



Transforming and Managing Destinations Tourism and Leisure in a Time of Global Change and Risks

Environmental management and sustainability in the hospitality business : the case of the Atlas Kasbah Ecolodge Agadir, Morocco



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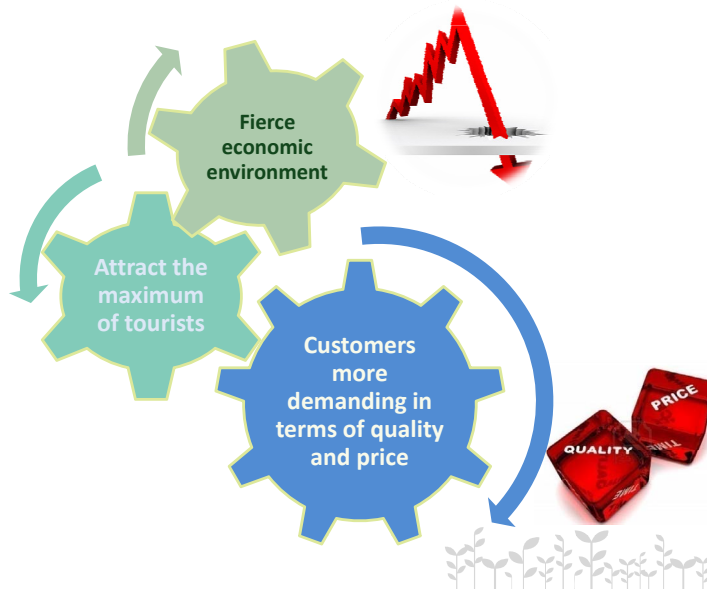
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Introduction



What is the importance of environmental management in the hospitality business ?



Constraints of research and hypotheses



“Environmental management is a set of tools to deal with any activity, tools for managing, reducing and preventing environmental impact”

Does an environmental management exist at the AKE? What is its contribution in marketing these kinds of services? Is there a specific type of customers addicted on ecology in AKE?

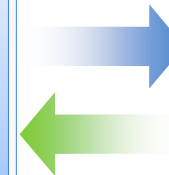
Thus two hypotheses were analyzed :

Hypothesis I

The institution of the environmental management is expensive in terms of investment and has only a minor impact in marketing this kind of service

Hypothesis II

The environmental Management is a short path to achieve sustainability in tourism, especially in terms of sustainable methods of production and consumption.



Analysis approach



1

The Atlas Kasbah Ecolodge
Environmental diagnosis

Atlas Kasbah Ecolodge

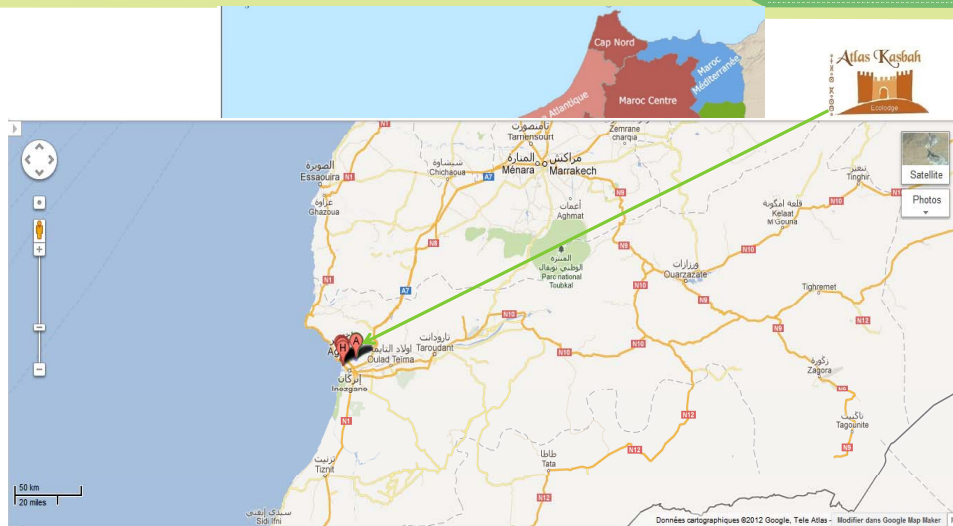


Fig. 1; 2 : Geographic situation

Atlas Kasbah Ecolodge



Is part of the territory of a rural commune called Drarga located some 5 kms from Agadir

