

- 1 **Integrating sustainability in destination management plans and policies of a post-Soviet**
- 2 **state**
- 3

4 **Abstract**

5 Little is known about sustainable tourism transformations in post-Soviet countries. This
6 particularly concerns the former Soviet Union Republics where no research has attempted to
7 assess how/if the principles of sustainability have been embedded into destination
8 management policies and plans (DMPPs). This study has critically evaluated the scope for
9 integration of sustainable tourism in DMPPs in Kazakhstan, a former post-Soviet country in
10 Central Asia. By interviewing key tourism stakeholders, it has shown limited embracement of
11 the principles of sustainability. The lack of - (1) an understanding of the sustainability concept
12 by the national government, destination managers and industry practitioners; (2) subject-
13 specific expertise in managing sustainable tourism projects; (3) community engagement in
14 sustainable tourism planning and development; and (4) stakeholder collaboration - has been
15 identified as a prime reason. A multi-level, multi-stakeholder action framework is proposed to
16 aid the tourism industry of Kazakhstan in its advancement towards the sustainable (tourism)
17 development goal.

18

19	Key words
20	Sustainable tourism
21	Destination planning and management
22	Destination Management Organisation (DMO)
23	Tourism stakeholders
24	Kazakhstan
25	

26 **1. Introduction**

27 Tourism generates a number of socio-economic benefits for host destinations but,
28 concurrently, imposes a range of environmental impacts (Raza *et al.*, 2017). It is anticipated
29 that, if properly embraced by destination managers, the principles of sustainability and
30 sustainable development can, at least partially, address these impacts (Malik *et al.*, 2016). The
31 extent of integrating the sustainability agenda in policies and plans adopted by specific
32 destinations varies significantly (Liu, 2003). The ultimate success of such integration is
33 attributed to the capability of a destination management organisation (DMO) to comprehend
34 the value of sustainable (tourism) development and adopt it as a future destination's vision
35 (UNWTO, 2015). Indeed, being responsible for strategic planning, management, marketing
36 and communication (Bieger *et al.*, 2009; Arbogast *et al.*, 2017), DMOs can exert significant
37 influence on the scope of integration, implementation and development of sustainable tourism
38 in specific destinations (Aleksandrov & Kilimperov, 2018).

39 Research on sustainable tourism development and its integration into destination
40 management plans and policies (DMPPs) has focused on developed countries (Yfantidou &
41 Matarazzo, 2017). It has outlined the opportunities and challenges in embracing the principles
42 of sustainability by DMOs. The challenges include: the overall ambiguity of the term
43 “sustainability”; the fact that tourism is a highly complex system with restricted adaptive
44 capacity; and the problem of prioritising the long-term goals of sustainable development over
45 the short-term economic gains by tourism organisations (Day, 2012), to mention a few. In
46 contrast, the opportunities are exemplified by the economic benefits for host communities
47 (Archer, 1996; Lee, 2013), benefits to the environment (Cater, 1995; Neto, 2003), and,
48 benefits to visitors and culture (Day, 2016).

49 Studies on sustainable tourism development in the context of DMOs in transitional
50 economies are small(er) in number, with the majority representing countries in Asia (Lew,
51 1998; Amran *et al.*, 2008) , East-Central Europe (Hall, 2000) and South America (Schlüter,

52 1999). No research has attempted to understand the extent to which the principles of
53 sustainable development have been integrated into DMPPs adopted by DMOs in the former
54 Soviet Union states. This is a major shortcoming as, cumulatively, these represent an
55 increasing tourism market which is set to grow annually by around 4.5% (ETC, 2019)). This
56 emphasises the need to understand how sustainable tourism development in post-Soviet
57 Republics can be facilitated via closer embracement of the sustainability principles in the
58 governing agenda of national DMOs. This is to reduce the negative impacts of the tourism
59 growth on the natural environment and local community livelihoods in these countries.

60 Kazakhstan is a former Soviet Union Republic which gained its independence in 1991.
61 It is the ninth largest country in the world by land area which has a population of over 18
62 million (Worldometer, 2020). Diverse heritage provides significant potential for tourism
63 development in Kazakhstan (Nurgalieva, 2014). The national government has envisaged
64 tourism as an industry of strategic importance (Shilibekova *et al.*, 2016) and, in line with this
65 vision, in 2017, a dedicated organisation, the '*Kazakh Tourism*', was created and assigned the
66 rights to plan and manage tourism in the country, thus fulfilling the duties of a DMO
67 (Petrenko *et al.*, 2019). Kazakhstan has further committed to the goal of sustainable
68 development aiming to establish itself as a leading 'green economy' in the region of Central
69 Asia (Alisjhabana, 2019). Despite the stated importance of tourism and sustainability, very
70 little is known about the extent to which the principles of sustainable development have been
71 integrated, if at all, into DMPPs of Kazakhstan (Tiberghien *et al.*, 2018). The role of tourism
72 stakeholders in advancing the sustainability agenda in Kazakhstani tourism also remains
73 unexplored (Allayarov *et al.*, 2018).

74 Drawing on this background, this study has set to qualitatively evaluate how the
75 principles of sustainable development have been embraced by DMPPs in Kazakhstan. By
76 exploring the perspectives of tourism stakeholders, the study seeks to outline the challenges of
77 developing sustainable tourism from the viewpoint of those involved in the design of tourism

78 policies (i.e. representatives of the Kazakhstani DMO), management of tourism enterprises
79 (i.e. tourism industry professionals) and facilitation of sustainable tourism planning and
80 management (i.e. representatives of local communities, tourism media and tourism academia).
81 By studying the perspectives of the key stakeholders, this paper will design a multi-
82 stakeholder action framework for more effective embracement of sustainable tourism in
83 Kazakhstan.

84 The study should be of interest to policy-makers in Kazakhstan as it will provide an
85 overview of the knowledge and action gaps to be rectified in pursuit of the better integration
86 of sustainability principles into the republic's decision-making on tourism development. The
87 paper can also be of interest to the industry to showcase the pre-conditions of more effective
88 engagement in the design and promotion of sustainable tourism in Kazakhstan. Lastly, the
89 study can be of interest to other tourism actors and agents, such as local community and
90 industry associations, to outline their role in enabling the progress of the tourism industry in
91 Kazakhstan towards the goal of sustainability. Importantly, whilst focusing on Kazakhstan, it
92 is argued that the study can aid in an understanding of the institutional and organisational
93 challenges of sustainable tourism development in other post-Soviet Republics, especially
94 those located in Central Asia, where the local political and socio-economic contexts share a
95 number of commonalities.

96

97 **2. Literature review**

98 ***2.1. Sustainable tourism development in the context of destination management***

99 Although the concept of '*tourist destination*' is one of the central elements of tourism practice
100 and academic research, there is no consensus as to how a tourist destination can be defined
101 (Saraniemi & Kylänen, 2011). Murphy (1985), Framke (2002), and Tan *et al.* (2013) all
102 consider tourist destination from a spatio-temporal perspective, i.e. as the well-demarcated
103 geographical areas (Brown & Hall, 2008) to which tourists travel and in which they might

104 elect to remain for a certain period of time (Leiper, 2004). In contrast, Seaton & Bennett
105 (1996) and Bieger *et al.* (2009) define tourist destination from a management and competition
106 viewpoint whilst Buhalis (2000) identifies it as a tourism product. The latter suggests, for
107 example, that tourist destination incorporates an '*amalgam of tourism products offering an*
108 *integrated experience to consumers*' thereby implying that a destination can be defined as a
109 small region, an entire country or even a whole world. This is largely in line with the vision of
110 Wahab & Cooper (2005), who present destinations as centres of facilities and services
111 intended to meet the demands of tourists, and Bieger *et al.* (2009) who posit that a destination
112 should '*be considered as the tourism product that, in defined markets, contests with other*
113 *tourism products or services*'. Lastly, tourist destinations have also been defined from
114 perspectives of economic geography, networking and system theories (Zemła, 2016).

115 Recently, in light of growing public concern of the disproportionate impacts imposed by
116 tourism on the environment and local communities, the definitions of '*tourist destination*'
117 have been extended towards the concept of sustainability. To this end, Saraniemi & Kylänen,
118 (2011) have adopted cultural, marketing management-oriented and customer-oriented
119 perspectives, suggesting that an understanding of all these tenets is required for the
120 development of sustainable tourism at a destination level. They further claim that, whilst the
121 idea of a truly *sustainable destination* may not necessarily be meaningful, the concept of
122 *sustainable destination management* should be considered as one of the efficient ways to
123 integrate the principles of sustainable (tourism) development into the tourist destination and
124 its management.

125 The concept of destination management incorporates various planning and management
126 tools, approaches and concepts required for an organisation in charge, a DMO, to effectively
127 manage, plan and daily operate tourism-related activities (Hounnaklang, 2016). Effective
128 management of a destination facilitates its competitiveness and attractiveness (Brent &
129 Crouch, 2003), but also enables its more sustained development (Conaghan *et al.*, 2015). The

130 management of a destination should ultimately aim at making a destination (more) sustainable
131 (Welford & Ytterhus, 2004) which requires an integration of the principles of sustainability
132 and/or sustainable tourism into DMPPs adopted by DMOs (Cucculelli & Goffi, 2016). Given
133 the growing detrimental impacts of global tourism, it is not surprising that the determinants of
134 embracing sustainability goals by specific destinations across the world have attracted
135 significant scholarly interest to date (Eligh *et al.*, 2002; Lu & Nepal, 2009; Pearce, 2015). It is
136 interesting, however, that this scholarly interest does not concur with interest of industry
137 practitioners because the sustainability agenda adopted by many DMOs as articulated in the
138 extent of its integration into their DMPPs remains immature (Mihalic, 2016).

