

Batroun scale, Lebanon





Analysis of Threats and Enabling Factors for Sustainable Tourism at Pilot Scale

Local Community Batroun scale, Lebanon



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط



CPMR
CRPM



OVERVIEW

The present document was produced within the framework of **Co-Evolve4BG** project “*Co-evolution of coastal human activities & Med natural systems for sustainable tourism & Blue Growth in the Mediterranean*” in relation to Threats and Enabling Factors for maritime and coastal tourism development on a national scale” Co-funded by ENI CBC MED Program (Grant Agreement A_B.4.4_0075).

This document consists of the **Deliverable 3.1.2.39** (Local Community – Batroun scale, Lebanon) of the **Activity 3.1.2** (Threats and Enabling Factors at local scale: Pilot Areas analysis) under the **Output 3.1** (Integrated analysis of Threats and Enabling Factors for sustainable tourism at MED scale) of the project.

REVIEW

Contributors

Sana ABIDIB, PhD

📍 Lebanese University, Faculty of Literature and Human Sciences, Lebanon

Rebecca AZIZ, PhD

📍 Ministry of Environment, Lebanon

Reviewer

Lobna BEN NASR, PhD

📍 ISTEUB, University of Carthage, Tunisia

Supervisors

Béchir BEJAOU, PhD

📍 National Institute of Marine Sciences and Technologies, Tunisia

Nahed MSAYLEB, PhD

📍 Lebanese University, Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences, Lebanon

LAYOUT

Khouloud ATHIMEN, Engineer, Technical Coordinator

📍 National Institute of Marine Sciences and Technologies, Tunisia

Houaida BOUALI, Engineer

📍 National Institute of Marine Sciences and Technologies, Tunisia

Mohamed Ali BRIKI, Engineer

📍 Coastal Protection and Planning Agency, Tunisia

Index

Index	iv
List of figures	v
List of tables	vi
List of abbreviations	vi
Abstract	viii
I. Introduction	1
II. Analysis of local communities	2
II.1. Population	2
II.2. Socioeconomic situation	3
II.3. Work dynamics	3
II.4. Geographical distribution	12
III. Coastal/Maritime tourism and local communities	15
III.1. Importance of Coastal/Maritime tourism to the local communities	15
III.2 Impacts of coastal Maritime Tourism on local communities	16
IV. Role of Coastal/Maritime tourism in territorial development in Batroun	20
V. Coastal/Maritime Tourism and Local Community participation	21
VI. Blue Economy, Coastal/Maritime Tourism and Local Community	23
VI.1. Blue Economy	23
VI.2. Coastal/Maritime Tourism and local community in Batroun	24
VII. Conclusions	26
VIII. Electronic references	27

List of figures

Figure 1. Population in Batroun, male and female by age	2
Figure 2. Phoenician Wall, Batroun by Lebanon Untraveled	4
Figure 3. Mseilha Fort, Batroun by This is Lebanon – Facebook page	4
Figure 4. Cathedral Saint Stephan, Batroun	5
Figure 5. Saydet el Baher (Lady of the sea), Batroun	5
Figure 6. Maqaad el Mir, Batroun	6
Figure 7. Statue of Botrys Sponge Diver	6
Figure 8. Batroun old souk	7
Figure 9. Batroun Marina and fishing Port (By “We are Lebanon”)	7
Figure 10. Batroun Mountains vines	8
Figure 11. Ixsir Winery, Batroun	8
Figure 12. Batroun International Festival (By Beiruting)	9
Figure 13. Batroun nightlife (By Foursquare)	9
Figure 14. Traditional clay pottery in Batroun	10
Figure 15. Pottery pot varieties made in Batroun	10
Figure 16. Batroun old Souk and Guest houses (By Lebanese American Facebook page)	11
Figure 17. Batroun Village Club (By Armed forces vacation Club)	11
Figure 18. Surf Spot at Pierre and Friends, Batroun	12
Figure 19. Batroun city borders (red line). (Google map)	13
Figure 20. Map of the distribution of Historical Landmarks, restaurants, Hotels, Pubs, in Batroun	14
Figure 21. Batroun City Analysis by Business Occupation	22
Figure 22. Relation between Blue Economy, Coastal Tourism, Local Community and Economic Growth	24
Figure 23. Bonita Bay, Batroun, by Discover Batroun	25

List of tables

Table 1. Improved Understanding, Management and Monitoring in the Coastal Zone- August 2012	17
---	----

List of abbreviations

LDE	Lebanese Diaspora Energy
DV	Diaspora Village
BBQ	Barbecue
KnE	Knowledge enriching, engaging, empowering
ERML	Environmental Resources Managers Limited
ECODIT	Environmental Planning and Management Consulting Firms
IAURIF	Institut d'Aménagement et d'Urbanisme de la Région d'Île-de France
CDR	Council of Development and Reconstruction
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program
MOE	Ministry of Environment
RAC/SPA	Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas
MAP	Mediterranean Action Plan
IMAC	Integrated Motoring and Analysis Center
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
LDC	Least Developed Countries

Abstract

None can deny that Tourism, as any other economic sector, may have a positive and negative impact on the community. In fact, it can be highly beneficial for the local community thanks to local inhabitants' income increase. This study aims at determining both the local community participation and its economic sustainability which contribute to the development of tourism in the coastal tourist area of Batroun. Collaboration of all the following citizens, tourists, as well as local private, public, and nonprofit organizations have collaborated in a partnership to join forces to solve systemic problems such as poor business climate, unskilled workforce, lack of jobs especially for youth, *etc.* Indeed, to make positive changes, direct or indirect collaboration and interaction between the local community and tourism activities remain well established. Thereby, profiting financially from tourism activities in Batroun tourist area.

I. Introduction

Batroun Region is one of the leading tourist destinations in Lebanon, especially in recent years, with a continuously increasing level of tourist arrivals. The city of Batroun lies on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea and it is situated almost 54 kilometers north of Beirut. It can be reached by driving through the coastal highway (from Batroun exit toward the city center), or by driving the old road along the seashore.

Even though it is one of the most ancient cities in the world, Batroun's history has not yet been fully disclosed and unveiled. In fact, there was hardly any excavation performed there and there is a scarcity in terms of historical written documents that date back to the remotest antiquity. The charming coastal Maronite town of Batroun is most attractive in summer, being highly popular for its beach clubs, water sports (surfing, scuba diving, snorkeling) and nightlife. Moreover, the traditional Ottoman houses and its cobblestoned narrow streets of the old town as well as its Phoenician fishing port provide a pleasant environment for tourists. Indeed, they can opt for a stroll along its well signposted historical sites or for either a lunch or dinner in one of its well-known seafood restaurants. Outside the old town, one can easily spend a day at one of Batroun's southern beach clubs or experience some culture at the Mseilha Castle north of Batroun. Since 1998, there has always been the chance to enjoy a wine tasting tour at one of the wineries located in the mountains surrounding Batroun. It is also well known for its famous lemonade and its streets that are charming as they combine the old houses, the gardens (ancient, graded rock inside a private royal garden), the ancient churches, and the archaeological landmarks.

