CUDES JOURNAL CURRENT DEBATES IN SOCIAL SCIENCES

Aksoy, Z. & Seven, E. (2022). The Descriptive Overview of Hunting Tourism: General Reviews for Turkey. *Journal of Current Debates in Social Sciences*, 5(Special Issue-1),110-122.

Research Article

The Descriptive Overview of Hunting Tourism: General Reviews for Turkey

Avcılık Turizmine Açıklayıcı Bir Bakış: Türkiye İçin Genel Değerlendirmeler

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DOI: 10.37154/cudes.2022.47

Article Info

Received: 14.02.2022
Accepted: 09.03.2022

Keywords: Wildlife tourism, Hunting tourism, Hunting species, Protected areas, Turkey

Abstract

Wildlife tourism, a popular type of tourism, is based on the interaction between tourists and wild animals which are in captivity or in their natural environment. Hunting tourism consists of temporary travel and accommodation of hunters for the purpose of hunting, resting and doing sports in a region or country other than the places where they live permanently, and making contributions to the economy of the visited country. People are seeking new sorts of tourism, such as historical sightseeing and discovering new nations with hunting tourism. The growth of the hunting tourism depends on not only the quantity of hunters, but also the type of game and trophy structure. Hunting tourism holds a significant place and potential in wildlife, and is regarded as a contributor to the economies of many countries, including Turkey. Turkey encompasses a rich fauna as in other biodiversity elements and, has various hunting tourism activities. In this paper, hunting tourism, one of the alternative tourism types, has been examined as a conceptual evaluation of tourism, the studies carried out on wildlife potential, wildlife development areas, protected areas, hunting fees, hunting regions and provinces, hunting laws and regulations in Turkey are investigated, and the latest updated data on the current topic have been presented and compared in accordance with international academic studies and their results.

Makale Bilgisi

Geliş: 14.02.2022
Onay: 09.03.2022

Anahtar sözcükler: Yaban hayatı turizmi, Av turizmi, Av türleri, Korunan alanlar, Türkiye

Öz

Popüler bir turizm türü olan yaban hayatı turizmi, doğal veya doğal olmayan ortamlarında bulunan vahşi hayvanlar ile turistler arasındaki etkileşime dayanmaktadır. Av turizmi, avcıların kalıcı olarak yaşadıkları yerler dışında bir bölge veya ülkede avlanmak, dinlenmek ve spor yapmak amacıyla geçici olarak seyahat etmelerini, konaklamalarını ve ziyaret edilen ülkenin ekonomisine katkılar sağlamasını kapsar. İnsanlar av turizmi ile tarihi geziler ve yeni milletler keşfetmek gibi yeni turizm türleri aramaktadırlar. Av turizminin büyümesi sadece avcıların sayısına değil aynı zamanda avın türüne ve yapısına da bağlıdır. Yaban hayatı içinde önemli bir yere ve potansiyele sahip olan av turizmi, Türkiye'de dahil birçok ülkenin ekonomisine katkı sağlayan bir turizm unsuru olarak görülmektedir. Türkiye, diğer biyolojik çeşitlilik unsurlarında olduğu gibi zengin bir faunaya sahiptir ve çeşitli av turizmi faaliyetlerine sahiptir. Bu çalışmada, alternatif turizm türlerinden biri olan av turizmi, turizmin kavramsal bir değerlendirmesi olarak incelenmiş, Türkiye'de yaban hayatı potansiyeli, yaban hayatı geliştirme alanları, korunan alanlar, av ücretleri, av bölgeleri ve illeri, av kanun ve yönetmelikleri konularında yapılan çalışmalar araştırılmış, güncel konuyla ilgili en son veriler sunulmuş ve uluslararası akademik çalışmalar ve sonuçları doğrultusunda karşılaştırılmıştır.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism sector has gained enormous significance on a global scale in recent years following by an intense evolutionary process (Martín-Delgado et al., 2020). It is also a growing economic force increasing averagely of 3% per year, and it is generally perceived as being detached from the political, cultural and social environment producing the ambition to be a tourist in the first place (Curtin and Kragh, 2014). Tourism is a large industry keeping different varieties, and some types of tourism reach saturation level leading serious changes in the tourist profile (Yılmaz, 2001). Thus, there might be a transition from mass tourism to individual tourism. Due to the sensitivity of today's tourists to the environment, products hosting attraction such as highland tourism, hunting tourism, wildlife, river sports, agro-tourism, botanical tourism, trekking, camping-caravan tourism, mountain tourism, bicycle tours, ornithological tourism, butterfly watching and highland tourism etc. are considered as the scope of touristic product diversification (Buckley, 1994; Brandon, 1996; Yılmaz, 2001; Şafak, 2006; Fennell, 2015; Genç and Seven, 2020). These varieties in tourism sector are supposed to make contributions to both the development of the tourism and the tourism revenues of the countries.