139

140 ***2.2. Actors of sustainable tourism development at a destination level: the role of DMOs***

141 The benefits of integrating the sustainability principles into DMPPs are manifold (Vučetić,
142 2018). The integration can ensure economic growth (Lu & Nepal, 2009), preserve ecosystems
143 (Haller, 2018), improve quality of life for local communities (UNESCO, 2009), enhance
144 business competitiveness (Cucculelli & Goffi, 2016) and attractiveness (Proctor *et al.*, 2018)
145 of a destination to tourists. These are the primary reasons for why DMOs, as organisations
146 empowered by governments to develop and implement strategies for destinations, should
147 more actively embrace the sustainability agenda (Hildebrandt & Isaac, 2015).

148 The traditional role of DMOs has been in marketing and promoting a destination, but
149 also in coordinating, planning and managing it (Hanna *et al.*, 2018). However, from the
150 standpoint of the sustainable development of tourism in a destination, the function of DMOs
151 is more complicated as it needs to achieve an equilibrium between the above, largely
152 economic, and the additional, social and environmental, goals (Wray *et al.*, 2010). This is
153 challenging as, in addition to marketing and business management expertise, DMOs should
154 now also excel in environmental management, ecology and anthropology, to mention a few
155 other areas of expert knowledge required (Klimek, 2013). The lack of such subject-specific

156 knowledge on the non-economic dimensions of sustainability may represent one of the
157 reasons for why DMOs have been less effective in integrating the principles of sustainable
158 development into their operations (Mihalic, 2016).

159 Past research on the role of DMOs in planning and management of a (more) sustainable
160 destination has emphasised the importance of these actors in the provision of the supply side
161 of sustainable tourism (Del Chiappa *et al.*, 2018). Conaghan *et al.* (2015) highlighted the
162 equal significance of DMOs from the demand perspective given that DMPPs they design and
163 implement may influence consumer behaviour and make it (more) sustainable. The
164 comprehensive role of DMOs in embracing sustainability is further underlined by Arbogast *et*
165 *al.* (2017) who have identified them as prime stakeholders with a concrete goal to responsibly
166 develop and govern tourism and to engage various tourism stakeholders in fulfilling this goal.
167 This is in line with Bieger *et al.* (2009), Pike & Page (2014) and Morrison (2018) who all
168 have discussed DMOs as the main organisations responsible for the integration and
169 development of sustainable tourism. The critical ‘gluing’ function of DMOs as facilitators of
170 a dialogue between tourism policy-makers and other destination stakeholders which attempts
171 to promote sustainable tourism at specific destinations has also been recognised (Morgan *et*
172 *al.*, 2012; Ruhanen *et al.*, 2019).

173 It has long been established that stakeholder collaboration and engagement are essential
174 for the integration and development of sustainable tourism at a destination level (Cessford &
175 Thompson, 2002). In their seminal paper, Sheehan and Ritchie (2005) apply stakeholder
176 theory to identify the main destination stakeholders and elaborate on how DMOs should
177 engage them for the benefit of destination’s promotion and development. The stakeholders
178 identified include tourism businesses, state/regional/local authorities, chambers of commerce,
179 investors and academics, among others. D’Angella and Go (2009) argue that the capabilities
180 of all stakeholders should be carefully assessed in order to understand how each stakeholder
181 can fulfil the roles expected of them. The theory of destination stakeholder assessment has

182 been proposed as a result. Khazaei *et al.* (2015) extend stakeholder theory and theory of
183 destination stakeholder assessment to understand how engaging multiple actors can contribute
184 to tourism's sustainability at a level of specific destinations. Nguyen *et al.* (2019) combine
185 stakeholder theory with social network analysis and actor network theory to design a blended
186 approach for the reassessment of stakeholder roles in the promotion and development of more
187 sustainable destinations. Research has shown the importance of understanding the needs of
188 stakeholders when integrating sustainability principles into DMPPs, but has also indicated the
189 lack of empirical studies on the topic in question, especially undertaken in the context of
190 developing countries (Wondirad *et al.*, 2020).

191 Despite the importance of multi-stakeholder networks and collaborative work held
192 within, examples of effective multi-stakeholder collaboration towards sustainability goals in
193 specific destinations remain small in number (Graci, 2013). There is evidence that one
194 particular stakeholder, normally governmental bodies and DMOs as their direct
195 representatives, tends to dominate in the design of DMPPs and fails to account for the
196 perspectives of other stakeholders, most notably local communities and small tourism
197 businesses (Byrd, 2007). Local community engagement is one of the main principles of
198 sustainable development which suggests that, by not listening to opinions of local
199 communities, other stakeholders will be unable to design DMPPs underpinned by the vision
200 of true sustainability (Boluk, 2011). This is particularly relevant for many destinations in
201 transitional economies, such as those in the post-Soviet states, where the principles of
202 democratic governance are yet emerging (Raszkowski & Bartniczak, 2019).

203 The challenge of embracing the principles of sustainability by DMOs and the lack of
204 stakeholder engagement in pursuit of the goal of sustainable development at a destination
205 level is equally pronounced around the world (Papadopoulou, 2016) as articulated by case
206 studies of Barcelona in Spain (Goodwin, 2016), Bulgaria (Aleksandrov & Kilimperov, 2018),
207 Wales in the UK (Morgan *et al.*, 2012), Vietnam (Hildebrandt & Isaac, 2015), Italy

208 (Cucculelli & Goffi, 2016) and Greece (Papadopoulou, 2016). No research has however
209 examined the extent to which the principles of sustainability have been embraced, if at all, by
210 DMOs in transitional economies of the former Soviet Union. This prevents comparisons and
211 hampers an analysis of the barriers towards (more) sustainable development in specific
212 destinations of this large, yet rapidly growing, tourism market. By looking at the case of
213 Kazakhstan, an emerging destination in Central Asia and a post-Soviet state, this study aims
214 to critically examine how/if the sustainability agenda has been embraced by its DMO and
215 incorporated into the related DMPPs. It is argued that such analysis will enable to, for the first
216 time, shed light on the progress of other countries of the former Soviet Union towards the
217 goal of sustainable tourism development.

218

219 ***2.3. The case of Kazakhstan***

220 As a destination, Kazakhstan holds significant potential to develop a well-rounded tourism
221 product. First, it has a rich natural and man-made heritage with a number of attractions either
222 already included or nominated for inclusion into the World Heritage List (UNESCO, 2019).
223 Second, the Kazakhstan government has officially proclaimed tourism as one of the priority
224 sectors for economic development of the country (Dulambaeva & Kozhakhmet, 2018) which
225 is reflected in the support provided by the government to tourism businesses and
226 entrepreneurs (Baiburiev *et al.*, 2018). Third, the geo-political location of Kazakhstan within
227 the Great Silk Road enables its accessibility to the significant tourism markets of China and
228 Russia (Medeu *et al.*, 2015). Lastly, although the rather remote geographical location of
229 Kazakhstan in Central Asia impedes the destination's promotion to Europe and USA,
230 transportation links between these tourism markets have substantially improved in recent
231 years (Kantarci, 2007), suggesting increasing supply of tourists from these markets in the
232 foreseeable future. Currently, the former Soviet Union's Republics supply the largest number
233 of tourists to Kazakhstan as they account for 91.7% of arrivals and 70.6% of spending.

234 Tourists from other countries make up 8.3% of the total visitors, but provide 29.4% of the
235 spending. The total number of inbound tourist arrivals to Kazakhstan in 2018 was 8.8 million
236 which was an increase of 14.1% from 2017, and 28.5% over the last five years (OECD, 2019).

237 Past studies have outlined the significant scope for sustainable tourism development in
238 Kazakhstan (Isaldaeva and Tazhibaeva, 2013; Zhensikbayeva *et al.*, 2018), examined the
239 importance of the Great Silk Road as a catalyst of sustainable tourism (Izenbayev *et al.*,
240 2016), evaluated the potential for social tourism (Asipova, 2014) and eco-tourism
241 development (Mukhambetov *et al.*, 2014), discussed the role of cultural tourism
242 (Neckermann, 2013) and investigated authenticity of cultural tourism in Kazakhstani regions
243 (Tiberghien & Xie, 2018). All above studies have confirmed that Kazakhstan has numerous
244 opportunities to develop different types of sustainable tourism and that it can be a competitive
245 destination in terms of the sustainable tourist product offer. No research has however
246 attempted to understand how/if the principles of sustainable development and the sustainable
247 tourism agenda have been integrated into national tourism policies and plans and embraced by
248 the Kazakhstani DMO through their integration into DMPPs.

249 In 2017, the government of Kazakhstan established a national tourism company, the
250 ‘Kazakh Tourism’, to serve the function of the country’s DMO (Petrenko *et al.*, 2019) (Figure
251 1). The ‘Kazakh Tourism’ reports to the national board of tourism and the government of
252 Kazakhstan and operates under the patronage of the Ministry of Culture and Sport. The
253 ‘Kazakh Tourism’ works with the national committee of the tourism industry of Kazakhstan
254 and the National Chamber of Entrepreneurs to fulfil its mission which was set as ‘*to develop*
255 *domestic and inbound tourism by attracting investment, improving competitiveness and*
256 *promoting the tourism branding of Kazakhstan*’ (Kazakh Tourism, 2019). To this end, the
257 ‘Kazakh Tourism’ collaborates with the regional executive boards of tourism and regional
258 chambers of entrepreneurs to ensure that Kazakhstani tourism businesses engage in the
259 fulfilment of its mission. This collaboration is supported by non-governmental organisations

260 (NGOs) in their capacity of knowledge, consultancy service and expert advice providers
261 (Figure 1).