II. Analysis of local communities

II.1. Population

Batroun city's Mayor revealed that the population in Batroun in total is 10,596, distributed between 5,341 males and 5,254 females. The average age of the residents of Batroun is 30 years (Figure 1).

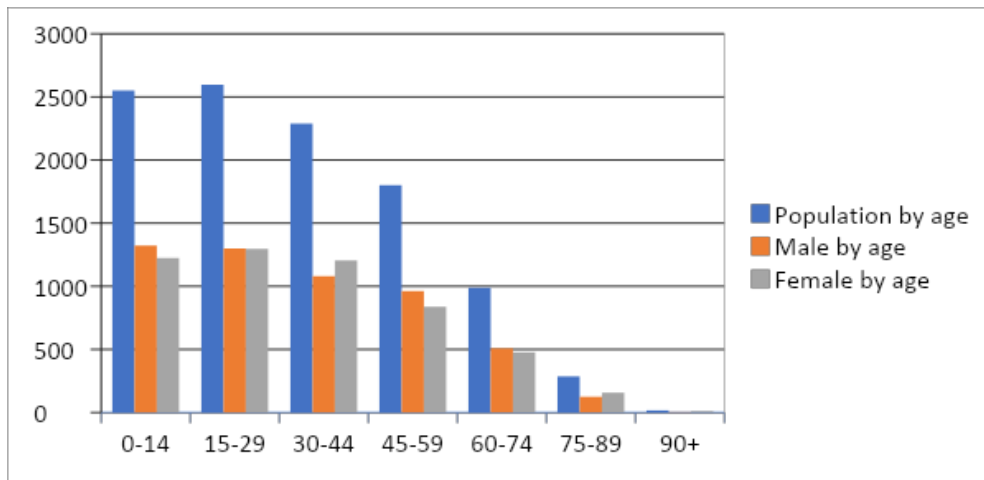


Figure 1. Population in Batroun, male and female by age.

II.2. Socioeconomic situation

Tourism is one of the world's largest industries interconnected with all other life economic, social, cultural, environmental, and political sectors. In the recent decade, the growth of tourism in coastal areas has reached its peak thanks to a distinctive resource combination of land and sea offering divers variety of cultures and activities. Yet, the increasing coastal tourism trends require Tourism capacity development along with its infrastructure. Unfortunately, Tourism development is still based on financial resources and the environment still depends on the perspectives of minimizing effects under the available budget. Several challenges are awaiting the coastal communities regarding the impact of unsustainable growth on both their environment and society.

Batroun is a major tourist destination in North Lebanon. Historically, the city of Batroun was settled at the interface between the sea and the national road that connects Beirut to Tripoli. Lately, the radical shift of the historical local economic tissue functions into a leisure service-based economy (nightclubs, bars, restaurants, stores, *etc.*) has become the unique and only lever of the city development. In fact, the economic metamorphosis has resulted in the housing resettlement towards emerging city suburbs (nearby hills: New Batroun, Batroun Hills, *etc.*) consequently to the real estate market overvaluation in the city center. This clearly reveals the business city-center constitution (dedicated to leisure and business) balanced by the residential suburbs' constitution, where accelerated urban sprawl has led to the natural lands' destruction (pinewood and

orange groves) and to the land prices fatal rise. The town as well boasts historic Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches. It is also a major beach resort with a vibrant nightlife that includes pubs and nightclubs in addition to the Citrus groves that surround Batroun. The town has always been famous (from the early twentieth century) for its fresh and well-known lemonade sold at the cafés and restaurants in its main street. Biking along the Batroun coastline is also a major activity, namely on late summer days. In 2009, the Batroun International Festival was born to host both famous national and international artists. In fact, the festival is held annually in July or August in the old harbor area.

II.3. Work dynamics

One of the core elements of tourism development is to encourage local communities' participation as it is central to Tourism sustainability. In fact, the coast provides several unique features making the area one of the most attractive tourist destinations. Indeed, a diverse variety of different types of coasts usually lure different types of tourists. Over the last years, work dynamics has greatly evolved and succeeded in motivating residents to engage further within the economic wheel and as a result to be more productive. It has also urged them to work effectively together to achieve the whole community common goal, which primarily success. While businesses across Lebanon are fighting to survive a monumental economic meltdown, the coastal city of Batroun is thriving as a tourist destination for Lebanese whose summer plans have been altered due to the local and regional crisis and mainly Covid 19 pandemic. Indeed, a lot of crowds stroll along Batroun's streets and visit its historical sites, others sunbathe on beaches and many others spend their time drinking their nights away despite the pandemic and the country's harsh financial crisis, dubbed by the World Bank as one of the most devastating depressions of modern history. Lebanon, patently Batroun, is one of the cities whose craft and landmarks go back so far into History. Batroun has witnessed years of uninterrupted efforts in assuring the continuity of its crafts and archeological conservation, while guarding against the trap of modernity and industrialization. Numerous and varied are the arts, crafts, historical landmarks, and archeological sites as well the quite diverse activities in Batroun.

II.3.1. Phoenician Wall

The Phoenician Wall is 225 meters long. The Old Phoenician Wall has roots in the earliest cities in the region (Figure 2) and it dates to the oldest ancient times, when it was considered a quarry. The sea wall was originally a natural structure made from petrified sand dunes. It is reported that the Phoenicians used this wall as protection against invaders and sea storms.



Figure 2. Phoenician Wall, Batroun by Lebanon Untraveled.

II.3.2. Mseilha Fort

Located on the mountains of Batroun, El-Mseilha fort is a medieval fortification. The site had been occupied since Roman times though the buildings of the current castles date back to the era from 13th to 17th century. Some historians believe that it was built to block the route from its neighboring city of Tripoli against crusaders. Others pretend it was built 400 years ago.



Figure 3. Mseilha Fort, Batroun by This is Lebanon – Facebook page.

II.3.3. Historical Churches

As the largest and most popular church in Batroun, St. Estephan Church is a major landmark (Figure 4). It was built by an Italian architect between the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. It can host more than one thousand believers, which makes it one of the largest churches in Lebanon. Everyone knows this location so it's an easy point to meet friends.



Figure 4. Cathedral Saint Stephan, Batroun.

Our Lady of the Sea is in the western part of town in Al Saydeh “The Lady Quarter” (Figure 5). Within the spacious courtyard, there is a small Greek Orthodox Church with vaulted ceiling and stone walls. The church was built on the water's edge overlooking the monument of the Old Phoenician Wall and over the Byzantine Church ruins that was built in the 19th century. Though the church is a centerpiece, visitors go for the picturesque terrace with an arched belvedere frame that overlooks a breathtaking sea view.



Figure 5. Saydet el Baher (Lady of the sea), Batroun.