Hunting tourism is a consequence of hunters' interest in shooting different specimens distributed irregularly all over the world, and this case led to a great number of national and international travels (Martín-Delgado et al., 2020). Hunting tourism is an activity, which belongs to hunting as a form of economic activity, and it is also a special form of tourism (Prentović et al., 2016). It is characterized by certain characteristics, yet it is essential to have a certain amount of available fund of one or more species of game for its success (Garača et al., 2019). With hunting tourism, people's tendency to return to nature has increased and it has been seen that people are looking for new tourism types such as hunting tourism as well as coastal tourism, seeing historical places, discovering new countries (Kozak and Bahçe, 2009). Hunting has become a significant tourism type in the long run, and it is getting more popular day by day.

There are various hunting tourism activities in Turkey, and all of these activities contribute to the management of natural resources and Turkish economy considerably (Süel et al., 2019). Hunting tourism has an important role and potential in the contribution of wildlife to the country's economy, and all kinds of expenditures and photo safaris made by tourists coming to the area with hunting tourism also contribute to the economy significantly (Akkuzu et al., 2015). Considering multiple investigations on the current topic, it is indicated that the impact of hunting and wildlife tourism on economy, wildlife potential of Turkey, the spatial dispersion of species, hunting tourism statistics are studied (Ege, 1996; Şafak, 2006; Ukav, 2012; Alkan, 2014; Olcay et al., 2019; Yayla et al., 2020; Özer, 2020; Sarı and Arpacik, 2020). Conducting investigations on a general literature review of various studies revealed that wildlife tourism or hunting tourism is not much studied in many areas of tourism, and also the number of the studies dealing with these two topics at the same time are very limited. Most of the researchers or people in charge of these kinds of tourism are not aware of the proper requirements such as the potential, areas, fees, provinces, laws and regulations etc.; hence, some certain knowledge about general scope should be stressed. Furthermore, in order to reach statistics on hunting and wildlife in Turkey, a current study on the subject is required.

Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to evaluate conceptually hunting tourism, wildlife tourism, hunting tourism legislation, hunting tourism in Turkey and wildlife-based tourism potential of Turkey. The following objectives are defined;

- to investigate hunting tourism on wildlife potential,
- to describe wildlife development areas,
- to pinpoint protected areas,
- to seek hunting fees,
- to claim hunting regions and provinces,
- to regard hunting laws and regulations.

The current study is a conceptual review and interpretation of studies conducted about hunting and wildlife tourism in Turkey; therefore, the recent data of many international studies from various conference proceedings, articles, theses, books, and book chapters published in the multiple databases holding substantial impact factors have been employed as data collection. The related studies were classified and analyzed as a list in order to indicate the significant aspects on the obtained data. This study is also a descripte analysis, and thus scanning key aspects in thoses studies are crucial to posit the data of the study.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Wildlife Tourism

The term "wildlife" has a rather deep meaning that includes wild animals and the environment in which they live. However, it is generally used in relation to terrestrial and aquatic vertebrate animals in Turkey (Akkuzu et al., 2015). Defined as an eco- and animal friendly tourism, wildlife tourism generally shows and watches animals in their natural habitat (Korir et al., 2013). Wildlife tourism consists of various experiences including hunting tourism, fishing tourism, wildlife-watching tourism, and captive-wildlife tourism (Higginbottom, 2014). Wildlife tourism is based on the interaction held between tourists and wild animals in captivity or their natural habitat, and it can have contributions to the environmental and socioeconomic benefits, which include providing jobs for local people, developing a conservation ethic, affecting onsite visitor behaviour, and satisfying tourists (Bertella, 2018). As a very popular form of tourism, wildlife tourism has become a significant component of tourism industry.

Wildlife tourism is generally animal friendly tourism form, and the opportunity to see animals which might even have a positive impact on the improvement of visitors' mental state (Kurleto, 2014). Wildlife tourism experiences not only have considerable influences on tourists' learning and behaviour, but also make great contributions to tourists' satisfaction with the experiences (Ballantyne et al., 2012). It is supposed to provide both conservation and the protection of potential contact between observers and wild animals (Schanzel and McIntosh, 2000). Most of the wildlife tourists are much more careful than other tourists in regards to participating in activities likely to have a disturbing effect on animals as they have an interest in and a concern for wildlife (Green and Higginbottom, 2000). However, there can be some negative impacts of wildlife tourism, such as disturbing animals in their natural habitats, scaring away animals and distrupting their feeding and nesting sitesdue to a rapid increase in resort and hotel construction (Korir et al., 2013). Besides, it is extensively acknowledged that wildlife tourism may have some negative impacts on biodiversity (Curtin and Kragh, 2014). Though the tourists attending to the wildlife tourism are generally very sensitive about the nature and animals, some detrimental effects of the wildlife tourism may occur.