262 The mission statement of 'Kazakh Tourism' suggests that sustainable tourism
263 development is not the main goal of the Kazakhstani DMO. This finds confirmation in the
264 national programme for development of the tourism industry of the Republic of the
265 Kazakhstan in 2019-2025 which fails to recognise sustainable development of tourism as one
266 of the main goals of the country's tourism development (National Government of the
267 Republic of Kazakhstan, 2019). Concurrently, sustainability and 'green economy'
268 development have been set as one of the country's strategic priorities (National Government
269 of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2019). Thus, the question arises as to why the principles of
270 sustainability are not deemed important for the development of tourism in Kazakhstan whilst
271 their importance for the overall country's development has been acknowledged.

272 [Insert Figure 1 here]

273

274 ***2.4. Summary and Knowledge Gap***

275 Although embracing the principles of sustainability and sustainable development is important
276 for effective destination management in light of intensifying negative impacts of tourism, no
277 research has looked at this issue in the context of countries of the former Soviet Union. This
278 study partially plugs this knowledge gap by examining the extent to which sustainability
279 considerations have been integrated into DMPPs of Kazakhstan, a large post-Soviet economy
280 with the rapidly developing tourism industry and recently publicised national commitment to
281 sustainability goals. By exploring opinions of tourism stakeholders in Kazakhstan, whose
282 engagement is critical for sustainable tourism development at any destination, the study
283 identifies the key barriers towards more effective embracement of the sustainability principles
284 in DMPPs of Kazakhstan and establishes the scope for how these can be rectified.

285

3. Research design

Owing to the lack of research on the topic in question conducted in the studied geographical context (Kazakhstan), an exploratory qualitative research approach (Creswell 2013) underpinned by constructivist paradigm was adopted for primary data collection and analysis. Constructivist paradigm was chosen given the flexibility in the research process it provides (Ritchie *et al.* 2013). As part of this paradigm, qualitative research was adopted due to its ability to examine the meanings, attitudes and perceptions of study participants (Ospina, 2004). This was deemed suitable for this study which had set to shed light on perceived barriers in integrating sustainability in DMPPs from the perspective of tourism stakeholders in Kazakhstan. Qualitative research has been widely applied in past studies on stakeholder perceptions in the context of destination management as demonstrated by Stewart & Draper (2007); Canavan (2013); Farmaki & Papatheodorou (2015).

Interview schedule was designed following the literature review. To build a list of preliminary themes for in-depth investigation, it made use of the findings from Khazaei *et al.* (2015), Nguyen *et al.* (2019) and Wondirad *et al.* (2020) as these studies looked at the topic in question albeit in the context of other geographies. The interview schedule consisted of four sections. The first, introductory, set of questions aimed at understanding the experiences of participants in working in the tourism industry in Kazakhstan, establishing the role of the participants within their respective tourism organisations and revealing the functions of these organisations. This was followed by the second set of questions intended to evaluate the potential of Kazakhstan to develop (more) sustainable types of tourism. The third set of questions focussed on the participants' understanding of the concepts of sustainability and sustainable development and attempted to outline the institutional, organisational and personal barriers towards their integration in DMPPs. The fourth set considered the role of DMOs and their functions in implementing sustainable tourism in Kazakhstan.

311 For integrity and validity, the interview schedule was piloted with three Kazakhstani
312 tourism policy-makers and three tourism businesses prior to deployment. The interview
313 schedule was designed in English with a subsequent translation to Russian and Kazakh
314 performed by a professional translator. When interviewing, study participants were given a
315 choice of these two most commonly spoken languages in Kazakhstan.

316 For this research, the study population contained multiple tourism stakeholders in
317 Kazakhstan, namely, policy makers, tourism businesses, academics, non-governmental
318 organisations, independent experts representing (inter)national organisations active in the
319 field of sustainability and tourism development, and tourism media. In total, eight senior
320 policy makers, senior managers of four leading tourism businesses, and ten independent
321 stakeholders (academics, tourism experts from the (inter)national organisations, NGOs,
322 professional associations of tourism businesses, media) were interviewed. All participants
323 were recruited via a snowballing technique using professional contacts of the research team
324 for initial recruitment. Although the snowballing technique has a well-recognised drawback of
325 being non-probabilistic which results in recruitment-related biases (Merriam and Tisdell,
326 2016), it is deemed appropriate when reaching for study participants from the categories of
327 populations limited in size and accessibility, such as tourism policy-makers and industry
328 professionals (Filimonau and Krivcova 2017). The total number of participants (n=22, Table
329 1) was determined by the saturation effect.

330 [Insert Table 1 here]

331 Interviews were conducted in June-July 2019 and lasted between 30 and 60 minutes.
332 They were digitally recorded, transcribed and professionally English translated. No incentives
333 were offered. Thematic analysis facilitated by NVIVO software was applied to the interview
334 transcripts following the coding structure proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). Its outcome
335 is presented in Table 2.

336 [Insert Table 2 here]

337

338 **4. Findings and discussion**

339 Participants recognised the large potential of Kazakhstani tourism and acknowledged a
340 significant scope for developing specific tourism types that have traditionally been considered
341 (more) sustainable, such as eco-tourism, cultural tourism and rural tourism (Table 2). This is
342 in line with Isaldaeva and Tazhibaeva (2013) and Aimagambetov *et al.* (2017) who drew the
343 same conclusion when assessing the prospects of sustainable tourism development in
344 Kazakhstan. The under-developed infrastructure and the lack of investment were however
345 commonly recognised as the main challenges of (sustainable) tourism development in
346 Kazakhstan:

347

348 *'Our country has great potential for the development of tourism. We have, for*
349 *example, diverse landscapes, namely endless steppes, beautiful mountains,*
350 *historical buildings and also our unique culture and traditions. These can attract*
351 *a lot of tourists, domestically and internationally, especially if we improve the*
352 *tourism infrastructure, such as the quality of roads and tourist accommodation.*
353 *The government is working in this direction by trying to attract private investors*
354 *albeit with varied success'* (DMO1)

355

356 This is in line with other studies conducted on this topic in the context of post-Soviet
357 states (Banaszkiewicz *et al.*, 2017; Turdumambetov, 2014). For effective development of
358 sustainable tourism, tourism stakeholders need to possess a good level of an understanding of
359 what the principles of sustainability and sustainable development imply (Maiden, 2008). By
360 recognising the benefits of sustainable development and acknowledging the challenges in its
361 implementation, tourism stakeholders can be best positioned to promote the need for its
362 integration into DMPPs (Ali *et al.*, 2017).

363

364 ***4.1. Understanding the concepts of sustainability and sustainable development***

365 The levels of knowledge and understanding of sustainability and sustainable development
366 among tourism stakeholders in Kazakhstan varied significantly. Although all claimed to be
367 well familiar with both concepts, the majority were unable to correctly identify the three
368 pillars of sustainable development and focused on the environmental dimension of
369 sustainability only (Table 2). Many detrimental environmental impacts of tourism, such as
370 littering and water pollution, are visible (Kavallinis & Pizam, 1994; Baysan, 2001) which may
371 partially explain why this aspect of sustainability was most popular with study participants. In
372 contrast, the negative socio-economic impacts, such as economic leakage (Chirenje *et al.*,
373 2013) and over-tourism (Benner, 2019), are less recognisable and, moreover, these are less
374 pronounced in Kazakhstan due to it being a yet emerging destination. The economic goals of
375 tourism development were far more important for tourism stakeholders in Kazakhstan at the
376 current stage of the national tourism industry's development which is well articulated by the
377 quote below:

378

379 *'...mmm, I think the terms sustainability and sustainable tourism come from the*
380 *western countries, which already have the highest GDP from the tourism*
381 *industry. In our situation, our tourism industry needs to be developed, so it needs*
382 *more international tourists from around the world, and it's therefore necessary to*
383 *increase the number of international tourists as soon as possible and develop our*
384 *tourism industry based on the national programme's goals' (P2)*

385

386 The above quote from a policymaker reflects well the content of the National Programme for
387 the Development of the Tourism Industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan in 2019–2025
388 (National Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2019) which contains no mention of

389 sustainability and/or the need for (more) sustainable development of tourism in the country.
390 The government's current priority is clearly on increasing tourist numbers, even at the cost of
391 detrimental environmental but, particularly, socio-economic impacts. Some independent
392 tourism stakeholders expressed concerns over the lack of knowledge of what sustainability
393 implies at the highest governance level in Kazakhstan with a subsequent poor understanding
394 of how the principles of sustainability and sustainable development should be integrated into
395 national tourism policies. The lack of understanding of the concept of sustainability is a
396 common problem among tourism stakeholders of many developing and transitional countries
397 (Bui, 2009; Sofield & Li, 2011; Hall, 2013) which hampers the quest of their national tourism
398 industries towards sustainable development goals.

399 Poor knowledge of sustainability was well reflected in participants' description of
400 (more) sustainable tourism types. For example, the majority only associated sustainable
401 tourism with eco-tourism, describing the latter as a tourism type which imposes low
402 environmental impacts and makes a more rational use of natural resources. Ecotourism by its
403 definition should, however, generate multiple benefits beyond the goals of environmental
404 conservation (Font *et al.*, 2003; Stronza, 2007; Hunt *et al.*, 2015), but this need went
405 unnoticed by the majority of tourism stakeholders in Kazakhstan.