A visit to the old city takes you to the Orthodox St. George Church. Its construction was completed in 1867. In the city center, there are remains of stones that belong to a fortress that dates to the Crusader period. It was destroyed by the Egyptian Sultan, Qalawun at the end of the thirteenth century. Near the ancient fortress there is the Maronite church, Saydet al Saha (Our Lady of the Square). It dates to 1898.

II.3.4. Maqaad el Mir and public beaches

The rock of Maqaad el Mir is in the south of the old town which has little interest except for this three-arch façade that can be admired from another side of the beach (Figure 6). Bahsa Beach is the most popular public beach with a few restaurants and a beach trail to jog or ride your bike through. White Beach is also a popular spot with a restaurant appropriate for families. Moreover, Joining Beach is situated by the steep cliff-like rocks and small caves that are recommended more for water bouldering. There is a small beach though that's not the main draw. Sea turtles are sometimes found along with another Salinas.



Figure 6. Maqaad el Mir, Batroun.



Figure 7. Statue of Botrys Sponge Diver.

II.3.5. Botrys Statue of sponge diver

Statue on the side of the main road of the village. It is a source of money for those who dive into the sea to find natural sponges and then sell them.

II.3.6. Historic old Souk

The Old Souk is where old traditions are still standing safe (Figure 8). The elder folks display products for sale, with authentic delicious eateries around every corner. Pop in any shop where the locals are, and you will enjoy the visit to its utmost. Besides, the traditional Ottoman houses and cobble-stoned narrow streets of the old town and Phoenician fishing port provide a pleasant environment for a stroll, in other words, it is

the chance to walk along its well signposted historical sites or to enjoy a lunch or dinner in one of its seafood restaurants. Take a Biking Tour (Routes) or by walking to get familiarized with the lay of the land and enjoy the splendid old city.



Figure 8. Batroun old souk.

II.3.7. Fisherman Port and Marina

The Port is a popular spot where boats of all sizes take off throughout the day (Figure 9). Rent a small boat or gaze at the number of beautiful yachts lined up. A few seafood restaurants sit along the port as well. Along the Port of Batroun you can rent or hire a boat with a driver/skipper. Also, Batroun Sailing is a good option.



Figure 9. Batroun Marina and fishing Port (By “We are Lebanon”).

II.3.8. Wineries

Batroun is the most famous winemaking region of Lebanon.

- Batroun Mountains is a family owned and operated winery and vineyards located in the mountainous region of Batroun district in north Lebanon (Figure 10). Wine and grapes are certified organic by “CCPB” confirming to EU organic standards, they produce 5 reds, 3 whites and 2 rose varieties. Vineyards consist of 8 plots in six villages at altitudes from 400 m to 1,500 m, a total of 35 thousand vines in 11 hectares.

Batroun agricultural lands offer not only wine but also the traditional Lebanese licorice drink, “Arak”. There is a taste room in the main city in Batroun, so the tourists can taste the finest wine ever.

- **Ixsir** is in the mountain of Batroun on a 17th century traditional Lebanese house along with a contemporary winery (Figure 11), rated by CNN as one of the greenest buildings in the world. “Ixsir’s vineyards culminate at an altitude of 1,800 meters, making them the highest in the Northern Hemisphere.”

- Atibaia Winery

- **Sept Winery** has a “fervent mission to reconnect with nature and to celebrate Lebanese grapes and soil. Sept aims to become an ambassador of Lebanon’s heritage and an inspiring model of biodynamic agriculture in the region and the world.”

- Coteaux de Botrys



Figure 10. Batroun Mountains vines.

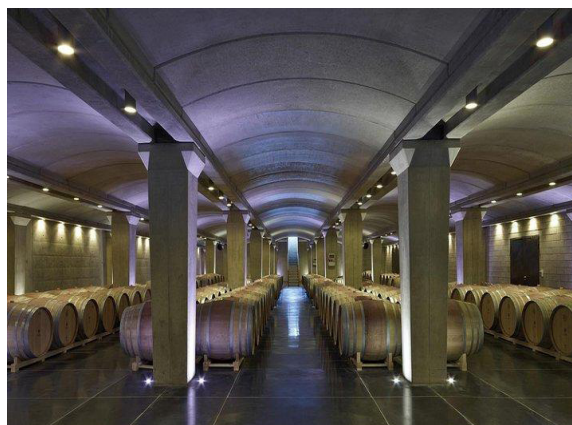


Figure 11. Ixsir Winery, Batroun.

II.3.9. Batroun Festivals

The festival started as a plain event in the early 90's yet, after a few years, it acquired international standards and earned its place among international cultural festivals (Figure 12). The Batroun International Festival was born in 2009 and started hosting leading local and international artists from all over the world. Besides, the Festival usually lasts a few days, during these days Batroun nightlife becomes highly exciting and does not cease to bring daily surprises to the young dwellers (Figure 13).

Batroun's 14,000 m² public garden comes to life every spring with a vibrant schedule of events for all ages. A big and varied market for flowers and plants, more than 40 stations presenting all kinds of food, artisan, and handicraft exhibitions. This year, there will be a beer, wine and seafood festival, local designers' exhibition, photography, and painting exhibition. The biggest Sup tour in the middle east and finally the Batroun Mediterranean film festival.

Christmas as well, is a highly celebrated event through a festival that is organized in Batroun at the Diaspora Village Batroun 2021. The Diaspora Village (DV). It is a project initiated by Lebanese Diaspora Energy (LDE), has launched their first Christmas Festival, celebrating the various and unique Christmas traditions from around the world.



Figure 12. Batroun International Festival (By Beirut).



Figure 13. Batroun nightlife (By Four-square).

The DV Christmas Festival that has become the famous season melting pot usually invites several Lebanese expats and locals to come together and celebrate the festive season. Integrated as part of the "Batroun, Capitale de Noël" program, the DV Christmas Festival activities spanned across the weekends in December and included a series of shows and activities from the participating countries such as: Russia, Mexico, Brazil, and Nigeria (Ministry of Tourism and Diaspora Village Website).

II.3.10. Crafts

Weaving, knitting, embroidery and crochet crafts are part of Batroun's history, and it plays a significant role in its economy thanks to the inclusion of larger communities. In fact, the embroidery works are collected from the villages and dispatched to the capital where they are sold in specialized shops. "La Maison de l'Artisan" is an official body that oversees many embroidery workshops, supporting them financially, technically, and helping them sell off their produce.

Batroun is also famous for its rich traditional handicraft of clay pottery production. Pots made of clay can be served for all kinds of food frying, boiling, or cooking and protect the food structure and enrich it with a special natural earthy taste (Figures 14 and 15).



Figure 14. Traditional clay pottery in Batroun.



Figure 15. Pottery pot varieties made in Batroun.

Lemonade is a popular drink in Batroun due to its hearty supplies of lemon and warm weather. Hilmi House of Lemonade and Jallab is the most popular spot just some steps away from St. Estephan Cathedral. In 2012, Batroun entered the Guinness Book of World Records for the largest cup of lemonade with a capacity of 5 543 liters. There are also other Lemonade shops around Batroun such as Lemonade Chahine, patisserie Rim, Naji Lemonade, Haro Lemonade and Barbari.

