

Towards a Developmental Vision for the Advancement of Rural Tourism in Fayoum Governorate

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Abstract:

Amidst the revolutionary industrial and technological evolution and its consequent side effects which are represented in different forms of environmental pollution, haphazard development, and reduction of green areas and natural features, *rural tourism* has become a must in both developed and developing countries. Fayoum governorate is a promising tourist destination in Egypt. It enjoys spacious green and yellow areas as well as water bodies ; Quaroun Lake, Lakes of Wadi Alrayyan, the Nile branch of Bahr Youssef. Moreover, Fayoum enjoys such a fine weather. Hence, this paper aims to (1) highlight both the potentials and the challenges of the rural tourism advancement in Fayoum governorate, (2) provide guiding principles and organizational frames to develop this type of tourism, (3) present suggested tourist itineraries which contribute to spot it, and (4) give functional and scientific recommendations in the light of the found results.

In order to meet the above mentioned objectives, the descriptive analytical method was adopted. Such a method requires a comprehensive data analysis. The data were precisely and objectively compiled through questionnaire forms distributed to the employees in the official tourism bodies in Fayoum. The collected data were analyzed by the statistics program " SPSS Version16". A number of results was found of which the most remarkable was that rural tourism as a type of tourism is not activated and that the focus is on the eco side in terms of visits to Wadi Alrayyan and Qariun Lake. The challenges which face rural tourism are embodied in (1) the lack of the tourism awareness needed to prioritize rural areas as tourist destination, (2) the weakness of investments directed to enhance rural tourism, (3)the shortage of infrastructure, services, physical and human resources, (4) the absence of publicity and promotion efforts as well as the absence of a set plan to enforce rural tourism.

Key Words: Fayoum Governorate, Rural Tourism, Tourism Development, Rural Tourism Potentials.