406

407 ***4.2.Perceptions and attitudes of tourism stakeholders towards sustainable tourism*** 408 ***development***

409 Hardy & Beeton (2001) highlighted the fact that unless there was a positive perception
410 amongst tourism stakeholders of the need for sustainable tourism development at a destination
411 level, it could not be effectively integrated into tourism policies and management practices.
412 Positive attitudes towards sustainable tourism development can accelerate its embracement
413 (Kruja & Hasaj, 2010) by prompting positive behavioural response among all tourism
414 stakeholders (Holden, 2010; Begum *et al.*, 2014). Participants demonstrated a range of
415 attitudes towards sustainable tourism development in Kazakhstan with a clear split observed

416 between tourism stakeholders representing policy-makers and businesses and the rest of the
417 sample (Table 2). The former were primarily driven by profitability, justifying this by the yet
418 insufficient development of tourism in the country. The latter category of stakeholders,
419 represented by academics, professional tourism associations and various NGOs, argued for
420 prioritizing sustainability over profitability or for, at least, their equality when planning and
421 managing tourism in Kazakhstan. This is in line with the literature which has established and
422 repeatedly emphasised a significant gap in the viewpoints on the need for sustainable tourism
423 development among the stakeholders from the government and business and other interested
424 parties (Ali *et al.*, 2017; Halis *et al.*, 2017; Hounnaklang, 2016; Lundberg, 2017; McDonald,
425 2006). This suggests that the problem of conflicting stakeholder interests and the challenge of
426 how these can be harmonised persists across geographical borders regardless of the political
427 and socio-economic backgrounds of destinations. The contrasting views of tourism
428 stakeholders in Kazakhstan on the need for sustainable tourism development are well
429 exemplified by the below quotes:

430

431 *'Look, in my opinion, as the government is responsible for the tourism product of*
432 *Kazakhstan, it should allow us, tourism businesses, to make unlimited use of such*
433 *attractive tourism products as natural parks and nature reserves. By accessing*
434 *these we can increase the number of international tourists in the country, and this*
435 *is exactly what the government wants...'* (TB3)

436

437 *'The majority of tourism businesses are not concerned about the environment.*
438 *For them the only important thing is to get as many tourists in as possible, so they*
439 *could get more profit and so the government would be happy. The key*
440 *stakeholders in this country, such as tourism businesses, don't care about the*
441 *importance of sustainable development'* (E2)

442

443 *'Last year we organised 27 meetings with tourism stakeholders to explain the*
444 *significance of preserving our natural resources but, unfortunately, tourism*
445 *businesses, or even the executive bodies of the government, did not attend. For*
446 *them, it's more important to get as many tourists during the peak season as*
447 *possible. But the environmental issues are becoming greater, one day we will lose*
448 *all our natural resources. To prevent this, we all [stakeholders] should work*
449 *together'* (NGO2).

450

451 **4.3.Challenges of integrating sustainability in DMPPs**

452 The above quote from a Kazakhstani NGO highlights the lack of stakeholder collaboration as
453 one of the main challenges in integrating sustainability in DMPPs in Kazakhstan.
454 Sustainability can only be achieved by building effective and responsive multi-stakeholder
455 partnerships (Maiden, 2008) which becomes particularly important in light of the tourism
456 industry being multi-stakeholder by nature (Krce Miocic *et al.*, 2016). The lack of stakeholder
457 collaboration in Kazakhstani tourism was emphasised by the majority of participants
458 regardless of their role and function (Table 2):

459

460 *'In general, our tourism industry does not have connections or communication*
461 *between stakeholders. The government develops tourism on its own, such as by*
462 *creating new tourism programmes, without thinking to involve other*
463 *stakeholders. On the other hand, we, as tourism businesses, try to survive by*
464 *ourselves, which means we don't collaborate or coordinate what we do with*
465 *governmental bodies, let alone form any kind of partnerships'* (TB1)

466

467 The lack of stakeholder collaboration was a particularly important problem for local
468 communities with many participants claiming that these were entirely excluded from planning
469 and management of tourism in Kazakhstan (Table 2). Local communities are crucial for
470 sustainable tourism development as they can, for example, provide accommodation, serve as
471 tour guides, produce souvenirs and cook local foods for tourists (Neckermann, 2013; Amir *et*
472 *al.*, 2015). Social entrepreneurship at a local level is a major vehicle of sustainable tourism
473 development (Laeis & Lemke, 2016) which can contribute to heritage preservation and
474 regenerate the rural and remote destinations that have, concurrently, high levels of
475 attractiveness for sustainable tourism (Conaghan *et al.*, 2015; Turker *et al.*, 2016; Zouganeli
476 *et al.*, 2012). The needs and wants of the local communities are not accounted for by other
477 stakeholders of Kazakhstani tourism, primarily policy-makers and businesses. In addition, the
478 locals are passive and demonstrate low interest in social entrepreneurship which is due to the
479 lack of support from the government. According to the official statistics, the level of social
480 entrepreneurship in tourism among local communities in Kazakhstan is 3% which is low
481 compared to agriculture with its 9% (Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of
482 Kazakhstan Statistics Committee, 2019). This is very poor given that agritourism, as a (more)
483 sustainable tourism type, holds significant potential for development in Kazakhstan and given
484 that it is substantially more developed by the locals in other post-Soviet countries, such as
485 Poland (Kosmaczewska, 2008):

486

487 *‘...the passiveness of the locals and the local communities towards the*
488 *development of sustainable tourism and tourism in general is a result of various*
489 *administrative barriers, such as taxation, sanitary inspection [fines], but also*
490 *because of seasonality of tourism. We have state funding to help the locals to*
491 *become tourism entrepreneurs, but not everyone knows about its existence. In*
492 *addition, the locals and communities are unaware of the significance of the*

493 *tourism industry as a source of income, so they need a better understanding of*
494 *tourism basics, such as marketing, for example... ’ (TB2).*

495

496 *‘The lack of training on how to run a tourism business is a general problem*
497 *because the community does not realize the importance of tourism businesses and*
498 *this leads to a low level of involvement of communities in tourism. They lack the*
499 *ability/skills of entrepreneurship and there’s a lack of leadership and innovation*
500 *skills too’ (A3).*

501

502 The lack of professionals possessing expert knowledge in sustainability and sustainable
503 tourism development was highlighted as another significant challenge (Table 2). This is in
504 line with Seidahmetov *et al.*, (2014) who established the educational level and qualifications
505 of specialists as significant problems for the tourism industry of Kazakhstan. This is further
506 exacerbated by high staff turnover with best employees in Kazakhstan leaving the tourism
507 industry for jobs in other economic sectors, such as banking, mining and engineering,
508 nationally but also abroad. Whilst these new jobs do not always require specialist knowledge
509 of sustainability, they are better paid compared to tourism jobs in Kazakhstan.

510

511 *‘I cannot say that our industry doesn’t have enough professionals but we have*
512 *such difficulties that people in the main governmental bodies or the executive*
513 *staff generally don’t have any specialist qualifications in sustainable tourism or*
514 *even general tourism or hospitality management; rather, most of them have*
515 *qualifications in other fields, such as finance, accounting or economy. Plus, many*
516 *of our good specialists have left the country to get jobs in the tourism industry*
517 *abroad. To grow our own talent, we need to organise more trainings with*
518 *international experts on sustainability, thus we can develop sustainable tourism*

519 *more easily; indeed, many developed nations have already integrated their*
520 *tourism industries in this way'* (NGO3).

521

522 The quote above demonstrates the lack of specialist training as another challenge of
523 integrating sustainability in DMPPs in Kazakhstan. The importance of sustainability training
524 for tourism policy-makers, industry practitioners and local communities has long been
525 emphasised (Gough & Scott, 1999). The unavailability of training resources may lead to a
526 poor understanding of the importance of sustainable tourism development with a consequent
527 negative effect on sustainability perceptions and attitudes of tourism stakeholders as discussed
528 earlier.

529 DMOs are fundamental for the promotion and development of sustainable tourism
530 (Aleksandrov & Kilimperov, 2018; Klimek, 2013) and, to this end, the last set of questions
531 aimed to explore the role of the Kazakhstani DMO in embracing the principles of
532 sustainability in its DMPPs. Only one participant represented by an academic explicitly
533 mentioned the current function of the '*Kazakh Tourism*' in designing sustainable tourism
534 products. This was, however, a vision of an 'ideal future' with the majority of participants
535 emphasizing the critical functions of a DMO in general management, marketing and attracting
536 finance (Table 2). This is confirmed in the literature (Schianetz *et al.*, 2007), thus showing
537 that the sustainability agenda is considered secondary by many DMOs around the world
538 where the Kazakhstani DMO is no exception.

539

540 ***4.4. The way forward***

541 Tourism stakeholders revealed a number of cavities that exist in Kazakhstani tourism and
542 prevent its DMO from better integrating the sustainability agenda in its DMPPs. By
543 addressing these cavities, the tourism industry in Kazakhstan can increase the scope for more
544 sustainable development, thus enhancing its reputation in the international tourism market and

545 positively distinguishing itself among competing destinations. Figure 2 outlines a set of
546 measures and strategies required to better embrace the principles of sustainability by
547 Kazakhstani tourism.

548 [Insert Figure 2 here]

549 The proposed measures and strategies should be applied at three levels: micro, meso
550 and macro. At the micro level, tourism businesses, academics and NGOs should work
551 together on product development and resource stewardship. This is in order to address such
552 cavities as the lack of community engagement and entrepreneurship skills in the design of
553 more sustainable tourism products, such as eco- and agro- tours. This is also in order to raise
554 public awareness of the benefits of sustainable tourism and prepare future industry experts for
555 the development of tourism products with reduced environmental impacts. For example,
556 institutions of higher education can provide specialist training courses to industry
557 professionals on how to design sustainable tourism products whilst NGOs can collaborate
558 with tour operators on how to procure seed funding for the development and promotion of
559 environmentally-benign tours.