II.3.11. Guest houses, Restaurants, Café, and Bars

Indulged in luxurious guest rooms overlooking the Mediterranean for a relaxing getaway, Old Town Guest Houses (Figure 16) and Batroun Village Club (Figure 17), situated in the heart of Batroun old town and a lot others (Merchak, San Stephano, Annete, Beit AlBatroun, Baytouna,...), offer a range of services and activities attractions: for an upscale Beach Club experience, head to Orchid Beach Lounge from floating Jacuzzis overlooking the sea, to private sun decks and an infinity pool, serving up an eclectic cuisine from fine Chefs.



Figure 16. Batroun old Souk and Guest houses (By Lebanese American Facebook page)

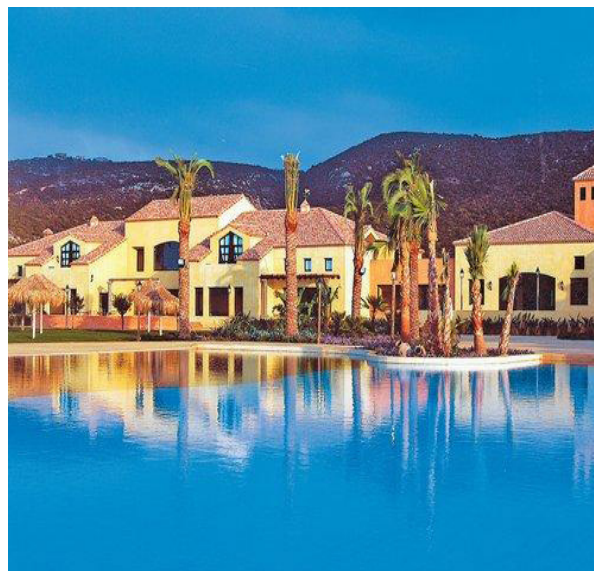


Figure 17. Batroun Village Club (By Armed forces vacation Club)

Colonel Brewery not only has a brewery and a beach bar that's fully stocked, but they also organize regular weekly events happening such as concerts, festivals, holiday themed events and more. Colonel Brewery serves up gastronomic bar food such as juicy burgers, BBQ'd fish and small bar bites (Ueng, 2019).

Pierre and Friends is one of the most popular spots for sunsets and late-night casual fun by the water. Jammal Restaurant serves the fish catch of the day on a table in the water. Chez Maguy, Crepaway, Roadster, Taiga Café, Lina's, etc. are spots to go to. As long as the vibe is good, the parties continue past midnight (especially in the summertime).

II.3.12. Arts and Museums

In Batroun, some Arts and painting galleries like *Soraya's* are open to the public as well as some Museums and cultural houses such as *Nabu*, *Batroun JCM*, *Henri*, Russian-Lebanese cultural house and Roman Amphitheatre are nice to visit, too.

II.3.13. Other Activities

Taking advantage of its coastal geographical exposure, many sea sport activities are being organized in Batroun, for instance, Surf, Paddleboard, Kayak, Canyoning, Windsurf, Sailing, Scuba diving and Snorkeling. In addition to other activities like Bike Tours, Trails and Walking Tours, Hiking and Camping Tours, and Rappelling.



Figure 18. Surf Spot at Pierre and Friends, Batroun.

II.4. Geographical distribution

Batroun District is one among six districts of the Northern Lebanon Governorate. Its geographical borders are marked in the south by the river Madfoun, and by the river El Jawz (Nahr El Jawz) in the north (Figure 19). It stretches from the Mediterranean coast to the west, partially covering the flanks of West Lebanon Mountain (Mount Lebanon) and reaches the Jabal El Mnaitri peaks at 2,700 meters.

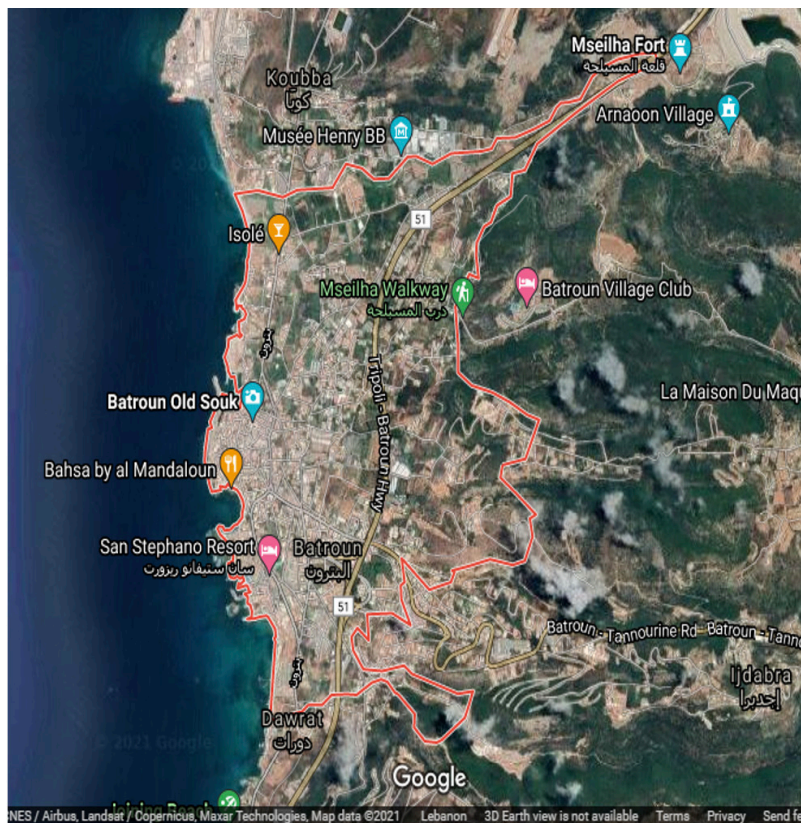


Figure 19. Batroun city borders (red line). (Google map).

It is 278 square kilometers in surface. It is surrounded in the north by Koura district, in the east by Baalbek district, and in the south, it is surrounded by the Byblos (Mount Lebanon Governorate; Localiban Website). It lies on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea and situated about 54 kilometers north of Beirut, Batroun, and a coastal city which represents its administrative center.

Many ancient monasteries and churches are scattered all over the coast and mountains. The traditional Ottoman houses and cobble-stoned narrow streets of the old town and Phoenician fishing port provide a pleasant environment for a stroll along its well signposted historical sites or for lunch or dinner in one of its seafood restaurants. Outside the old town, one can easily spend a day at one of Batroun's southern beach clubs or experience some culture at the Mseilha Castle north of Batroun (Figure 20).