Wildlife tourism is a very important component of the tourism industry of a great number of countries, including some of South American countries (especially in Ecuador-Galapagos), Africa (particularly Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa and Botswana), Bangladesh, Australia, Indonesia, India, Malaysia, Canada and many other countries (Kurleto, 2014). It is a multi-million-dollar industry including safaris and customized tour packages (Korir et al., 2013). Today, wildlife resources provide important contributions to the economies of countries in different ways such as hunting, nature tourism, and wild animal products (Wollscheid and Czudek, 2010). On the other hand, overloading wildlife resources, especially in underdeveloped or developing countries, seriously threatens the future of these resources (Akkuzu et al., 2015). Therefore, the planning of wildlife tourism in a country should be made very carefully not to endanger the wildlife resources.

2.2 Hunting Tourism

Since the existence of humanity, hunting has changed continuously, and it has altered into an activity for sports and entertainment in the course of time despite of the fact that it was a necessity for survival (Özer, 2015). Hunting is generally regarded as a serious leisure or sport in western societies, and it is expanding tourist markets internationally (Tickle and Von Essen, 2020). Hunting, which means the act of capturing animals living freely in nature, alive or dead, has attracted the attention of human beings in almost every period (Şafak, 2006). It is a phenomenon which started with the existence of humanity, has undergone some changes and continues its existence today. It has turned into a recreational tourism activity for pleasure, while it was a necessity for people to survive in the

early ages (Unur, 2000). Furthermore, it is known that hunting tourism is a kind of tourism, where an individual travel outside his/her municipality of residence with the aim of hunting, and this travel can be either domestic or international (Keskinarkaus and Matilainen 2009). Hunting tourism also includes the trip and layover of hunters to rest and do sports.

The history of hunting tourism is divided into three stages (Martín-Delgado et al., 2020). The first stage was in the 19th century, which included the first international travels in Africa and Asia with the purpose of hunting (Bauer and Herr, 2004); the second stage was in the 20th century, and in this stage the recreational nature of hunting became general, and hunting destinations became consolidated in this century, and a large number of companies providing hunting tourism services were founded (Martín-Delgado et al., 2020). In the third stage that took place in the 21st century, the hunting tourism has become a more established sector worldwide (IUCN SSC, 2012). It has developed significantly in the course of time and become one of the fastest growing forms of tourism (Damm, 2008). Hunting tourism has gained importance in time, and it has become an essential element of tourism industry.

Hunting tourism is a kind of tourism that consists of temporary travel and accommodation of hunters for the purpose of hunting, resting and doing sports in a region or country other than where they live permanently, and which makes significant contributions to the economy of the visited country and region (Unur, 2000). Hunting tourism industry needs labour force intensively, thus operators are supposed to have comprehensive knowledge of local environment, which necessitates using local hunting guides and staff in the improvement and distribution of the products (Matilainen and Keskinarkaus, 2010). In the ancient times, most of the hunters had higher purchasing power, and they were ambitious to relish the intact nature, watch and hunt animals, and enjoy experiencing gastronomic specialties that were prepared of the game (Milojica et al., 2014). Hunters are divided in three groups, and these groups are including hunters, who hunt for meat, who shoot to count carcasses, and who aim specific body parts either for legal or illegal trade, or as trophies, and these three groups might include legal commercial shooters, illegal poachers, local residents, or recreational shooters (Buckley and Mossaz, 2015). Though hunters are generally viewed as stewards of nature and conservationists, it is claimed that hunters illustrate the paradox of being considered as “animal lovers” while also killing animals for excitement and sport (Tickle and Von Essen, 2020). The main difference between a hunter and a hunting tourist is that when the hunter needs to pay for the hunting experience, in the form of services with an outfitter, they become a tourist (Tickle and Von Essen, 2020). Also, the hunting tourist is a traveller who is pushed by a defined special interest that makes contributions to their choice of destination for travelling (Komppula and Suni, 2013). Having powerful ecological awareness, hunter-tourists are lover of nature, wilderness and sports, and as they have a higher purchasing power, they are eager to allocate considerable funds for satisfying their own needs (Milojica et al., 2014). It is seen that the tourists attending to the hunting tourism have been wealthy, as hunting tourism requires high purchasing power.

2.3 Hunting Tourism Legislation

In Turkey, the need to make a serious regulation in hunting occurred for the first time in 1937, and for this purpose, the "Land Hunting Law" numbered 3167 was enacted. Hunting tourism started in Turkey in 1950, and until the 1970s, foreigners who came to our country hunted by their own means (Unur, 2000). Foreign and domestic hunters started hunting tourism in the 1950’s without paying any fees for hunting, and foreign hunters went on hunting game in Turkey without any legal rules until 1975 (Yayla et al., 2020). Turkey became a member of the *International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation*, in 1967. *Hunting Tourism Regulation* was issued in 1973 to organize the activities held by hunting travel agencies in Turkey, and numerous adjustments were made for hunting tourism (Demir et al. 2012).