560 At the meso level, the role of the Kazakhstani DMO, i.e. the ‘Kazakh Tourism’, is
561 paramount to enable the multi-stakeholder collaboration at the micro level. The ‘Kazakh
562 Tourism’ can fulfil the function of a ‘gelling’ agent whereby it brings together tourism
563 businesses, academics and NGOs that are willing to work on the design and development of
564 sustainable tourism products. The ‘Kazakh Tourism’ should oversee their work and support it
565 financially and politically given its direct connections with the national government and other
566 powerful stakeholders in Kazakhstan. In other words, the ‘Kazakh Tourism’ should start
567 playing a more (pro-)active role in the promotion of more sustainable tourism in Kazakhstan
568 by listening to the needs of the industry and securing resources to fulfil these needs.

569 At the macro level, policy-makers should move away from the current, short-sighted,
570 vision of rapid tourism development which is often achieved at the cost of environmental

571 destruction. This vision should be replaced with a longer-term, more sustained, perspective on
572 how tourism should be developed in Kazakhstan. This perspective needs to be underpinned by
573 the consideration of conserving the natural resources and enhancing awareness of the benefits
574 of sustainable tourism development among domestic, as well as international, tourists. This
575 sustainability perspective should be adopted at all levels of decision-making and the
576 Kazakhstani DMO, the ‘Kazakh Tourism’, should be assigned more power of making
577 independent decisions on how this perspective can be reinforced on the ground.

578

579 **5. Conclusions**

580 This study critically evaluated the current state of integration of the principles of sustainability
581 and sustainable (tourism) development in DMPPs of a post-Soviet Union’s Republic of
582 Kazakhstan. It established significant potential for sustainable tourism development in
583 Kazakhstan but, concurrently, revealed a number of substantial challenges that hinder the
584 embracement of sustainability by the national DMO, the ‘*Kazakh Tourism*’. The national
585 prioritisation of the short-term financial gains from largely unsustainable tourism development,
586 the lack of stakeholder engagement in the design of sustainable tourism products, the lack of
587 community involvement in sustainable tourism development, poor understanding of the
588 benefits of sustainability in tourism and the lack of qualified specialists in sustainable
589 (tourism) development were identified as the primary barriers. The study provided a multi-
590 level, multi-stakeholder action framework designed to facilitate the (better) integration of
591 sustainability in the future DMPPs of Kazakhstan and highlighted the role of various
592 stakeholders in its effective implementation.

593 ***5.1. Theoretical implications***

594 The study contributed to the existing body of knowledge on stakeholder theory, social
595 network analysis and actor network theory. Past research making use of these theories in the
596 context of sustainable tourism (D’Angella and Go, 2009; Khazaei *et al.*, 2015; Nguyen *et al.*,

597 2019) has called for an in-depth assessment of the capabilities of various destination
598 stakeholders to engage in the design and development of more sustainable tourism products.
599 Past research (Wondirad *et al.*, 2020) has further outlined the need to understand the scope for
600 collaboration between various stakeholders as a means of integrating sustainability in DMPPs,
601 especially in the context of developing countries. The novelty of this current study is, thus,
602 twofold: (1) an empirical investigation of how multi-stakeholder collaboration and
603 networking can bring about more sustainable destination planning and management; and (2) a
604 case study of an emerging destination with significant potential for sustainable tourism
605 development in Central Asia, Kazakhstan.

606 ***5.2. Managerial implications***

607 The study established the need for a multi-stakeholder, collaborative, effort in order to design
608 and develop sustainable tourism products in Kazakhstan, thus positioning it as a sustainable
609 tourism destination. To aid in the application of this effort, a multi-level action framework
610 was proposed highlighting the roles of different stakeholders in enabling transition of
611 Kazakhstan towards the goal of (more) sustainable destination. The action framework
612 emphasises the need for collaboration and pinpoints stakeholder engagement at all levels as a
613 determinant of successful transitioning. The action framework can potentially be adopted for
614 application beyond Kazakhstan, especially in countries with similar political and socio-
615 economic backgrounds, such as in other former Soviet Union's republics.

616 ***5.3. Future research directions***

617 The study outlined a number of promising avenues for future research. First, it should aim to
618 understand in more depth opinions of various tourism stakeholders on sustainable
619 development of Kazakhstani tourism. This particularly concerns those categories of
620 stakeholders that were excluded from analysis in the current study, such as the regional and
621 local tourism authorities, domestic and international tourists. Such research can establish the
622 demand for sustainable tourism products, thus providing an incentive to other stakeholders to

623 invest in the design of such products to match supply with demand. Second, given the lack of
624 research on the extent of integration of the principles of sustainability and on the degree of
625 embracement of sustainable tourism by DMPPs in post-Soviet countries, future studies on this
626 topic should be conducted in the context of other former Soviet states, especially those with
627 rapidly growing tourism markets, such as Russia, Uzbekistan, Georgia and Ukraine.
628 Comparative research with former Soviet Union's Republics that have now become members
629 of the European Union with its considerably different political and socio-economic contexts
630 and, subsequently, more stringent environmental standards, such as the Baltic States, would
631 also be useful to have. Such research would enable mutual learning and could facilitate the
632 extraction of 'good business' practices in the embracement of sustainability by national
633 DMOs in post-Soviet states. Lastly, future studies should deal with the topic of social
634 entrepreneurship as a vehicle of sustainable tourism development in Kazakhstan and beyond
635 and examine the determinants of more active engagement of local communities in tourism
636 decision-making. Post-Soviet states represent a particularly interesting context for such
637 research given that social entrepreneurship was discouraged in the Soviet Union. This
638 suggests that the drivers of local community involvement in sustainable tourism development
639 in the former republics of the Soviet Union will differ substantially from those established in
640 the 'western' states, thus providing scope for interesting comparative research and outlining
641 directions for possible policy and management interventions.

642

643 **References**

- 644 Aimagambetov, E., Bugubaeva, R., Bespayeva, R., & Tashbaev, N. (2017). Model of sustainable
645 development of tourism industry in Kazakhstan (regional perspective). *Public Policy and*
646 *Administration*, 16(2), 179–197. <https://doi.org/10.13165/VPA-17-16-2-02>
- 647 Aleksandrov, K., & Kilimperov, I. (2018). THE ROLE OF DESTINATION MANAGEMENT
648 ORGANIZATIONS (DMOs) FOR SUSTAINABLE RURAL TOURISM IN BULGARIA.
649 *Scientific Papers Series Management, Economic Engineering in Agriculture and Rural*
650 *Development*, 18(2), 11–16.
- 651 Ali, F., Hussain, K., Nair, V., & Nair, P.K. (2017). Stakeholders' perceptions & attitudes towards
652 tourism development in a mature destination. *Tourism*, 65(2), 173–186.
653 <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.17576.06400>
- 654 Alisjahbana, A.S. (2019). *Opening Statement: First Kazakhstan Forum On Achieving Sustainable*
655 *Development Goals*. UNESCAP. [https://www.unescap.org/speeches/opening-statement-](https://www.unescap.org/speeches/opening-statement-first-kazakhstan-forum-achieving-sustainable-development-goals#)
656 [first-kazakhstan-forum-achieving-sustainable-development-goals#](https://www.unescap.org/speeches/opening-statement-first-kazakhstan-forum-achieving-sustainable-development-goals#)
- 657 Allayarov, P., Embergenov, B., & Han, S.T. (2018). Problems and Prospects of sustainable
658 tourism in the Republic of Kazakhstan. *Business and Economic Research*, 8(2), 115.
659 <https://doi.org/10.5296/ber.v8i2.12951>
- 660 Amir, A.F., Ghapar, A.A., Jamal, S.A., & Ahmad, K.N. (2015). Sustainable Tourism
661 Development: A Study on Community Resilience for Rural Tourism in Malaysia. *Procedia -*
662 *Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 168, 116–122. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.10.217>
- 663 Amran, A., Abdul Wahid, N., Che Haat, H., Siti-Nabiha, A.K., & Abustan, I. (2008).
664 TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE TOURISM MANAGEMENT IN MALAYSIA. *Lex ET*
665 *Scientia International Journal*, XV(2), 301–312.
- 666 Arbogast, D., Deng, J., & Maumbe, K. (2017). DMOs and rural tourism: A stakeholder analysis
667 the case of Tucker County, West Virginia. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 9(10).
668 <https://doi.org/10.3390/su9101813>
- 669 Archer, B. (1996). Sustainable Tourism - Do Economists Really Care? *Progress in Tourism and*
670 *Hospitality Research*, 2, 217–222. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pth.6070020303>
- 671 Asipova. Z. (2014). Geographic underpinning of the design and development of social tourism in