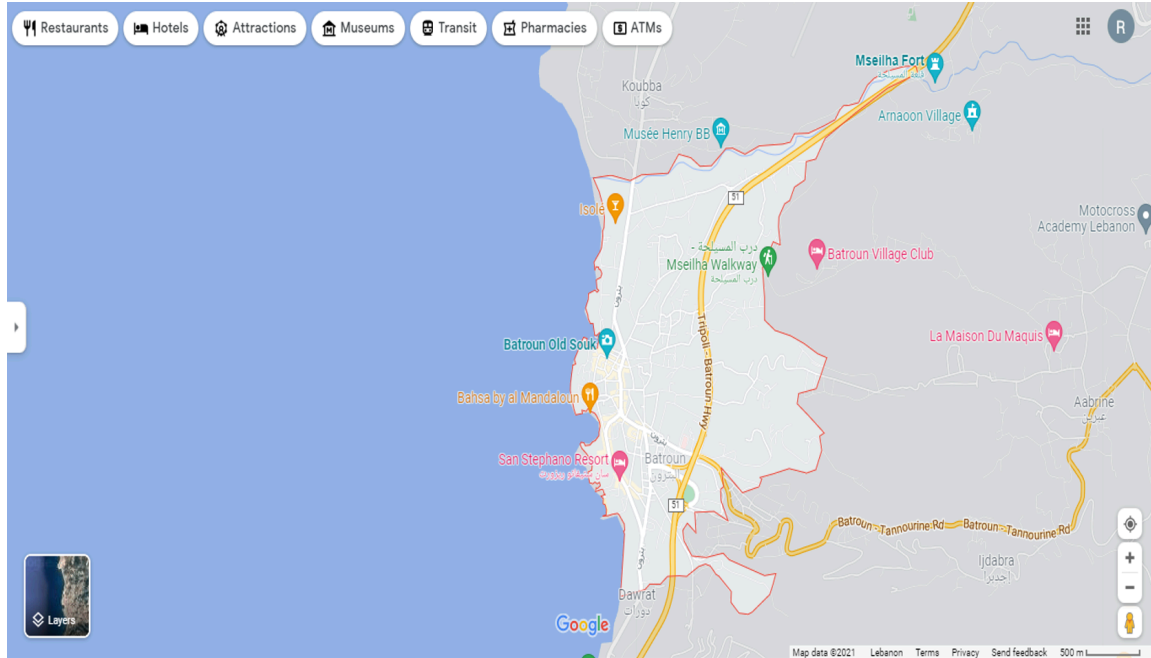


Figure 20. Map of the distribution of Historical Landmarks, restaurants, Hotels, Pubs, in Batroun.

III. Coastal/Maritime tourism and local communities

One of the core elements of tourism development is to encourage local communities' participation in the tourism industry sustainability. In fact, the Coasts provide unique features for being an attractive place for the tourists. According to their specific aspects, they offer a variety of leisure and pleasure to tourists.

III.1. Importance of Coastal/Maritime tourism to the local communities

The development of community groups through social interaction and empowerment provides long-term impacts for the community itself. In fact, the local community's involvement in the planning process is very effective in increasing public awareness of tourism activities, as well as involvement in decision-making processes. Local people who are directly involved and who have a high degree of participation in tourism help in further community engagement and development of a direct impact on perceived tourism benefits.

Yet, Tourism industry can lead paradoxically to inequality within the local communities. Hence, local governments should play a crucial role in tourist areas renovation, promotion, and infrastructure development. Thereby, offering local people the chance to take advantage of business opportunities such as working in tourist destinations Collaborative Governance which allows stakeholders involvement in making both decisions and policies collectively, as well as managing programs or assets available for public purposes.

Community involvement in tourism activities needs to be enhanced through collaboration between both local decision makers and tourism managers. Collaboration between community groups is essential for maintaining social interaction. Although local people have limitations in planning tourism, achieving sustainable tourism development can never be separated from the full support of local communities in hosting different attitudes towards tourism.

Batroun can be called a bubble of sorts that are rarely found in the guidebooks if compared to its most popular neighboring Lebanese destinations such as Beirut, Byblos, Tripoli, or Tyre. Together with its pristine aqua blue waters and its white pebble beach, Batroun represents the ideal destination for the Lebanese on their days off thanks to its fame for providing the best day beach clubs. Besides, it is also rich in history, which obviously includes some of the first civilizations residing along the shores along the Old Phoenician Walls. In fact, tourists may enjoy the chance of touring through the city and discovering the ancient churches, tasting wine, and exploring Lebanon's most popular Brewery on the water. It seems exciting as well to go on a Biking Tour with Routes, to explore Batroun Old Souk, Batroun International Festival (Batroun Bike Festival: Beer, Wine & Seafood Festival, Windsurf Challenge, Concerts, Mediterranean Festival).

III.2 Impacts of coastal Maritime Tourism on local communities

Coastal tourism development can appropriately contribute to the livelihood of the community. This study assessed these impacts through the analysis of local perceptions based on four criteria of tourism development—the economic, environmental, social, and cultural impacts.

In fact, it has been detected that Tourism has positively impacted the development of coastal communities which were neutral to positive regarding socioeconomic impact. However, more efforts by the government as well as the private sector are needed to protect the local culture and the coastal communities while improving the positive impacts on economic development and social integrity (Impacts of Tourism Development on Coastal Communities –Unhasuta, *et al.*, 2021).

III.2.1 Socioeconomic Impacts

Coastal tourism is an important economic activity which implies necessarily highlighting some key points on socio-economic level:

- Coastal Tourism was the most significant economic sector in terms of local employment, with high levels of associated economic benefits local ‘stick in all the studied areas.
- Coastal tourist home location identification revealed the very extensive (international, national, and regional) spatial connections of all studied areas, which is in our case the area of Batroun.
- All areas experienced a strong concentration of visitors during summer months.
- Most visitors tended to arrive by car. Consequently, the provision of more sustainable transportation networks (public transport, cycling and walking), for travel to and from tourist destinations and visiting locations during tourist stays is a key territorial planning consideration.
- Coastal tourism is improving sustainability and is extending the coastal tourists’ services range and seasonality are key concerns for tourism development strategies in effective governance.
- Socio-economic impacts may include:
 - Impacts on income and job creation focused on coastal communities (direct employment in accommodation in tourist destinations and indirect employment related to travel to and from tourist home locations and holiday activities).
 - Competition for coastal space with sectors such as port development, offshore energy production and aquaculture make a direct impact on fish stocks, potentially leading to changes in commercial fishing activities and subsequent impact on fishermen’s income, jobs, and fishing communities.

III.2.2 Environmental Impacts

Environmental impacts may include:

- Land Sea Interactions and terrestrial planning.
- Pollution.
- Fishing.
- Wetlands natural resources exhaustion.
- Freshwater resources overexploitation.
- Infrastructure over urbanization and mass construction.
- Recreational activities random organization.

Table 1. Improved Understanding, Management and Monitoring in the Coastal Zone- August 2012.

