

**Official Awareness of Tourism Carrying Capacity Dimensions in The  
Fayoum Destination's Natural Heritage Sites  
(Case of the Valley of Whales)**

**English Summary**

The Fayoum destination in Egypt entertains natural heritage as rich as its cultural heritage. Apparently, the increasing tourist demand on the natural heritage sites worldwide is causing a devastating impact on the environment. This case study aims to evaluate the official awareness of tourism carrying capacity (TCC) concept among the destination management stakeholders who are planning and directing the Valley of Whales as a natural heritage site in Fayoum. The site suffers from the lack of conservation and the absence of awareness in the site management. A critical review of literature on the concept of carrying capacity and its dimensions has been analyzed to attain specific criteria. More than 28 semi-structured interviews with the official employees who are in charge for managing the Valley of Whales and a direct observation check list collected rich data for qualitative analysis. The paper concludes that the absence of TCC dimensions between the planners and employees of natural heritage sites in the Fayoum in general and the Valley of Whales in specific will expose these sites to severe damage. Wise decisions have to be taken as fast as possible by the Fayoum destination management in terms of legislations, official staff training, and environmental awareness.

**Key Words:** Tourism Carrying Capacity (TCC), Natural Areas, Environmental Dimensions, Natural heritage, and Sustainable tourism development.