- 672 the Republic of Kazakhstan [Географические основы формирования и развития
673 социального туризма в Республике Казахстан]. Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Al-Farabi
674 Kazakh National University.
- 675 Baiburiev, R., David, L., Abdreyeva, S., Zhakupova, A., & Artemyev, A. (2018). Impacts of
676 Tourism Activities on Economy of Kazakhstan. *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites ISSN*,
677 22(2), 480–488.
- 678 Banaszkiwicz, M., Graburn, N., & Owsianowska, S. (2017). Tourism in (Post)socialist Eastern
679 Europe. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, 15(2), 109–121.
680 <https://doi.org/10.1080/14766825.2016.1260089>
- 681 Baysan, S. (2001). Perceptions of the environmental impacts of tourism: A comparative study of
682 the attitudes of German, Russian and Turkish tourists in Kemer, Antalya. *Tourism
683 Geographies*, 3(2), 218–235. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616680010030284>
- 684 Begum, H., Er, A.C., Alam, A.S.A.F., & Sahazali, N. (2014). Tourist's Perceptions towards the
685 Role of Stakeholders in Sustainable Tourism. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*,
686 144, 313–321. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.07.301>
- 687 Benner, M. (2019). From overtourism to sustainability: A research agenda for qualitative tourism
688 development in the Adriatic. *Munich Personal RePEc Archive*, 92213, 1–18.
689 https://mpa.ub.uni-muenchen.de/92213/1/MPRA_paper_92213.pdf
- 690 Bieger, T., Beritelli, P., & Laesser, C. (2009). Size matters! Increasing DMO effectiveness and
691 extending tourism destination boundaries. *Tourism*, 57(3), 309–327.
- 692 Boluk, K. (2011). In consideration of a new approach to tourism : a critical review of fair trade
693 tourism. *Journal of Tourism and Peace Research*, 1(2), 27–37.
- 694 Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology. *Qualitative Research in
695 Psychology*, 3, 77-101.
- 696 Brent, R.J.R., & Crouch, G.I. (2003). *The Competitive Destination - A Sustainable Tourism
697 Perspective*. CABI Publishing.
- 698 Brown, F., & Hall, D. (2008). Tourism and development in the global south: The issues. *Third
699 World Quarterly*, 29(5), 839–849. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436590802105967>

- 700 Buhalis, D. (2000). Distribution Channels in the Changing Travel Industry. *The International*
701 *Journal of Tourism Research*, 2(5), 357–359. [https://doi.org/10.1002/1522-](https://doi.org/10.1002/1522-1970(200009/10)2:5)
702 1970(200009/10)2:5
- 703 Bui, D.T. (2009). *Tourism industry responses to the rise of sustainable tourism and related*
704 *environmental policy initiatives: the case of Hue City, Vietnam*. Auckland University of
705 Technology.
- 706 Byrd, E.T. (2007). Stakeholders in sustainable tourism development and their roles: Applying
707 stakeholder theory to sustainable tourism development. *Tourism Review*, 62(2), 6–13.
708 <https://doi.org/10.1108/16605370780000309>
- 709 Canavan, B. (2013). Send More Tourists! Stakeholder Perceptions of a Tourism Industry in Late
710 Stage Decline: The Case of the Isle of Man. *International Journal of Tourism Research*,
711 15(2), 105–121. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.883>
- 712 Cater, E. (1995). Environmental Contradictions in Sustainable Tourism. *The Geographical*
713 *Journal*, 161(1), 21–28. <http://www.jstor.com/stable/3059924>
- 714 Cessford, G., & Thompson, A. (2002). Managing tourism in the New Zealand protected area
715 system. *Parks*, 12(1), 26–36.
- 716 Chirenje, L.I., Chitotombe, J., Gukurume, S., Chazovachii, B., & Chitongo, L. (2013). The
717 Impact of Tourism Leakages on Local Economies: A Case Study of Nyanga District,
718 Zimbabwe. *Journal of Human Ecology*, 42(1), 9–16.
- 719 Conaghan, A., Hanrahan, J., & McLoughlin, E. (2015). The Sustainable Management of a
720 Tourism Destination in Ireland: A Focus on County Clare. *Advances in Hospitality and*
721 *Tourism Research (AHTR)*, 3(1), 62–87.
- 722 Conaghan, A., Hanrahan, J., & McLoughlin, E. (2015). A model for the transition towards the
723 sustainable management of tourism destinations in Ireland. *International Journal for*
724 *Responsible Tourism*, 4(2), 103–123.
- 725 Creswell, J.W. (2013). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods*
726 *approaches*. Sage Publications.
- 727 Cucculelli, M., & Goffi, G. (2016). Does sustainability enhance tourism destination
728 competitiveness? Evidence from Italian Destinations of Excellence. *Journal of Cleaner*

- 729 *Production*, 111, 370–382. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2014.12.069>
- 730 Day, J. (2012). Challenges of Sustainable Tourism. *Journal of Tourism Research & Hospitality*,
731 01(02), 3–5. <https://doi.org/10.4172/2324-8807.1000e108>
- 732 Day, J. (2016). Sustainable Tourism Model An Integrated Systems Approach to Managing
733 Tourism Growth : A Destination Marketing Organization Perspective. *Colombia Purdue*
734 *Partnership*, 1–21.
- 735 D'Angella, F., and Go, F.M., (2009). Tale of two cities' collaborative tourism marketing:
736 Towards a theory of destination stakeholder assessment. *Tourism Management*, 30(3), 429-
737 440.
- 738 Del Chiappa, G., Usai, S., Cocco, A., & Atzeni, M. (2018). Sustainable Tourism Development
739 and Climate Change: A Supply-Side Perspective. *Munich Personal RePEc Archive*.
740 <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.376345>
- 741 Dulambaeva, R. T., & Kozhakhmet, R. B. (2018). *Actual issues of tourism in Kazakhstan*.
742 <http://www.rusnauka.com/pdf/239518.pdf>
- 743 Eligh, J., Welford, R., & Ytterhus, B. (2002). The production of sustainable tourism: Concepts
744 and examples from Norway. *Sustainable Development*, 10(4), 223–234.
745 <https://doi.org/10.1002/sd.195>
- 746 ETC-European Travel Commission. (2019). European tourism - Trends & Prospects - Quarterly
747 Report Q2/2019. In *European tourism - Trends & Prospects - Quarterly Report Q2/2019*.
748 <https://etc-corporate.org/reports/european-tourism-2019-trends-prospects-q2-2019/>
- 749 Farmaki, A., & Papatheodorou, A. (2015). Stakeholder Perceptions of the Role of Low-cost
750 Carriers in Insular Tourism Destinations: The Case of Cyprus. *Tourism Planning and*
751 *Development*, 12(4), 412–432. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21568316.2015.1013566>
- 752 Filimonau, V., and Krivcova, M. (2017). Restaurant menu design and more responsible consumer
753 food choice: An exploratory study of managerial perceptions. *Journal of Cleaner*
754 *Production*, 143, 516-527.
- 755 Font, X., Sanabria, R., & Skinner, E. (2003). Sustainable tourism and ecotourism certification:
756 Raising standards and benefits. *Journal of Ecotourism*, 2(3), 213–218.
757 <https://doi.org/10.1080/14724040308668145>

- 758 Framke, W. (2002). The 'destination': A problematic concept. *10th Nordic Symposium for*
759 *Tourism Researchers, Vasa*. www.wasa.shh.fi/konferens
- 760 Goodwin, H. (2016). *Responsible Tourism Partnership Working Paper I. Managing Tourism in*
761 *Barcelona* (No. 1; Responsible Tourism Partnership, Issue 2016).
762 <http://responsibletourismpartnership.org/overtourism/>
- 763 Gough, S., & Scott, W. (1999). Education and training for sustainable tourism: possibilities,
764 problems and cautious first steps. *Canadian Journal of Environmental Education*, 4(1), 193–
765 212. <http://opus.bath.ac.uk/10730/>
- 766 Graci, S. (2013). Collaboration and Partnership Development for Sustainable Tourism. *Tourism*
767 *Geographies*, 15(1), 25–42. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616688.2012.675513>
- 768 Halis, M., Halis, M., & Ali, A. (2017). Tourism Stakeholders Attitudes Toward Sustainable
769 Developments: Empirical Research from Shahat City. *Ottoman Journal of Tourism and*
770 *Management Research*, 2(3), 182–200. <https://doi.org/10.26465/ojtmr.2017239502>
- 771 Hall, C.M. (2013). Framing behavioural approaches to understanding and governing sustainable
772 tourism consumption: beyond neoliberalism, “nudging” and “green growth”? *Journal of*
773 *Sustainable Tourism*, 21(7), 1091–1109. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2013.815764>
- 774 Hall, D. (2000). Sustainable tourism development and transformation in central and eastern
775 Europe? *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 8(6), 441–457.
776 <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669580008667379>
- 777 Haller, C.R. (2018). Sustainability and Sustainable Development. *Topic-Driven Environmental*
778 *Rhetoric*, May, 213–233. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315442044-11>
- 779 Hanna, P., Font, X., Scarles, C., Weeden, C., & Harrison, C. (2018). Tourist destination
780 marketing: From sustainability myopia to memorable experiences. *Journal of Destination*
781 *Marketing and Management*, 9(March 2017), 36–43.
782 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2017.10.002>
- 783 Hardy, A.L., & Beeton, R.J.S. (2001). Sustainable tourism or maintainable tourism: Managing
784 resources for more than average outcomes? *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 9(3), 168–192.
785 <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669580108667397>
- 786 Hildebrandt, T., & Isaac, R. (2015). The Tourism Structures in Central Vietnam: Towards a

