shaqlawa for tourism and recreation can be classified to:

1 – Tourists: Most of them coming from the central and southern provinces of Iraq as well as from Kurdistan Region provinces. In 2012, (74,114) tourists visited Shaqlawa.

2 – Erbil inhabitants where their number estimates with hundreds of visitors in ordinary days and thousands of visitors in weekends and public holidays. The number of this kind of tourists increases every minute from around (02) pm in the weekends and by dusk it reaches a level where the movement of cars and people becomes almost impossible.

3 – Families who own a second home in Shaqlawa where the numbers of its member estimates with (5,000) visitors.

### D - Environmental Problems Caused by Touristic activities

Before the determination of environmental problems caused by touristic activities in Shaqlawa city are necessary to point to the following remarks:

1 - Responsibility of the environmental problems in Shaqlawa city, and in other tourism place and regions, don't lie only on touristic activities. The role of touristic activities lies in the participation which caused these problems and the high percentage of responsibility lie on other human activities, (industrial, transportation, agricultural, etc.).

2 - The environmental problems don't occur individually, but as a collection of problems. This does not signify the occurrence of all environmental problems in one place.

3 – Impact of touristic activities on environment may be direct, by activities of tourists themselves, and indirect, by touristic institution services.

4 - Touristic activities cause negative impacts on the physical environment and man-made environment.

5 – Regarding the level of impact, negative impacts of Shaqlawa touristic activities on environment have local level feature primarily.

6 – The seasonal feature of touristic activities in Shaqlawa, (increases tourists in summer and in weekends and public holidays), caused concentration of big numbers of

tourists in small space and that gives rise to put enormous pressure on an area and lead to negative impacts of touristic activities on the environment.

Concerning the environmental problems resulting from tourism activities in Shaqlawa, the best known among them are the following:

### 1 – Degradation of water resources

According to the information given by Water Source Directory of Shaqlawa, the city's old water springs had been dried and majority of handmade wells are dried also or its water level slow down. The data show all (7) mains springs, ( Dangara, Mizgawti Gawra, Khoman, Nawangee, Joot Baloo'a, hekh Sayid and Betirma), with more than (250) small springs are dried. (KRG, 2011)

As result of dried of springs and handmade wells water shortage problem started in Shaqlawa City, especially in summer season several years ago. To control water shortage and to provide water for Shaqlawa inhabitants and its tourists, the local authorities build:

- Pipe network for transportation drinking water from (25) wells and majority of them are located on Safin Mountain side.
- Construction of Shaqlawa – Qandil water supply project.
- Rehabilitating the old water supply pipe network with bigger pipe diameters.

### 2 - Solid waste and littering pollution

Tourism activities in Shaqlawa caused some forms of pollution. More widely known form of pollution caused by tourism activities is (solid waste and littering pollution). According to a field study daily average of solid waste and littering of an individual tourist in Shaqlawa reaches (1.46) kg / tourist / day. For the foregone we can say, the touristic activities contribute in creation of solid waste and littering pollution in Shaqlawa and increasing daily size of solid waste and littering in the city, especially in summer and in weekends and public holidays.