Hunting tourism activities are organized by travel agencies, and these agencies have to obtain a Hunting Tourism Permit from the Ministry of Forestry in order to organize hunting tours and hunting parties for foreign tourist hunters (Official Gazette, 1973). Local hunters must apply for a hunting tourism permit with the *Hunting Tourism Permit Application Form*, which includes the request (Official Gazette, 2018). Foreign hunters can hunt game and wild animal species in the hunting grounds within the scope of hunting tourism through a travel agency or / by obtaining a *Special Hunting Permit for Foreign Hunters*, regardless of the travel agency (Official Gazette, 2018).

Taking the European Union countries into consideration, it is pinpointed that there are some differences in terms of legislation on hunting. Although some of the European countries follow a shared common approach in the hunting tourism economy management, they have their own specific conditions, traditions, the number and species diversity of game animals (Myronenko, 2015). Thus, arrangement and modification of game and hunting management regulations might take some time in the Europe. The European Union's legal hunting framework is quite complicated because there are some legal directives [Firearms Directive (1991), Wild Game Meat Directive (1992), Bird Directive (1979), and Habitat Directive (1992)], which are the outcomes of international agreements, and their regulations and decisions influencing the internal law of each of the EU countries (Myronenko, 2015). There is no common hunting legislation applicable to all European countries, but there are a certain number of legal directives that are compatible with international agreements.

2.4 Wildlife-Based Tourism Potential of Turkey

In order to protect and develop the potential of hunting and wildlife, and to create a rational form of resource management, a meeting called "A Training Workshop on New Approach in Hunting and Wildlife Management" was held in İzmir between 23-25 March 1999 with the participation of the Ministry of Forestry, academicians, non-governmental organizations, and professional organizations (Alkan, 2014). The second Workshop was held in Ankara on October 27-28, 1999, and on February 5-6, 2000 the third Workshop was followed by Istanbul University at the Faculty of Forestry. The subject of these workshops was the draft of a new Land Hunting Law (Geray and Iğırcık, 2002).

Table 1. Wildlife Development Areas in Turkey (DKMP (2022)

Province	Area Name	Target Species
Adana	Akyatan Lake, Pozantı Karanfildağ, Seyhan Dam Lake,Tuzla Lake, Hançerderesi	Water Birds, Wild Goat
Afyon	Sandıklı Akdağ, -Dinar Karakuyu Lake	Water Birds, Red Deer
Ankara	Beypazarı Kapaklı, Kara Akbaba, Nallıhan Davutoğlan, Nallıhan Emremsultan, Nallıhan Saçak	Red Deer, Black Vulture Water Birds, Wild Sheep
Antalya	Akseki İbradı Üzümdere, Alanya Dimçayı, Cevizli Gidengelmez Mountain, Düzlerçamı, Gündoğmuş, Kaş Kıbrıs Brook, Sarıkaya, Sivridağ	Wild Goat, Red Deer
Ardahan	Posof	Mountain Rooster
Artvin	Yusufeli Çoruh Valley	Wild Goat
Balıkesir	Akdağ	Red Deer
Bartın-Ulus	Sökü	Red Deer, Roe
Bingöl	Şeytandağları	Hook Horned Mountain Goat, Wild Goat
Bitlis - Adilcevaz	Süphandağı	Hook Horned Mountain Goat, Wild Goat
Bolu	Göynük Kapıormanı, Yedigöller, Abant	Red Deer, Roe
Burdur	Burdur Lake, Karataş Lake	Water Birds
Bursa	Karacabey Karadağı – Ovakorusu	Pheasant
Çorum	Kargı Kösdağ	Roe
Denizli	Çardak Beylerli Lake, Çivril Akdağ	Red deer, Water Birds
Düzce	Gölyaka Efteni Lake	Water Birds
Erzurum	Çat, İspir Vercenik Mountain, Oltu	Hook Horned Mountain Goat, Wild Goat
Eskişehir	Mihalıççık Çatacık, Sivrihisar Balıkdamı	Red deer, Water Birds
Gaziantep	Tahtaköprü Baraj Lake	Water Birds
Gümüşhane	Şiran Kuluca	Wild Goat
Hatay	Altınözü, Mountain Gazelle Area, İskenderun-Arsuz	Striped Hyena, Mountain Gazelle, Wild Goat, Roe
İstanbul	Çatalca Çilingoz, Sarıyer Feneryolu	Red Deer, Roe
İzmir	Bayındır-Ovacık, Selçuk Gebekirse Lake, Homa Dalyanı	Roe, Water Birds
Karabük	Sırçalı Canyon, Yenice	Roe, Red Deer
Kars	Kuyucuk Lake, Sarıkamış Kağızman	Water Birds, Wild Goat
Kastamonu	Azdavay Kartdağı, Ilgazdağı, Taşköprü Elekdağ, Tosya Gavurdağı	Red Deer
Kayseri	Yahyalı Aladağlar	Wild Goat