Threats	Description
Uncontrolled coastal development and coastal tourism	Include problems such as coastal urbanization (housing, industries, and sea backfilling) and illegal dwellings, land use change through construction activities accompanied with quarrying and sand dredging, increased tourism, and development of touristic resorts.
Fishing on sensitive ecosystems	Include fishing on fragile biotopes and habitats, in small bays and caves; illegal fishing especially using nets with small mesh sizes increasing the by-catch of immature individuals, use of explosives and toxic bait, spearfishing with scuba diving equipment etc.; incidental capture; over-fishing and insufficient data and monitoring.
Invasion by non-indigenous species	The consequent deformation of the natural dynamics and biodiversity, ballast water, out-competing of natural communities as overgrazing, predation of turtle eggs, are the main emerging issues in this field.
Pollution	Includes a variety of problems, from eutrophication, light pollution, and industrial/urban pollution to underwater pipeline deployment (solid waste and wastewater carried by river discharges to the sea, oil spills from ships and war conditions) and harmful agricultural practices (excessive fertilization and use of pesticides, overgrazing and groundwater overexploitation for irrigation).
Global phenomena	Land abandonment and migration of populations, soil erosion, sea level rise (climate change) and the increase in salinity and water temperature, earthquake/seismic activity, landslide, and floods.
Trade in endangered or threatened species	Several endangered or threatened species populations are decreasing because of the takings for commercial purposes (sponges, dolphins, sea turtles, sea horses, shells).

III.2.2.1 Land Sea Interactions and terrestrial planning

More effective terrestrial planning and better governance could support coastal tourism sustainable development. In fact, it is important for these areas to develop processes that facilitate plans integration for land and sea and that engage key actors associated with the sector. Likewise, considering the different impacts of Land-Sea Interactions.

III.2.2.2 Impact of exploitation of natural resources

1- Impact of marine fishing

The fisheries sector in Lebanon is artisanal and traditional with regulations dating back to 1929 (Decision 2775/29). Besides, the Lebanese fishing fleet is made up of a total of 2,700 fishing boats spread along the Lebanese coast. In fact, an average number of 40-50 Fishermen are based in the port of Batroun and fish resources are greatly reduced for several reasons (climate change, illegal usages by fishermen from outside Batroun area, acts of theft like net and fish theft). Apart from the above, smaller harbors and natural beaches with high ecological value are also affected by fishing practices.

To set up efficient management plans, it is essential to raise awareness and to establish training courses and long-term monitoring training of commercial fish species and fishing effort.

Thereby, contributing to the development of appropriate management plans and sustainable benefits from the resources. Moreover, the coastal tourism industry overuses water resources for hotels, swimming pools, gardens, and tourists' personal use.

2- Uncontrolled urbanization and construction of infrastructure

The Lebanese coastal area urban development is entirely related to the economic and commercial activities centralization in this strategic location. This development is clearly represented by uncontrolled urban expansion with the corresponding infrastructure construction. Urban sprawl is initially the outcome of demographic growth and rural population migration towards the cities.

Another cause for the intensive urban development along the coast is the growing tourism sector which is mainly based on activities within urban structures such as beach resorts, hotels, restaurants, country clubs and casinos. This traditional trend of Lebanese tourism has proved to have a highly destructive impact on the environment. The coastal resorts' unregulated building as well as the maritime public domain illegal violation have both resulted in coastal privatization, beach erosion, as well as land and ecosystem degradation.

Furthermore, this populated zone's uncontrolled spreading requires more space and land resources for further road, buildings, and other infrastructural projects constructions. These requirements can be fulfilled thanks to sand extraction from beaches, sediment dredging offshore, sea embankment near the shore. Most of these practices are irreversible, transforming the natural and agricultural areas into constructed properties.

Furthermore, quarrying activities and construction works are noticed around Mseilha fortress in Batroun.

3- Floods Sites

Flood risks include the coastal zone with urban, commercial, and touristic infrastructure as well as archaeological sites.

4- Landslides Sites

The causes of high landslide risks are steep stream basins and steep slopes often located along faults such as Ras Shaqaa in the Caza of Batroun.

5- Changes in land cover/land use

According to the “Situational Analysis of the current land use of the coastal zone, particularly in terms of socio-economic activities” (Classes of Threats and description, information from UNEP – ERML: Improved Understanding, Management and Monitoring in the Coastal Zone, Component B (i) of the ERML), it is obvious that, as most Mediterranean countries, Lebanon’s coast has undergone drastic land use changes, from natural to bio-cultural, and ultimately to urban environments. Land cover/land use changes especially from natural environments to artificial land can be the result of various practices namely: Sea filling affecting beaches and threatening Batroun National Marine Reserve. This is mostly practiced by the tourism sector while some private property owners also indulge in this practice.

6- Uncontrolled recreational activities

Seashore destinations witness the largest mass of tourism, often frequented by foreign tourists rather than by locals. This is reflected in the rising number of visitors to beaches such as the rocky beaches located into the south of Batroun.

The resulting effect is usually recreational activities uncontrolled development on the coastal areas and shallow water especially during the summer period. Activities such as unregulated recreational fishing, scuba diving, jet-skiing, and boating are located on the various coastal marinas and sea fronts, which are spread along the Lebanese coast.

IV. Role of Coastal/Maritime tourism in territorial development in Batroun

Tourism has become an essential part of our life as it refreshes the mind and reduces stress.

The main purposes of tourism are:

- **Economic Sustainability:** It ensures the effectiveness and competitiveness of tourism destinations and enterprises. It helps sustain improvement, which is beneficial in the long run.
- **Local enrichment:** Tourist destination prosperity is an enormous part of tourism. The tourism business continuously maximizes the economic growth of the host destination.
- **Employment Standards:** Tourism has boosted the wages, the terms of service, and the availability for all. It creates local jobs with no discrimination based on gender, race, disability, or other means.
- **Local management:** Involves local communities, empowering local people for planning and decision making developed mainly by both the community and the tourism management team.
- **Community Welfare:** Maintains and boosts the local community's lifestyle. They are part of social structures that should be based on no social humiliation or exploitation.
- **Natural Integration:** Maintains and improves the quality of both urban and rural landscapes. It also avoids natural and visual degradation of the environment.
- **Biodiversity:** assists in conserving wildlife, natural wildlife areas and reduces their losses.
- **Environmental cleanness:** apart from the purpose of tourism, all tourists should try to reduce air, water, land pollution, and waste generation.
- **National integration** Tourism is indeed a crucial part of the national integration.
- **Heritage preservation** Tourism always motivates tourists to understand their traditions, heritage, culture, and religious aspects.
- **Economic growth** Tourism's most significant feature is its destination business aspect. It encourages local people to create many handicraft items, prepares local food items, different kinds of souvenirs, dresses, *etc.*, for sale. Thereby, giving an important economic boost to the country.