### 3- Changing Physical Landscape

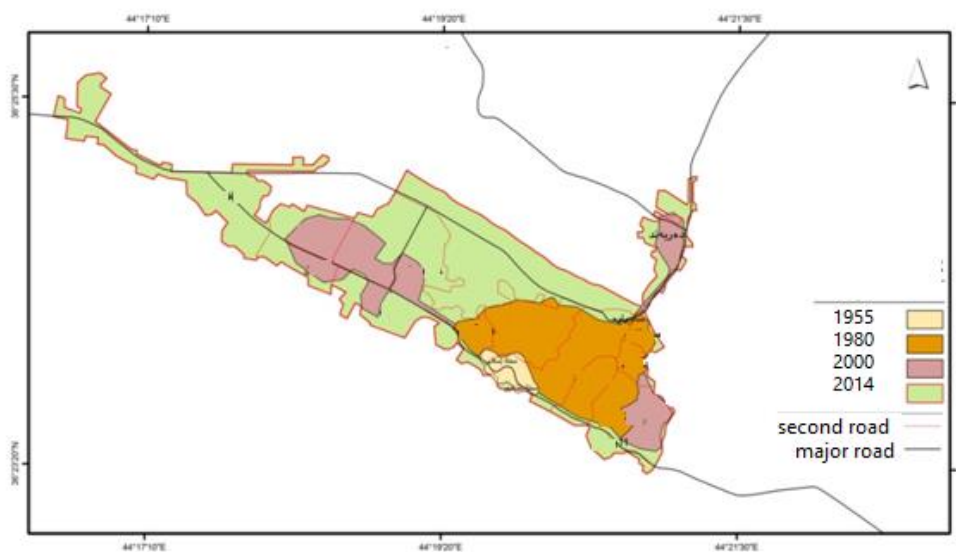
Touristic activities caused changing in Shaqlawa physical landscape. These changes can be shown in the following points:

A -- Changing Shaqlawa land use pattern: Development of tourism facilities in Shaqlawa, such as construction accommodation, water supplies, restaurants, roads and others recreation facilities can lead to land degradation and loss of wildlife habitats and deterioration of scenery.

The fieldwork study data show that the hotel, motel, touristic villages, second home ownership and restaurants and café in Shaqlawa occupied, (651,850) m<sup>2</sup>, (10.6%) of all city urban space in 2014. Of ours building these tourist facilities give rise to decreasing green space in Shaqlawa and its surrounded.

B – Urban expansion of Shaqlawa city: According to the data Shaqlawa urban space, during (1955 – 2014), expanse from (0.18) km<sup>2</sup> in 1955 to (1.85) km<sup>2</sup> in 1980, (3.07) km<sup>2</sup> in 2000 and to (6.15) km<sup>2</sup> in 2014. The city has expanded during last (14) fourteen years, (2000 – 2014), more than it's expanding during (45) forty five previous year, (1955-2000). (KRG, 2011)

Shaqlawa expansion during (1955 – 2014 )



Urban expansion of cities caused several environmental problems represented primarily by:

- Loss of agricultural land.
- Loss of green space.
- Expand the area of producing greenhouse gases.
- Increasing the degree of environmental pollution.
- Declining water tables.
- Loss of life (biology) land.
- Increase the intensity of heat island.

C – Destruction of Saqlawa gardens and Safin Mountain forests: Saqlawa gardens, Safin Mountain forests and others green spaces suffered from negative impacts of tourism development in the city. The suffering of green spaces in Shaqlawa was in form of deforestation and land clearing for construction tourist and recreation facilities.

#### **Fourth: Needs of sustainable tourism development**

Needs of sustainable tourism development come from its requirements and aims on the one hand, and its importance to minimize negative impacts of touristic activities on environment and for addressing the environmental problem caused by these activities on the other hand.

Regarding requirements and aims of sustainable tourism development, it can be summarized in the following points: (Naqshbandi, 2004, Naqshbandi, 2007 and Juganaru, M. Juganaru & Anghel, 2009)

- 1 – Development of tourism plans to achieve present and future needs of the tourists.
- 2 - Protection of the environment to minimize the adverse effects of tourism sources.
- 3 - The protection of animal and plant species, (biodiversity), which leads to loss reduction of future generations options.
- 4 – Encouragement of the exploitation of natural and human tourism resources within environment's ability.
- 5 – To determine the maximum for the exploitation of tourism resources.
- 6 - To achieve justice among the members of one generation and the different generations in terms of the right to benefit from tourism sources.
- 7 - The objective of sustainable tourism is to retain the economic and social advantages of tourism development while reducing or mitigating any undesirable impacts on the natural, historic, cultural or social environment. This is achieved by balancing the needs of tourists with those of the destination.
- 8 - Sustainable tourism allows the development of tourism and recreation activities in a country, region or tourist destination by taking into account the basic principles of sustainable development, showing respect for the environment, for the people and for the economy and the local culture of the tourist receiving region.