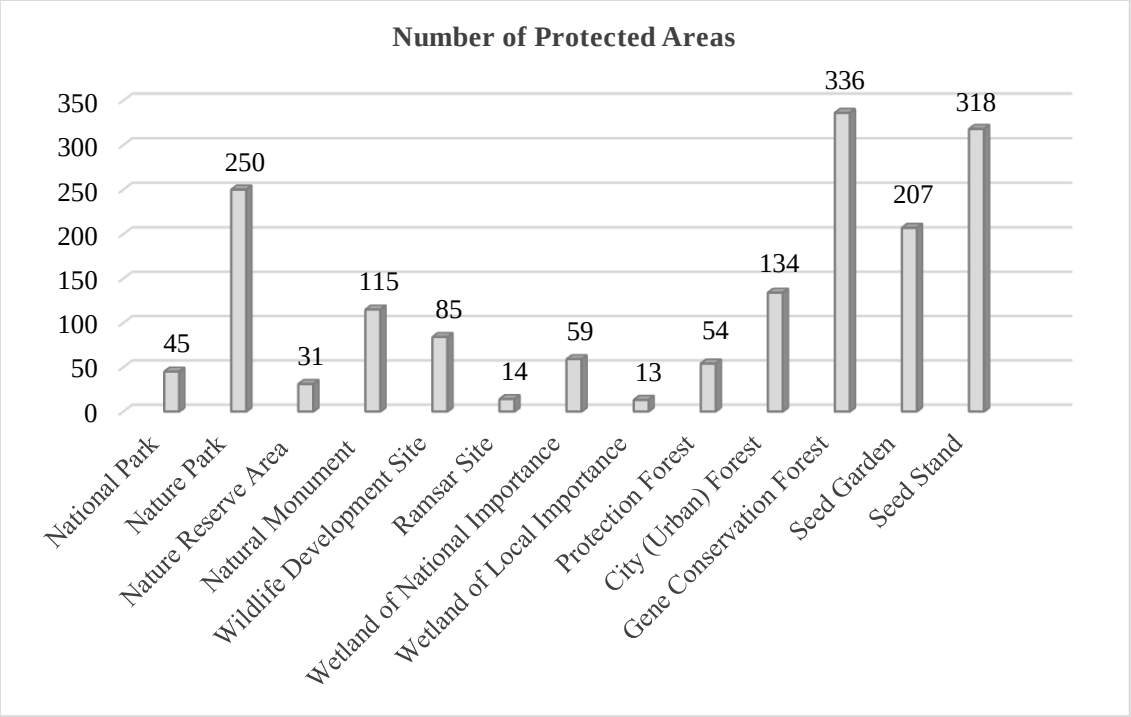
Kocaeli	Kandıra Seyrek	Roe
Konya	Bozdağ	Wild Sheep
Kütahya	Merkez Altıntaş, Tavşanlı Çatak, Türkmenbaba	Bustard, Red Deer
Mersin	Mut Kestel Mountain, Tarsus Kadıncık Valley, Cehennem Deresi, Hisardağ ve Gedikdağı, Tarsus-Hopur Topaşır	Wild Goat
Muğla	Köyceğiz, Yılanlı Çakmak, Bördübet	Caracal, Wolf, Brown Bear, Otter
Niğde	Çamardı Demirkazık	Wild Goat
Osmaniye	Zorkun Valley	Roe
Rize	Çamlıhemşin Kaçkar	Hook Horned Mountain Goat
Sakarya	Kaynarca-Acarlar Lake	Water Birds
Samsun	Bafra Kızılırmak Delta, Terme Gölardı Simenlik Lake	Water Birds, Pheasant
Sinop	Bozburun	Roe
Şanlıurfa	Birecik Fırat, Birecik Steppes, Merkez Kızılkuyu	Bald Ibis, Striped Hyena, Desert Varan, Euphrates Tortoise, Gazelle
Tokat	Kaz Lake	Water Birds
Zonguldak	Yeşilöz	Red Deer, Roe

Table 1 shows that Wildlife Development Areas are under the protection of the General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks, and there are a total of 85 Wildlife Development Areas in 41 different provinces of Turkey (DKMP, 2022). Different species of animals such as red deer, black vulture, water birds, wild sheep, bald ibis, striped hyena, desert varan, Euphrates tortoise, gazelle, roe, pheasant, hook horned mountain goat, mountain rooster, bustard, caracal, wolf, brown bear, otter are bred at these wildlife development areas.