- 787 Destination Management Organisation. *Tourism Planning and Development*, 12(4), 463–
788 478. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21568316.2015.1038360>
- 789 Holden, A. (2010). Exploring stakeholders' perceptions of sustainable tourism development in
790 the Annapurna Conservation Area: Issues and challenge. *Tourism and Hospitality, Planning
791 and Development*, 7(4), 337–351. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1479053X.2010.523177>
- 792 Hounnaklang, S. (2016). Concepts, Issues And The Effectiveness Of Alternative Tourism
793 Management In Thailand: A Case Study Of Plai Pong Pang Homestay, Amphoe Ampawa,
794 Samut Songkram Province. *International Journal of Arts & Sciences*, 9(3), 337–348.
- 795 Hunt, C.A., Durham, W.H., Driscoll, L., & Honey, M. (2015). Can ecotourism deliver real
796 economic, social, and environmental benefits? A study of the Osa Peninsula, Costa Rica.
797 *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 23(3), 339–357.
798 <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2014.965176>
- 799 Isaldaeva, S.Z., and Tazhibaeva, T.L. (2013). Ecotourism as a factor of sustainable development
800 of Kazakhstan [Экологический туризм как фактор устойчивого развития Казахстана],
801 *Vestnik KazNU*, 502 (574), 54–59.
- 802 Izenbayev, B., Mazbayev, O., Saiken, A., Tasbolat, B., & Atasoy, E. (2016). THE GREAT SILK
803 ROAD AS A FACTOR OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOURISM INDUSTRY. *Oxidation
804 Communications*, 39(1), 378–383.
- 805 Kantarci, K. (2007). Perceptions of Central Asia Travel Conditions: Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan,
806 Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan. *Journal of Hospitality & Leisure Marketing*, 15:2, 15(2),
807 55–71. https://doi.org/10.1300/J150v15n02_04
- 808 Kavallinis, I., & Pizam, A. (1994). The environmental impacts of tourism-whose responsibility is
809 it anyway? The case study of Mykonos. *Journal of Travel Research*, 33(2), 26–32.
810 <https://doi.org/10.1177/004728759403300205>
- 811 Kazakh Tourism. (2019). *The main activities of NC Kazakh Tourism JSC | Основные
812 направления деятельности АО «НК «Kazakh Tourism»*.
813 <http://qaztourism.kz/activities/mainAct>
- 814 Khazaei, A., Elliot, S., and Joppe, M., (2015). An application of stakeholder theory to advance
815 community participation in tourism planning: the case for engaging immigrants as fringe

- 816 stakeholders. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 23(7), 1049-1062.
- 817 Klimek, K. (2013). Destination Management Organisations and their shift to sustainable tourism
818 development. *European Journal of Tourism, Hospitality and Recreation*, Vol 4(Issue 2), 27–
819 47.
- 820 Kosmaczewska, J. (2008). The relationship between development of agritourism in Poland and
821 local community potential. *Studies in Physical Culture and Tourism*, 15(2), 141–148.
- 822 Krce Miocic, B., Razovič, M., & Klarin, T. (2016). Management of sustainable tourism
823 destination through stakeholder cooperation. *Management (Croatia)*, 21(2), 99–120.
- 824 Kruja, D., & Hasaj, A. (2010). Comparisons of stakeholders' perception towards the sustainable
825 tourism development and its impacts in Shkodra Region, Albania. *Turizam*, 14(1), 1–12.
826 <https://doi.org/10.5937/turizam1001001k>
- 827 Laeis, G.C.M., & Lemke, S. (2016). Social entrepreneurship in tourism: applying sustainable
828 livelihoods approaches. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*,
829 28(6), 1076–1093. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-05-2014-0235>
- 830 Lee, T.H. (2013). Influence analysis of community resident support for sustainable tourism
831 development. *Tourism Management*, 34, 37–46.
832 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2012.03.007>
- 833 Leiper, N. (2004). The Framework of Tourism - Towards a definition of tourism, tourist and the
834 tourist industry. In S. Williams (Ed.), *Tourism: Critical Concepts in the Social Sciences*.
835 Routledge.
- 836 Lew, A.A. (1998). The Asia-Pacific ecotourism industry: putting sustainable tourism into
837 practice. In *Sustainable tourism: a geographical perspective*. (pp. 92–106). Addison Wesley
838 Longman Ltd.
- 839 Liu, Z. (2003). Sustainable tourism development: A critique. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*,
840 11(6), 459–475. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669580308667216>
- 841 Lu, J., & Nepal, S.K. (2009). Sustainable tourism research: An analysis of papers published in the
842 Journal of Sustainable Tourism. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 17(1), 5–16.
843 <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669580802582480>

- 844 Lundberg, E. (2017). The importance of tourism impacts for different local resident groups: A
845 case study of a Swedish seaside destination. *Journal of Destination Marketing and*
846 *Management*, 6(1), 46–55. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2016.02.002>
- 847 Maiden, J.A. (2008). *Participation in Sustainable Tourism Development: Stakeholders &*
848 *Partnership Working* (Issue March). Cardiff University.
- 849 Malik, M.A.S., Shah, S.A., & Zaman, K. (2016). Tourism in Austria: biodiversity, environmental
850 sustainability, and growth issues. *Environmental Science and Pollution Research*, 23(23),
851 24178–24194. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11356-016-7609-x>
- 852 McDonald, J. (2006). Understanding sustainable tourism development from a complex systems
853 perspective: a case study of the Swan River, Western Australia. *Theses: Doctorates and*
854 *Masters*. <http://ro.ecu.edu.au/theses/82%5Cnhttp://ro.ecu.edu.au/theses/82/>
- 855 Medeu, A., Askarova, M., Plokhikh, R., Skorintseva, I., & Bekkulyeva, A. (2015). Great Silk
856 Road on the Territory of Kazakhstan: from Past to Future. *Journal of Resources and*
857 *Ecology*, 6(2), 114–118. <https://doi.org/10.5814/j.issn.1674-764x.2015.02.009>
- 858 Merriam, S.B., and Tisdell, E.J. (2016). *Qualitative research: a guide to design and*
859 *implementation*. 4th edition. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons.
- 860 Mihalic, T. (2016). Sustainable-responsible tourism discourse - Towards “responsustable”
861 tourism. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 111, 461–470.
862 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2014.12.062>
- 863 Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan Statistics Committee. (2019).
864 *Official Statistics*. Official Statistics. <https://stat.gov.kz/>
- 865 Morgan, N., Hastings, E., & Pritchard, A. (2012). Developing a new DMO marketing evaluation
866 framework: The case of Visit Wales. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 18(1), 73–89.
867 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1356766711432225>
- 868 Morrison, A.M. (2018). *Marketing and managing tourism destinations* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- 869 Mukhambetov, T.I., Janguttinav, G.O., Esaidar, U.S., Myrzakulova, G.R., & Imanbekova, B.T.
870 (2014). The life cycle of sustainable eco-tourism: A kazakhstan case study. *WIT*
871 *Transactions on Ecology and the Environment*, 187, 39–49.
872 <https://doi.org/10.2495/ST140041>

- 873 Murphy, P. (1985). Tourism Development and Community Participation. *Tourism Management*,
874 280–295.
- 875 National Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan. (2019). *National Programme for the*
876 *Development of the Tourism Industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan in 2019–2025*. National
877 Programme for the Development of the Tourism Industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan in
878 2019–2025. <http://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/P1900000360>
- 879 Neckermann, W. (2013). *Sustainable development of a tourism destination: realism or idealism?*
880 *Evaluating the sustainability of a destination development project through community-based*
881 *ecotourism*. Breda University of Applied Sciences.
- 882 Neto, F. (2003). A new approach to sustainable tourism development: Moving beyond
883 environmental protection. *Natural Resources Forum*, 27(3), 212–222.
884 <https://doi.org/10.1111/1477-8947.00056>
- 885 Nguyen, T.Q.T., Young, T., Johnson, P., and Wearing, S., (2019). Conceptualising networks in
886 sustainable tourism development. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 32, 100575.
- 887 Nurgalieva, A.S. (2014). The Perspectives of Tourism Development in Kazakhstan. *European*
888 *Researcher*, 84(10–1), 1765–1775. <https://doi.org/10.13187/er.2014.84.1765>
- 889 OECD. (2019). *Kazakhstan - Tourism in the Economy*. OECD Tourism Trends and Policies.
890 [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/156f500e-](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/156f500e-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/156f500e-en)
891 [en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/156f500e-en](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/156f500e-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/156f500e-en)
- 892 Ospina, S. (2004). Qualitative Research. In G. Goethals, G. Sorenson, & J. MacGregor (Eds.),
893 *Encyclopedia of Leadership*. SAGE Publications.
- 894 Papadopoulou, S. (2016). *Destination Management and the establishment of Destination*
895 *Management Organization: Case Study of Thessaloniki, Greece* (Issue February)
896 [International Hellenic University]. <https://repository.ihu.edu.gr/xmlui/handle/11544/14476>
- 897 Pearce, D.G. (2015). Destination management in New Zealand: Structures and functions. *Journal*
898 *of Destination Marketing and Management*, 4(1), 1–12.
899 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2014.12.001>
- 900 Petrenko, E.S., Dauletova, A.M, Mazhitova, C.K., and Shabaltina, L.V. (2019). The analysis of
901 measures of state support for tourism development in the Republic of Kazakhstan [Анализ