Concerning the importance of sustainable tourism development for addressing the environmental problem caused by touristic activities in the world in general and in Saqlawa City in particular can be determined through the following points: (Fien, Calder & White, 2012)

- 1 - The positive side of sustainable tourism is to ensure that development is a positive experience for local people; tourism companies; and tourists themselves.
- 2 - Sustainable tourism, one that establishes a suitable balance between the environmental, economic and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development, plays an important role in conserving biodiversity.
- 3 - It attempts to minimize its impact on the environment and local culture so that it will be available for future generations, while contributing to generate income, employment, and the conservation of local ecosystems.
- 4 - By doing so, sustainable tourism maximizes the positive contribution of tourism to biodiversity conservation and thus to poverty reduction and the achievement of common goals towards sustainable development.

5 - Sustainable tourism provides crucial economic incentives for habitat protection.

6 - Revenues from visitor spending are often channeled back into nature conservation or capacity building programmes for local communities to manage protected areas.

7 - Furthermore, tourism can be a key vehicle in raising awareness and fostering positive behavior change for biodiversity conservation among the millions of people travelling the globe every year.

For better understanding the importance of sustainable tourism development, it is useful indicate to Table (1) related to comparison between the ordinary or traditional tourism development and sustainable tourism development.

**Table (1): Comparison between the ordinary, (traditional), tourism development and sustainable tourism development**

<u>Ordinary, (Traditional), Tourism Development</u>	<u>Sustainable Tourism Development</u>
Fast development	Development is on the stages
Short-term development	Long-term development
Unlimited	Limited, with certain absorptive power
Quantum policy	Qualitative policy
Management of development from outside	Management of development processes from the inside by the local population
Partial planning for separate sectors	Comprehensive and integral planning
Focus on the creation of buildings	Observance of environmental conditions in the construction and land planning
Programs plans for projects	Projects plans programs based on sustainability concept

*Source: Amish Semire; Impact of Sustainable Tourism Development on Treating Unemployment Problem, Algiers Case Study, 2014, pp. 5 -6. (Arabic Language)*

For the foregoing and in the conclusion of the subject of need's of Sustainable tourism development it can say: (UNEP & UNWTO, 2005)

1 - Sustainable tourism development guidelines and management practices are applicable to all forms of tourism in all types of destinations, including mass tourism and the various niche tourism segments.

2 - Sustainability principles refer to the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development, and a suitable balance must be established between these three dimensions to guarantee its long-term sustainability.



## **Conclusions:**

The main conclusions of the study can be summarized in the following points:

1 - Tourism activities are the activities of tourists and its characteristic activities can be identified as those productive activities whose principal output is characteristic of tourism.

2 - According to the level of impacts of tourism activities on environment can be divided into local and global levels.

3 - The local level of environment impacts of touristic activities encloses depletion of natural resources, pollution and changing physical landscape and the global level encloses loss of biodiversity, – Depletion of the ozone layer and climate change.

4 - Sustainable tourism development is: "development that meets the tourist needs of the community and its aspirations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet those needs and achieve those ambitions."

5 - Shaqlawa is a famous resort in Iraqi Kurdistan Region situated to the north versant of Safin Mountain and has great potentialities for touristic activities more important among them are: good geographical location, comfortable climate, beautiful physical landscapes, many historical places, availability of tourism facilities and the city is renowned as a city of peace and multicultural co-existence of its different religions and ethnicities, where everyone respects the beliefs of the other.

6 – Negative impacts of Shaqlawa touristic activities on the environment have local level feature primarily and more environmental problems resulting from tourism activities known in Shaqlawa are: degradation of water resources, solid waste and littering pollution and changing physical landscape.

7 – Needs of sustainable tourism development come from its requirements and aims on the one hand and its importance to minimize the negative impacts of touristic activities on environment and for addressing the environmental problem caused by these activities on the other hand.

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