The protection of natural areas is universal in nature, and has a long history (Martín-Delgado et al., 2020). Protected areas are another source of income other than hunting tourism within the scope of wildlife-oriented tourism activities in Turkey, and are referred to by names such as national park, natural monument, and special environmental protection zone. While the ratio of them to the country's area was 2.96% in 1990, the total size of these areas, which was 4.224 as of 2019, reached to 6.777.346 hectares, and the ratio of this area to the country's area is 8.69 % (WWF, 2020).

There are 1661 protected areas in Turkey. Furthermore, Turkey has 336 Gene Conservation Forests, 318 Seed Stands, 250 Nature Parks, 207 Seed Gardens, 134 City (Urban) Forests, 115 Natural Monuments, 85 Wildlife Development Sites, 59 Wetlands of National Importance, 54 Protection Forests, 45 National Parks, 31 Nature Reserve Areas, 14 Ramsar Sites, and 13 Wetlands of Local Importance (Figure 1; DKMP, 2021b). While the number of protected area visitors was approximately 25 million in one year in 2017, this figure increased to 35 million 360 thousand 393 people in 2018 (DKMP, 2021c). As a result of the improvement and development works carried out, the number of visitors to the protected areas has enhanced each year, constituting 51.8 million in 2019 and 32.8 million as of the end of December 2020 (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry Activity Report, 2020). There was an influx of visitors to the areas protected by the Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks in 2021. With the investments made in protected areas, the number of visitors reached 51 million 756 thousand 443 people in 2021 (DKMP, 2021c). It is seen that the protected areas have attracted a great number of visitors recently.

Figure 1. Protected Areas in Turkey (DKMP, 2021b)



Turkey has a great biological diversity in terms of fauna and flora elements with its diverse ecosystem and habitat types. In addition, it is among the countries that attract attention with its endemic species. Biodiversity is one of the important assets of tourism with the species and ecosystems it covers (Seven, 2020). Turkey has a considerable potential in terms of hunting and wildlife resources, both in terms of species diversity and the amount it can host in its habitat. However, this potential has been compromised by the destruction or mismanagement of wild ecosystems and habitats (Şafak, 2006). Handling the current literature, it is found that the problems encountered in hunting and wildlife tourism and the solution proposals for these problems are widely highlighted. Olcay et al. (2019) conducted a research on determining the reasons for tourists to prefer hunting tourism, and they stated that the participants in the study mostly wished hunting tourism for a healthy life and relaxation, and that is why the controls regarding the development of hunting tourism should be tightened and conscious hunting should be developed. Ukav (2012) carried out another research to reveal the structure of Adıyaman hunting tourism, and as a result of the research, he suggested that the entailed significance should be given to wildlife hunting in Turkey in order to prevent illegal hunting. Şafak (2006) covered hunting and wildlife management in the Aegean Region , and explained the hunter profile of the Aegean Region ,the priority problems in hunting and wildlife management, and developed solutions for these problems.

The contribution of wildlife resources to the country's economy and the success to be achieved in this field are closely related to the management of these resources in line with the principle of sustainability (Akkuzu et al., 2015). According to Başkaya (2010), the number of native wild animals that can be hunted in a country is one of the important ways to measure the success in wildlife management. Although, Turkey is home to many species hunted in Europe, it can't hunt as much as many European countries (Akkuzu et al., 2015). For example: Germany can catch 1,200,000 roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*) annually, while Turkey, which has a significant potential for this species, can hunt deer, which can be expressed in very low numbers compared to this number (Başkaya, 2010). Though Turkey has rich wildlife resources, the hunting tourism statistics of the country fall behind the resources.

2.5 Hunting Tourism in Turkey

Turkey is a country with different geographical and climatic characteristics, and it has a suitable environment for a large number of game and wild animals to live and shelter (Unur, 2000). Since it has geographical regions with different climatic characteristics, the vegetation cover is richer than other Middle Eastern countries, and the fact that there are 9,000 species of plants gathered under 850 genera is another important factor; therefore, many animal species with different climate and nutritional needs can find suitable habitats for themselves (Özer, 2020). A total of 1279 vertebrate species are recognized in Turkey, including 160 mammals, 466 birds, 120 reptiles, 22 frogs, 127 freshwater fish, and 384 marine fish (Demirsoy, 1982). Hunting tourism officially began in Turkey in 1977 with wild boar hunting via setting a fee for foreign tourist hunters (Yayla et al., 2020). Later, wild goats, which were protected and reproduced within the borders of Antalya Termessos National Park, were offered to hunting tourism in 1981, and the bear and wild goat resources in Artvin and Yusufeli hunting grounds were opened to hunting tourism in 1984 (Korkmaz, 2021). As of the 1995-1996 hunting season, some of the income from hunting tourism has been transferred to Village Legal Entities (Alkan, 2014). Althoug Turkey has had a great number of animal species, hunting tourism officially started only in the late 1970s.