Is at the heart of the Argan Biosphere Reserve classified by UNESCO

Has been classified by the Moroccan Ministry of Tourism as a first category of rural shelters

Is accessible by both private and public transportation

It is open all year around

Enjoys an area of more than 1 hectare and a capacity of 26 beds

Environmental diagnosis



Tranquility and beauty.

- Located at the center of the Argan Biosphere Reserve;
- At the foot of the Atlas Mountains;
- On the border of a valley system crossing geological layers dating back to the secondary geological period..

Security, cleanliness and comfort

- Mid size rooms endowed with good quality bedding and, all clean and equipped with hot water.
- A botanical garden
- An electrolysis swimming pool
- A restaurant that serves a clean, traditional and varied bio-food.

Value of services

Quality of Human resources

The staff at Atlas Kasbah Ecolodge is pleasant, presentable, welcoming, offers an efficient service and speaks several languages (Arabic, Amazigh, French, German and English).

Discovery of nature and local culture

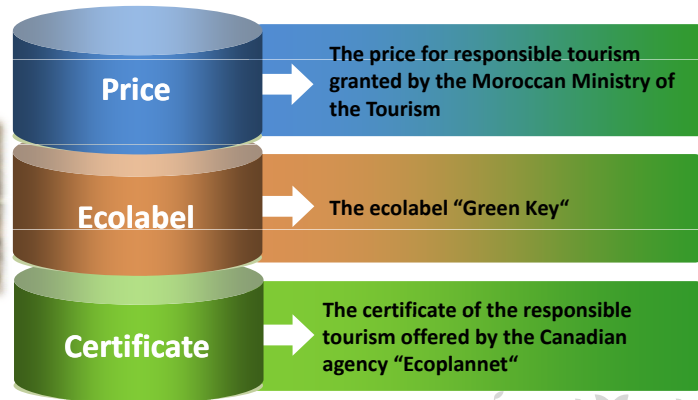
- The Ecolodge puts at the disposal of its customers:
- Booklets of welcome;
 - Notice board;
 - Advice;
 - Web site/Facebook page.



Environmental management



The Ecolodge has been awarded several citations for sustainable tourism since its inauguration, notably:



Atlas Kasbah evaluation:



- The plumbing is equipped with debit reducers;
- The kitchen is endowed with two regularly drained ferries;
- The soil is protected to limit the evaporation;
- Station of phyto-purification ;
- Natural ventilation;
- Light of the day encouraged
- Use of the TRE (Technologies of Renewable Energy)
- The establishment doesn't use any chemicals (alternative products).



- The implementation of the rule of the 3RV: to reduce, re-employer, to recycle, to valorize;
- The reduction of the objects to unique use and not of individual conditioning;
- The storage of the garbage in a non visible place by the customer and without the nuisance of smell.
- The establishment is entirely tobacco free except on the outside terraces.

Atlas Kasbah evaluation:



- Sensitization of the local population via the contribution and the involvement to local environmental programs;
- Web site and Facebook page
- Formation to the steps of the quality for a staff
- Thematic documents for customers

- Setting up of a biologic vegetable garden with organic manure use;
- Respect for the product season;
- Valuing of the local products and non pollutants (pottery, canvas of jute, reeds).

- Supports and the finances the events of socioeconomic nature.
- Some activities proposed by the Ecolodge, notably, the rides tourists take on donkeys or the guides are provided by locals to customers.