V. Coastal/Maritime Tourism and Local Community participation

Local community participation is one of the core elements of tourism development because it is important to the sustainability of the tourism industry. There are several sectors which are involved in tourism development such as government, private sectors, various organizations, and individuals. However, in that list of involvement, the local community is probably the only legitimate and moral stakeholder in tourism development.

Involvement of the local community has substantial value in tourism for the locals' lifestyle and environmental, cultural, and traditional aspects which are the main Tourism attractions. Thus, the locals' needs and aspirations should be highly maintained. Tourism development along with the local community involvement will ultimately result in sustainable development as well as in further economic, environmental, and cultural benefits. Moreover, more active community participation in Tourism ensures the latter enrichment experience.

In fact, when the community is more involved in tourism development, ultimately it is going to guarantee to be an active partner, and it is going to provide more control and balance since it has a particular stake in the region and commitment to environmental quality. Tourism sustainability and development is a long-term objective, and its feasibility depends on the local community's support and involvement.

Fortunately, there were some objectives that have been achieved regarding the city of Batroun. The initiative effects are positive both on the social level and the local community participation level (strengthening the sense of belonging to the area and the community, empowerment of local community through tourism, preservation of heritage, old souks, antiquities, *etc.*), they are as well very important on the slope of economic and income-generating activities especially with the instability of Lebanese lira and the rise of the exchange dollar rate.

Many initiatives have already been taken by many NGOs and corporations, and they have been appreciated by beneficiaries and have been considered as essential in contributing to Tourism improvement and to local communities' status. Yet, more efforts must be made to fully achieve general and specific objectives.

As businesses across Lebanon struggle to survive amid a severe economic crisis, the coastal city of Batroun is booming as a tourist destination for Lebanese whose travel plans have been canceled either due to the crisis or to the coronavirus pandemic. In fact, larger numbers of tourists are roaming the streets of Batroun, visiting its historical sites, and others spending the day on the beaches and the night in bars, despite the pandemic and the economic crisis.

After a city analysis (Figure 21), we can notice that the local community participation is crucial in Tourism. In fact, this is obvious in the large number of Hotels, Guest Houses as well as Resorts restaurants, Bars and Clubs and shopping stores that can be owned

either by local inhabitants or by other non-local owners (Crepaway, Roadst), Malak al Taouk, Lina's Café, *etc.*); the people even open markets just in front of their houses as we can see in the picture below.

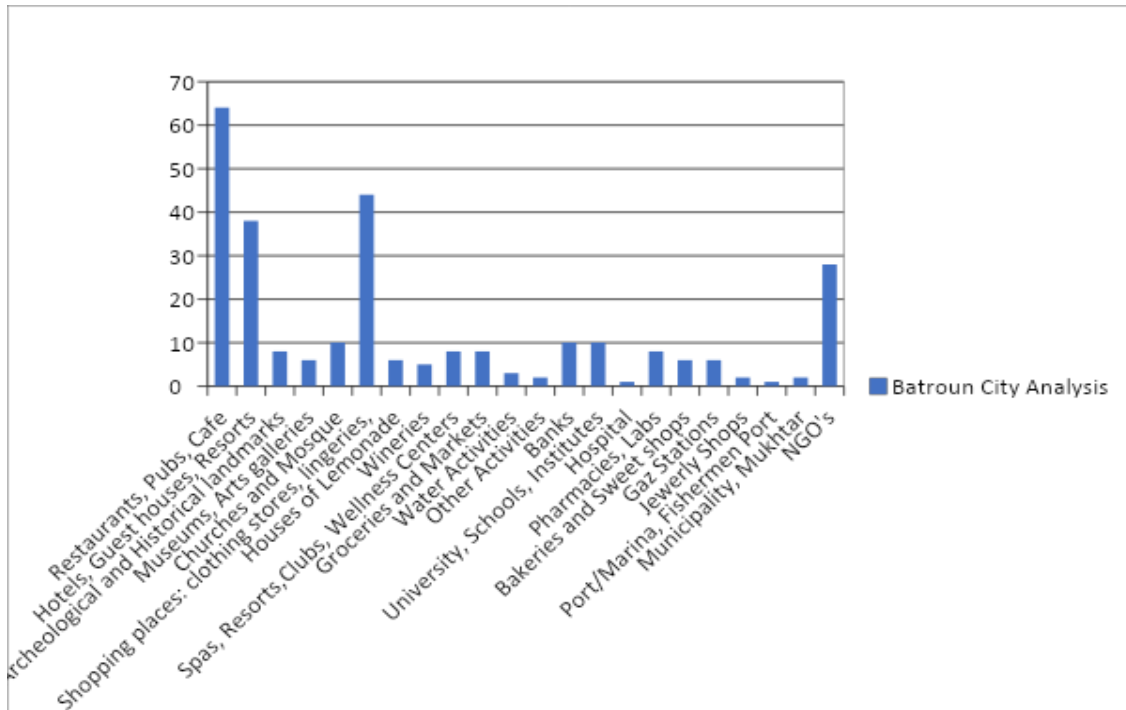


Figure 21. Batroun City Analysis by Business Occupation.

VI. Blue Economy, Coastal/Maritime Tourism and Local Community

VI.1. Blue Economy

According to the World Bank, the blue economy is the “sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs while preserving the health of the ocean ecosystem.”

The European Commission defines it as “All economic activities related to oceans, seas and coasts. It covers a wide range of interlinked established and emerging sectors.”

The Commonwealth of Nations considers it “an emerging concept which encourages better stewardship of our ocean or ‘blue’ resources.” Conservation International adds that “blue economy also includes economic benefits that may not be marketed, such as carbon storage, coastal protection, cultural values and biodiversity.”

The Center for the Blue Economy states “it is now a widely used term around the world with three related but distinct meanings- the overall contribution of the oceans to economies, the need to address the environmental and ecological sustainability of the oceans, and the ocean economy as a growth opportunity for both developed and developing countries.”

A United Nations representative has recently defined the Blue Economy as an economy that “comprises a range of economic sectors and related policies that together determine whether the use of ocean resources is sustainable. An important challenge of the blue economy is to understand and manage the oceanic sustainable aspects, ranging from sustainable fisheries to ecosystem health to preventing pollution. Secondly, the blue economy’s next challenge is to realize the ocean resources sustainable management which requires collaboration across borders and sectors through a variety of partnerships, and on a scale that has not been previously achieved. This is a tall order, particularly for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) which face significant limitations.”

The UN notes that the Blue Economy will help in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals, among which one goal is “Life below Water” (Blue Economy definitions, United Nations).

Batroun’s blue economy prosperity is being challenged by several hindering factors such as the global pandemic, the world’s oceans health, as well as the increasing pressure from overexploitation, pollution, and climate change. Ocean economy growth requires a comprehensive approach that combines steadfast commitments to ocean protection together with a viable business growth.

Growing a sustainable blue economy requires a strategy to create jobs in coastal communities. It requires a policy that ensures our oceans remain healthy, this in its turn will ultimately help our coastal and indigenous communities remain resilient and vibrant.