Though the history of hunting in Turkey dates back to hundreds of years ago, and hunting has been a significant source of nourishment and entertainment for Turks, hunting tourism is a fairly new topic (Başkaya et al., 2012). Hunting tourism has been discussed from different perspectives in the following studies. Ege (1996) emphasized that Turkey has a suitable geographical location for a large number of game and wild animals to live and shelter, but despite its rich flora and fauna, Turkey has not been able to benefit from this potential sufficiently. Alkan (2014) examined the hunting tourism potentials of Antalya province and its effects on hunting tourism in terms of wildlife, and revealed that 10 mammal species were detected with a camera trap. Yayla et al. (2020) tried to identify the spatial dispersion of species allowed to be hunted, and also aimed to assess hunting tourism with regards to the geographical distribution of the animal species. Besides, Sarı and Arpacik (2020) looked into Turkey's hunting tourism statistics between 2000-2018, the number of protected area visitors, and interviews with domestic and foreign tourists visiting some protected areas in the Eastern Black Sea Region between 2016-2018. Özer (2020) pointed out that hunting tourism would enhance tourism incomes in addition to the income obtained from mass tourism. He also stated that hunting tourism has the effect of spreading the tourism concentrated on the coastline to the inner regions, so the tourism sector can be revived in the inner regions as well, and it can contribute to the elimination of interregional inequality in income distribution.

All applications to be made within the scope of hunting tourism in Turkey are determined by the Central Hunting Commission to include each hunting year from 1 April to the end of 31 March of the following year (Olcay et al., 2019). The types of animals that are allowed to be hunted within the scope of international and national hunting tourism in our country are as follows.

Species Allowed to Hunt in the Scope of International (Private) Hunting Tourism in 2021-2022 Hunting Season (DKMP, 2021a).

1. Wild goat
2. Faulty horned wild goat
3. Hybrid wild Goat
4. Hook horned mountain goat
5. Anatolian Mouflon
6. Red deer
7. Gazelle
8. Roe deer

Table 2. Hunting fees and numbers of animals allowed to hunt (2021-2022) (Official Gazette, 2021)

Name of the animal species	Agency	Local	Total	Distribution rate by animal species	Hunting Permit Fee	Hunting Fee
Anatolian Chamois (wild goat)	174	59	233	42.92	550 ₺	6600-97200 ₺
Faulty Horned Wild Goat	11	15	26	4.79	220 ₺	4400 ₺
Hybrid Wild Goat	7	2	9	1.67	550 ₺	9000 ₺
Hook Horned Mountain Goat	18	4	22	4.09	550 ₺	9300-47500 ₺
Anatolian Mouflon (wild sheep)	8	-	8	1.48	1400 ₺	150600-157700 ₺
Red Deer	44	23	67	12.39	550 ₺	9300-37700 ₺
Gazelle	3	-	3	0.56	550 ₺	23500 ₺
Roe Deer	99	75	174	32.10	330 ₺	1400 ₺
Total	364	178	542	100.00		

Table 2 indicates that during the hunting season in the 2021-2022, there have been 8 different species including a total of 542 animals allowed to be hunted (Official Gazette, 2021). The number of each species varies based on the quota determined by the ministry and the species population growth each year. Wild Goat (233) is the most allowed species to be hunted, and it is followed by the Roe Deer (174) and Red Deer (67). On the other hand, only a small number of Hybrid wild goats (9), Anatolian Mouflons (8) and Gazelles (3) are allowed to be hunted. Hunting permit fees vary between 220₺-1.400₺. The lowest hunting fee is 1.400₺ (Roe Deer) while the highest hunting fee is 157.700₺ (Anatolian Mouflon).

Table 3. Hunting Regions and Provinces in Turkey (Official Gazette, 2021)

Hunting Region	Provinces Within the Hunting Region
Eastern Mediterranean	Adana, Osmaniye, Mersin, Kahramanmaraş, Gaziantep, Kilis, Hatay
Western Mediterranean	Antalya, Isparta, Burdur, Denizli
Aegean	İzmir, Manisa, Aydın, Uşak, Muğla, Balıkesir, Çanakkale
South East Anatolia	Şanlıurfa, Adıyaman, Diyarbakır, Batman, Mardin, Elazığ, Malatya, Bitlis, Siirt, Şırnak, Hakkâri
Marmara	İstanbul, Kocaeli, Bursa, Bilecik, Yalova, Edime, Kırklareli, Tekirdağ
Western Black Sea	Bolu, Düzce, Sinop, Sakarya, Kastamonu, Zonguldak. Barım. Karabük
Eastern Black Sea	Trabzon, Rize, Gümüşhane, Bayburt, Artvin, Samsun, Ordu, Giresun, Amasya, Tokat
Central Anatolia	Ankara, Çankırı, Kırşehir, Kırıkkale, Konya, Aksaray, Karaman, Sivas, Yozgat, Çorum, Eskişehir, Kütahya, Afyonkarahisar, Kayseri, Niğde, Nevşehir
Eastern Anatolia	Erzurum, Erzincan, Ağrı, Kars, Iğdır, Ardahan, Tunceli, Van, Bingöl, Muş