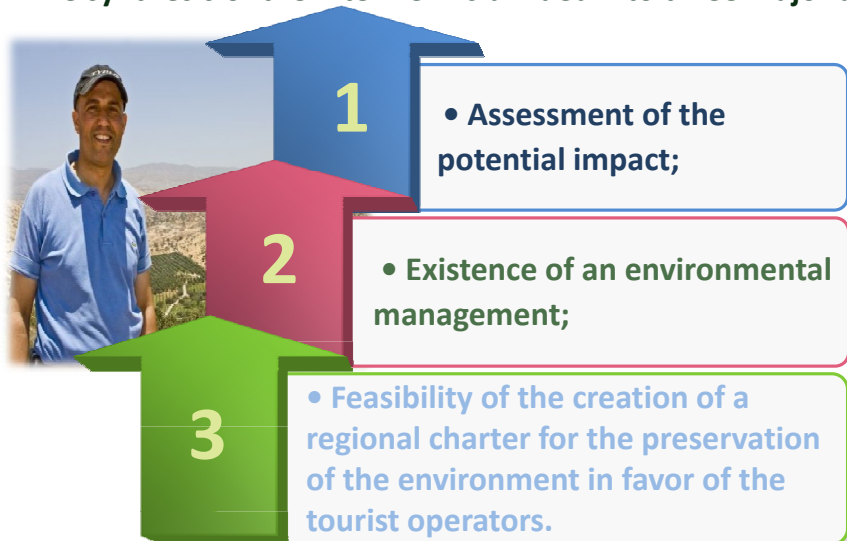
2 Synthesis of the interview



Synthesis of the interview



The synthesis of the interview is divided into three major axes:



Assessment of the potential impact :



This assessment can be summed up below :

Tab. 3 : Potential Impacts of the establishment

Component	Rubric	Potential Impact
Economic	Employment	-Creation of 15 direct employments (Staff from the nearby village) -50 indirect jobs -Encouragement of artisans of the village
	Local economy	-Promotion of the local products -Participation of the local population in the organization of hiking and horse riding
Social	Culture and patrimony	-Helping the local culture -Valorization of the local tangible and intangible heritage -Preservation of the architectural art and the local construction materials
	Society	-Financing the social events -Respect the habits and the Religion
Environmental	Physical area	-Controlled intrusion in the Reserve Biosphere of l'Argan forest -Preservation of the Argan tree -Water management : phyto-purification -Energy management : solar panels -Waste management : selective tri, creation of the green house...

Source: Own survey Boudribili



Existence of an environmental management



In order to maintain its reputation as an ally of the nature, Atlas Kasbah practices an environmental policy that aims to minimize all negative impact on the environment. Some examples are :

- Enhancing the local natural and cultural heritage
- Enforcing the environmental legislation
- Making the respect of the environment a fundamental aspect in the decision making process
- Establishing some partnerships with the local for the purchases and making sure that the locals share this same respect for the environment

The manager has been very satisfied by the results of its environmental practices. However, the existence of some constraints namely those related to investments with a 40% stake in its marketing.



Creation of a regional charter



Mr Hassan Aboutayeb, Manager of Atlas Kasbah Ecolodge

"It is imperative to institute a regional charter* for the preservation of the environment in favor of the tourist operators as an important initiative to undertake"

This charter should first reinforce the quality of the services provided then the preservation of the environment

We participate in the institution of this charter, because it represents a landmark tool in providing quality service in the preservation of the environment

Elaborate a guide of good practices destined to the professionals in the hospitality business can only strengthen the awareness of the importance of the good environmental practices

We would like to thank Mr Aboutayeb, manager of the AKE for his collaboration.

3 Result of the questionnaire

Result of the questionnaire



- ❖ The survey of this study is based on a sample of 45 foreign tourists;
- ❖ 40 % of the guests are repeaters, even if 60 % are for the first time in the region;
- ❖ On the other hand, only about 20% of the interviewees have already visited the Ecolodge and expressed their satisfaction with the geographical location.