Oceans will continue to play a significant role in our economic development and wealth generation. At the same time, oceans will be essential to environmental sustainability and the protection of Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultures and ways of life (Blue Economy Strategy Engagement, 2021).

VI.2. Coastal/Maritime Tourism and local community in Batroun

Tourism in marine and coastal areas is a complex phenomenon. In fact, Tourism in coastal areas has brought along both positive and negative effects because of the irresponsible activities exerted upon such areas. Thereby, demanding an integrated approach that can be translated into a sustainable coastal tourism development (Marafa, 2008)

Local communities play an important role in tourism development (Figure 22). They are indeed regarded as legitimate and moral stakeholders in tourism development. As a result, Local community must be involved in policy and decision making so that it will enhance the trust and confidence of the local people in the tourism industry. If properly used, tourism is going to generate income that can be tremendously beneficial to both the host country and its local communities (Figure 23). Tourism has generated higher income that can be used on a national and local level to improve education and infrastructure, or to fund conservation efforts, and to promote more responsible tourism.

Local people should participate by all means; they should be financially supported to invest in tourism development. Likewise, they should be consulted but the final decision on tourism development should be made by formal bodies. Local communities should have a voice in the decision-making process and take a leading role as workers at all levels.



Figure 22. Relation between Blue Economy, Coastal Tourism, Local Community and Economic Growth.

Interaction between local community and tourism leads to economic growth, and so, the wheel will keep turning over and over. Wherever and whenever tourism in natural and rural areas is not properly planned, developed, and managed, it will contribute to the deterioration of natural landscapes which will threaten biodiversity, and as well causes marine and coastal pollution, poor water quality, displacement of local communities, and the erosion of cultural traditions.

Batroun is a place that tells a story by itself. A city yearning to be explored. A treasure chest waiting to be discovered (Blue Marlin- Discover Batroun).



Figure 23. Bonita Bay, Batroun, by Discover Batroun.

VII. Conclusions

There's a controversy over Batroun's origins. Some say it is Phoenician, others say it is Roman and others say it dates to the time of the Crusaders. It is not known so far, and nothing is yet proven. "There is a civilization underneath that we have not discovered yet" said Georges Mubarak, an excavator and former Greenpeace activist from Batroun. A treasure chest. That's what one could associate Batroun with. An ancient coffer carrying mysterious artifacts, precious gems, and untold tales. Being passed from one civilization to another for centuries, yet conserving its authenticity, maintaining its strength, guarding its mysteries.

Besides, carrying a magical combination of ancient legacies and incredible landscapes, Batroun throws the sea and the mountains at your feet. You could visit mysterious historical places and let your mind wander. It offers the chance as well to Explore the mountains, to go hiking and discover nature's panoramic sets around the city. Go surfing, swimming, or simply sunbathing on the beach, while enjoying lemonade. Its culture, streets, architecture, promise to sweep you off your feet and land right in the middle of a Lebanese tale.

Batroun, Lebanon is a city that offers the most satisfying simple pleasures. Whether you are on an exploring mission searching for new adventures, or dreaming of a romantic getaway with your lover, planning the next fun chapter with your friends, or looking for a family trip with the little ones, Batroun offers a variety of idyllically scenarios.

VIII. Electronic references

An improved structural modeling approach. *Annals of Tourism Research* 31(3): 495-516.

Batroun available online on: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Batroun>

Batroun city Analysis, available online on: <https://zhujiworld.com/lb/130534-batroun/>

Batroun District, available online on: <http://www.localiban.org/batroun-706>

Batroun district, available online on: <https://www.geonames.org/search.html?q=Batroun+Lebanon&country>

Batroun Festivals for summer, Modernarabesque , July 2021, available online on: <https://www.modernarabesque.com/en/news/3155>

Batroun Festivals, Ministry of Tourism, available online on: <https://www.visit-lebanon.org/leisure/festivals>

Batroun, Lebanon, June 21, 2021 by Yara Abi Nader (Reuters), available online on: <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/lebanon-battles-crisis-coastal-city-batroun-thrives-local-tourism-2021-06-21/>

Batroun, vivid sea, available online on: <https://www.lebanoninapicture.com/pictures/batroun-by-the-vivid-sea-lebanon-batroun-dji-drones-bat-Rami Rizk picture>

Batrouniyat, available online on: <http://www.batrouniyat.org/>

Blue Economy definitions, available online on: https://www.un.org/regularprocess/sites/www.un.org.regularprocess/files/rok_part_2.pdf

Blue Economy Engagement Paper, Canada, available online on: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/about-notre-sujet/blue-economy-economie-bleue/engagement-paper-document-mobilisation/part1-eng.html>

Christmas around the world, Diaspora village, Batroun Capital de Noel, available online on: <https://www.lebtivity.com/event/christmas-around-the-world-at-the-diaspora-village-batroun-2021>

Classes of Threats and description, information from UNEP – ERML: Improved Understanding, Management and Monitoring in the Coastal Zone-August 2012, available online on:

Discover Batroun, Blue Marlin Batroun, 2020, available online on: <https://www.bluemarlinbatroun.com/discover-batroun-activities/>

<file:///C:/Users/HP%2015/Downloads/sustainability-13-04423-v3.pdf>

<https://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/mar/ebsaws-2014-03/other/ebsaws-2014-03-submission-lebanon-02-en.pdf>

Impacts of Tourism Development on Coastal Communities – Article, Sussaangana Unhasuta, Nophea Sasaki, Sohee Minsun Kim, Sustainability 2021, 13, 4423, available online on:

Integrating Sustainable Tourism Development in Coastal and Marine Zone Environment – Lawal Mohammed Marafa), available online on: <https://journals.openedition.org/etudescaireennes/1373?lang=en>

Local community participation and tourism development, available online on: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/local-community-participation-tourism-development-dolma-eco-tourism>

Maqaad el Mir archeological site, Batroun, available online on: <https://www.petitfute.co.uk/v50051-batroun/c1173-visites-points-d-interet/c976-archeologie-artisanat-science-et-technique/204528-makaad-el-mir.html>

Marafa, 2008

Tourism Development towards Economic Sustainability of Local Communities in Parangtritis Tourism Area, available online on: <https://knepublishing.com/index.php/KnE-Social/article/view/3141/6663>

Ueng, J., 2019. 22 Things to Do in Batroun, Lebanon, April 26, 2019 / Beaches, Middle-East, Travel Guide, available online on: <https://www.bohemianvagabond.com/things-to-do-in-batroun/>

What are the main impacts of Coastal Tourism? Posted February 14, 2020, by Espon latest news, available online on: <https://www.espon.eu/what-are-main-impacts-coastal-tourism>

DISCLAIMER

The present document has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union under the ENI CBC MED Program. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of the *Ministry of Public Works and Transport (MPWT)* and *Al Midan NGO* and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union or the Program management structures.

PARTNERS



Institut National Des Sciences
Et Technologies De La Mer



ASSOCIATES PARTNERS



CPMR
CRPM