In the 2021-2022 hunting season, it is defined that there are 9 hunting regions and 81 Provinces: there are 7 provinces in Eastern Mediterranean Region; 4 provinces in Western Mediterranean Region; 7 provinces in Aegean Region; 11 provinces in South East Anatolia Region; 8 provinces in Marmara Region; 8 provinces in Western Black Sea Region; 10 provinces in Eastern Black Sea Region; 16 provinces in Central Anatolia Region and 10 provinces in Eastern Anatolia Region (Table 3, Official Gazette, 2021). Table 3 also shows that generally hunting tourism is located in the inner parts of Turkey where tourism activities are low.

3. CONCLUSION

A great number of improvement and development works carried out in the protected areas in Turkey, as a result, the number of these areas has increased year by year and has reached 1661, a huge number. Furthermore, the number of the visitors to the protected areas also has increased as a result of these improvement and development works. The number of protected area visitors was approximately 25 million in 2017, while this figure increased to 35 million 360 thousand 393 people in 2018. 51.8 million people visited the protected areas in 2019; however, with the effect of the pandemic period, this number decreased to 32 million people in these areas in 2021. Increasing both the number of protected areas and the visitors to these areas is very crucial in terms of boosting Turkey's tourism income, which is prominent in making contributions to the economy of the country. Hence, with the cooperation of tourism sector stakeholders and the ministry of agriculture and forestry, extensive studies should be implemented with the purpose of augmenting the protected areas and increase the number of these areas.

In recent years, Germany, Austria, Denmark, Czechoslovakia in Eastern European countries, Romania; Yugoslavia, Poland, Bulgaria, the Soviet Union, and Spain in Western Europe, as well as many African countries, obtain foreign currency to a considerable extent through hunting tourism (Geray and Akesen, 2001). Herewith, it can be claimed that hunting tourism is significant in making contributions to the economy of many countries as well as Turkey. Hunting tourism revenues in our country can be increased to 20 billion TL in about 10-15 years with the necessary studies, and significant amounts of income may be added to this amount by organizing interesting promotions from other wildlife-oriented tourism activities and organizations that satisfy nature tourists (Sarı and Arpacık, 2020). Developing hunting tourism sector is not only based on the number, but also on the type of hunting game and on the trophy structure (Garača et al., 2019). Therefore, in order to increase hunting tourism incomes, different organizations or activities hoped to attract tourists should be provided in hunting tourism facilities.

In addition, Turkey ’s hunting and wildlife resource potential is diverse both in terms of species richness and the number of people it can accommodate in its ecosystem. Turkey also holds a miscellaneous range of geographical and climatic qualities, ensuring a perfect habitat for a huge variety of game and wild species. Besides,it has a favorable geographic location for a great number of game and wild animals to live and breed, yet despite its diverse flora and fauna, Turkey has not been able to fully use its potential (Ege, 1996). Hunting tourism will increase tourism revenues in addition to the income from mass tourism. It is thought that hunting tourism has the effect of spreading the tourism concentrated on the coastline to the inner regions Thus, the tourism sector can also be revived in the inner regions and will contribute to the elimination of the inequality between regions in the income distribution (Özer, 2020).

The protection of natural areas is universal, and areas such as national parks, natural monuments, and special environmental protection zones protected within the scope of tourism activities for wildlife in Turkey have increased significantly from past to present. There are a total of 85 Wildlife Development Areas in 41 different provinces of Turkey. Different species of animals are bred at these wildlife development areas. However, only 8 mammal species including a total of 542 animals are allowed to be hunted as part of hunting tourism in 2021-2022 hunting season. The number of the Wildlife Development Areas, the species of animals bred in these areas and the animals allowed to be hunted should be increased gradually in order to enhance the ratio of hunting tourism revenues to tourism earnings.

The worth of wildlife resources to the economy of a country and its success aimed to be achieved in this field are inextricably linked to their management in accordance with the idea of sustainability. In nutshell, the natural habitats of wild animals should be protected, and the negative effects of excessive-unconsciously illegal hunting on the living population should be increased by increasing the negative effects. These resources are the best protection in order to maintain the ecological balance and ensure their sustainability in wildlife areas with hunting tourism potential. It is necessary to raise awareness of local people about the conservation of species. In addition, cooperation should be made with relevant non-governmental organizations in protection and supervision for its sustainable management.

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