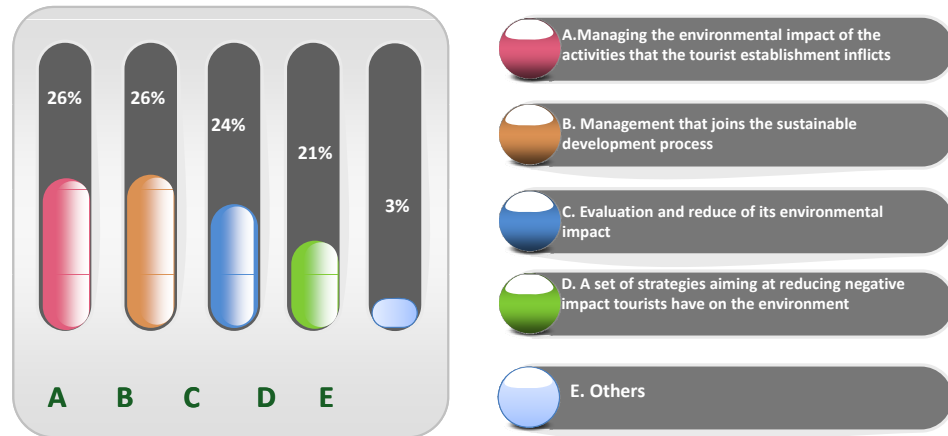
Source: Own survey Boudribili



Environmental management definition:



Fig. 2 : The environmental management definition by the residents



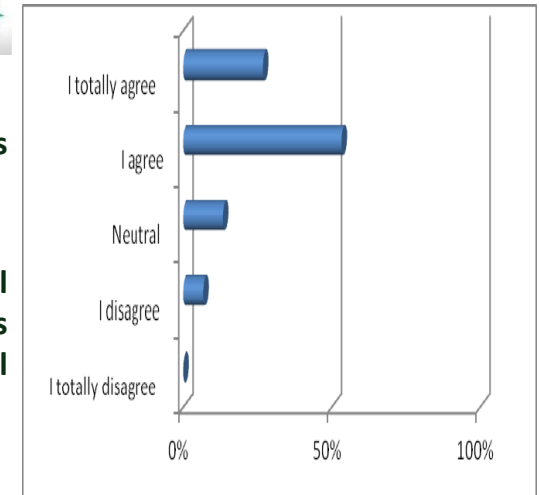
Source: Own survey Boudribili

Labels importance



Fig. 3 : Labels importance in the choice of the welcome establishment

- **57 % of the tourists answered affirmatively.**
- **80 % declare that a label guaranteed the seriousness of the environmental goal of the institution**



Source: Own survey Boudribili

4 Discussion and conclusion

Conclusion:

The choice of the Atlas Kasbah Ecolodge proved to be a well justified choice.

Result : a serious engagement in the respect of the environment with the principles of sustainable development.

At the end, after verification of the hypothesis we confirm that the environmental Management is a short path to achieve sustainability in tourism, especially in terms of sustainable methods of production and consumption (hypothesis II).

The establishment is rather frequented by an aware target that generally adheres to the ecological call.

Implementation through a charter of environmental quality to enforce the quality of services provided and aiming at enhancing environmental quality.

The Ecolodge remains a pioneering experience in this kind of tourist activity that deserves a large diffusion and an application on similar cases.

Conclusion :



In what way can we popularize these good practices and assure at the same time, the managers commitment?



Conclusion:



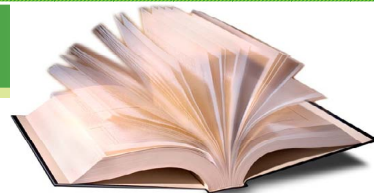
Therefore, in order to generalize this experience, QET Charter has been created in the basis of the results of this study :



- The Charter Quality and Environment in Tourism is a project that will soon see the light of day.
- It aims to maintain a permanent improvement concerning the quality of services and also the protection of natural resources in rural tourism. In its first part, the charter will be applied on 70 establishments operating in rural tourism.
- Its main objectives are:
 - The perseveration and the valorization of natural resources;
 - The promotion and the popularization of the environmental management within the establishments of the hospitality business in Agadir
 - Enhance the quality of services;
 - Attract a sensitized category of customers and sensitize the non interested one in environment.



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Thank for your attention!



Source: Atlas Kasbah Ecolodge



Agadir Nowadays

Environmental management and sustainability in the hospitality business : the case of the Atlas Kasbah Ecolodge Agadir, Morocco

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