- 902 мер государственной поддержки по развитию туризма в Республике Казахстан].
903 *Journal of International Economic Affairs*, 9 (4), 2677–2692.
- 904 Pike, S., & Page, S.J. (2014). Destination Marketing Organizations and destination marketing:
905 Anarrative analysis of the literature. *Tourism Management*, 41, 202–227.
906 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2013.09.009>
- 907 Proctor, D., Dunne, G., & Flanagan, S. (2018). In league? Destination marketing organisations
908 and football clubs in the virtual space. *Journal of Sport and Tourism*, 22(4), 333–348.
909 <https://doi.org/10.1080/14775085.2018.1523744>
- 910 Raszkowski, A., & Bartniczak, B. (2019). Sustainable development in the Central and Eastern
911 European Countries (CEECs): Challenges and opportunities. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*,
912 11(4). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11041180>
- 913 Raza, S. A., Sharif, A., Wong, W.K., & Karim, M.Z.A. (2017). Tourism development and
914 environmental degradation in the United States: evidence from wavelet-based analysis.
915 *Current Issues in Tourism*, 20(16), 1768–1790.
916 <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2016.1192587>
- 917 Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., Nicholls, C.M., and Ormston, R. (2013). *Qualitative research practice: A*
918 *guide for social science students and researchers*. Sage Publications.
- 919 Ruhanen, L., Moyle, C. Lee, A., & Moyle, B. (2019). New directions in sustainable tourism
920 research. *Tourism Review*, 74(2), 245–256. <https://doi.org/10.1108/TR-12-2017-0196>
- 921 Saraniemi, S., & Kylänen, M. (2011). Problematizing the concept of tourism destination: An
922 analysis of different theoretical approaches. *Journal of Travel Research*, 50(2), 133–143.
923 <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287510362775>
- 924 Schianetz, K., Kavanagh, L., & Lockington, D. (2007). The Learning Tourism Destination: The
925 potential of a learning organisation approach for improving the sustainability of tourism
926 destinations. *Tourism Management*, 28(6), 1485–1496.
927 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2007.01.012>
- 928 Schlüter, R. (1999). Sustainable tourism development in South America. In *Contemporary issues*
929 *in tourism development*. (pp. 176–191). Routledge.
- 930 Seaton, A.V., & Bennett, M.M. (1996). *The Marketing of Tourism Products: Concepts, Issues and*

- 931 *Cases*. Thomson Learning.
- 932 Seidahmetov, M., Aidarova, A., Abishov, N., Dosmuratova, E., & Kulanova, D. (2014).
933 Problems and Perspectives of Development of Tourism in the Period of Market Economy
934 (Case Republic of Kazakhstan). *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *143*, 251–255.
935 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.07.398>
- 936 Sheehan, L.R., and Ritchie, B., (2005). Destination Stakeholders Exploring Identity and Salience.
937 *Annals of Tourism Research*, *32*(3), 711-734.
- 938 Shilibekova, B., Syzdykbayeva, B., Ayetov, S., Agybetovaa, R., & Baimbetova, A. (2016). Ways
939 to improve strategic planning within the tourist industry (In the case study of the republic of
940 Kazakhstan). *International Journal of Environmental and Science Education*, *11*(11), 4205–
941 4217.
- 942 Sofield, T., & Li, S. (2011). Tourism governance and sustainable national development in China:
943 A macro-level synthesis. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, *19*(4–5), 501–534.
944 <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2011.571693>
- 945 Stewart, E.J., & Draper, D. (2007). A collaborative approach to understanding local stakeholder
946 perceptions of tourism in Churchill, Manitoba (Canada). *Polar Geography*, *30*(1–2), 7–35.
- 947 Stronza, A. (2007). The economic promise of ecotourism for conservation. *Journal of*
948 *Ecotourism*, *6*(3), 210–230. <https://doi.org/10.2167/joe177.0>
- 949 Tan, W.K., Liu, W C., & Hu, Y.N. (2013). Finding the crucial factors for sustainable
950 development of rural-based tourist destinations: Using Nanzhuang, Taiwan as a case study.
951 *Service Business*, *7*(4), 623–640. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11628-012-0178-2>
- 952 Tiberghien, G., Bremner, H., & Milne, S. (2018). Authenticating eco-cultural tourism in
953 Kazakhstan: a supply side perspective. *Journal of Ecotourism*, *17*(3), 306–319.
954 <https://doi.org/10.1080/14724049.2018.1502507>
- 955 Tiberghien, G., & Xie, P.F. (2018). The life cycle of authenticity neo nomadic tourism culture in
956 Kazakhstan. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, *16*(3), 234–247.
- 957 Turdumambetov, B. (2014). Tourism Development in the Post-Soviet and Post-Revolutionary
958 Country: A Case Study of Kyrgyzstan. *International Journal of Liberal Arts and Social*
959 *Science*, *2*(6), 73–87.

- 960 Turker, N., Alaeddinoglu, F., & Can, A. S. (2016). The role of stakeholders in sustainable
961 tourism development in Safranbolu, Turkey. *Conference: 2016 International Conference on*
962 *Hospitality, Leisure, Sports, and Tourism, July*, 415–426.
963 [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331000851_The_Role_of_Stakeholders_in_Sustai](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331000851_The_Role_of_Stakeholders_in_Sustainable_Tourism_Development_in_Safranbolu_Turkey)
964 [nable_Tourism_Development_in_Safranbolu_Turkey](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331000851_The_Role_of_Stakeholders_in_Sustainable_Tourism_Development_in_Safranbolu_Turkey)
- 965 UNESCO. (2009). Sustainable Tourism Development in UNESCO Designated Sites in South-
966 Eastern Europe. In *Ecological Tourism in Europe (ETE)*.
- 967 UNESCO. (2019). *Kazakhstan - UNESCO World Heritage Centre*. Kazakhstan - UNESCO
968 World Heritage Centre. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/KZ>
- 969 UNWTO- United Nations World Tourism Organization. (2015). Towards Measuring the
970 Economic Value of Wildlife Watching Tourism in Africa – Briefing Paper. In *Towards*
971 *Measuring the Economic Value of Wildlife Watching Tourism in Africa – Briefing Paper*.
972 <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284416752>
- 973 Vučetić, A.S. (2018). Importance of environmental indicators of sustainable development in the
974 transitional selective tourism destination. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 20(3),
975 317–325. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.2183>
- 976 Wahab, S., & Cooper, C. (2005). Tourism, globalisation and the competitive advantage of
977 nations. In S. Wahab & C. Cooper (Eds.), *Tourism in the Age of Globalisation (ebook)*.
978 Routledge in the Taylor & Frances e-Library.
- 979 Welford, R., & Ytterhus, B. (2004). Sustainable development and tourism destination
980 management: A case study of the Lillehammer region, Norway. *International Journal of*
981 *Sustainable Development and World Ecology*, 11(4), 410–422.
982 <https://doi.org/10.1080/13504500409469843>
- 983 Wondirad, A., Tolkach, D., and King, B., (2020). Stakeholder collaboration as a major factor for
984 sustainable ecotourism development in developing countries. *Tourism Management*, 78,
985 104024.
- 986 Worldometer. (2020). *Kazakhstan Demographics 2020 (Population, Age, Sex, Trends)*.
987 Worldometer (Online). [https://www.worldometers.info/demographics/kazakhstan-](https://www.worldometers.info/demographics/kazakhstan-demographics/#pop)
988 [demographics/#pop](https://www.worldometers.info/demographics/kazakhstan-demographics/#pop)

- 989 Wray, M., Dredge, D., Cox, C., Buultjens, J., Hollick, M., Lee, D., Pearlman, M., & Lacroix, C.
990 (2010). *SUSTAINABLE REGIONAL TOURISM DESTINATIONS: Best practice for*
991 *management , development and marketing* (Issue December 2016). CRC for Sustainable
992 Tourism Pty Ltd.
- 993 Yfantidou, G., & Matarazzo, M. (2017). The Future of Sustainable Tourism in Developing
994 Countries. *Sustainable Development*, 25(6), 459–466.
- 995 Zemła, M. (2016). Tourism destination: The networking approach. *Moravian Geographical*
996 *Reports*, 24(4), 2–14. <https://doi.org/10.1515/mgr-2016-0018>
- 997 Zhensikbayeva, N.Z., Saparov, K.T., Chlachula, J., Yegorina, A.V., Uruzbayeva, N.A., & Wendt,
998 J.A. (2018). Natural potential for tourism development in Southern Altai (Kazakhstan).
999 *Geojournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 21(1).
- 1000 Zouganeli, S., Trihas, N., Antonaki, M., & Kladou, S. (2012). Aspects of Sustainability in the
1001 Destination Branding Process: A Bottom-up Approach. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing*
1002 *and Management*, 21(7), 739–757. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19368623.2012.624299>
- 1003

1004 Table 1. Interview participants (n=22)

Code	Gender	Participants role	Experience in tourism industry Limited 2 or less Moderate 2-5 Extensive 5+
The stakeholders with the power of decision making (Policymakers) (n=8)			
P1	M	Chairman of the national tourism industry committee	Extensive
P2	M	Head of Department of Tourism Promotion, Advertising and Marketing	Extensive
P3	F	Executive Director of Department of International Tourism	Extensive
P4	M	Executive Director of Regional Tourism Department	Extensive
DMO1	F	Executive Director of National Tourism Organisation	Extensive
DMO2	M	Deputy of Chairman of National Tourism Organisation	Moderate
DMO3	M	Executive Director of DMO	Extensive
DMO4	M	Chief specialist of DMO	Moderate
Tourism businesses (n=4)			
TB1	F	Chairman and owner of a large tourism agency	Extensive
TB2	F	Chairman and owner of a large hotel chain	Extensive
TB3	M	General Manager of a large tourism agency	Moderate
TB4	M	General Manager of a large tourism agency	Moderate
Independent stakeholders (academics and experts of tourism industry) (n=5)			
A1	F	University professor	Extensive
A2	F	University professor	Extensive
A3	M	University professor	Moderate
E1	F	The EU-funded 'Kazakhstan Regional Development' project expert	Extensive
E2	F	Regional coordinator of the UN Development Programme in Kazakhstan	Extensive
Tourists and local community (Tourism Associations, NGOs, Media) (n=5)			
NGO1	F	Deputy Head of a NGO active in tourism development	Extensive
NGO2	F	Head of a regional NGO active in community development	Extensive
TA1	F	Executive Director of the national tourism association	Extensive
TA2	F	Deputy Head of the national tourism association	Extensive
J1	F	Editor-in-chief of a popular national tourism and travel journal	Extensive

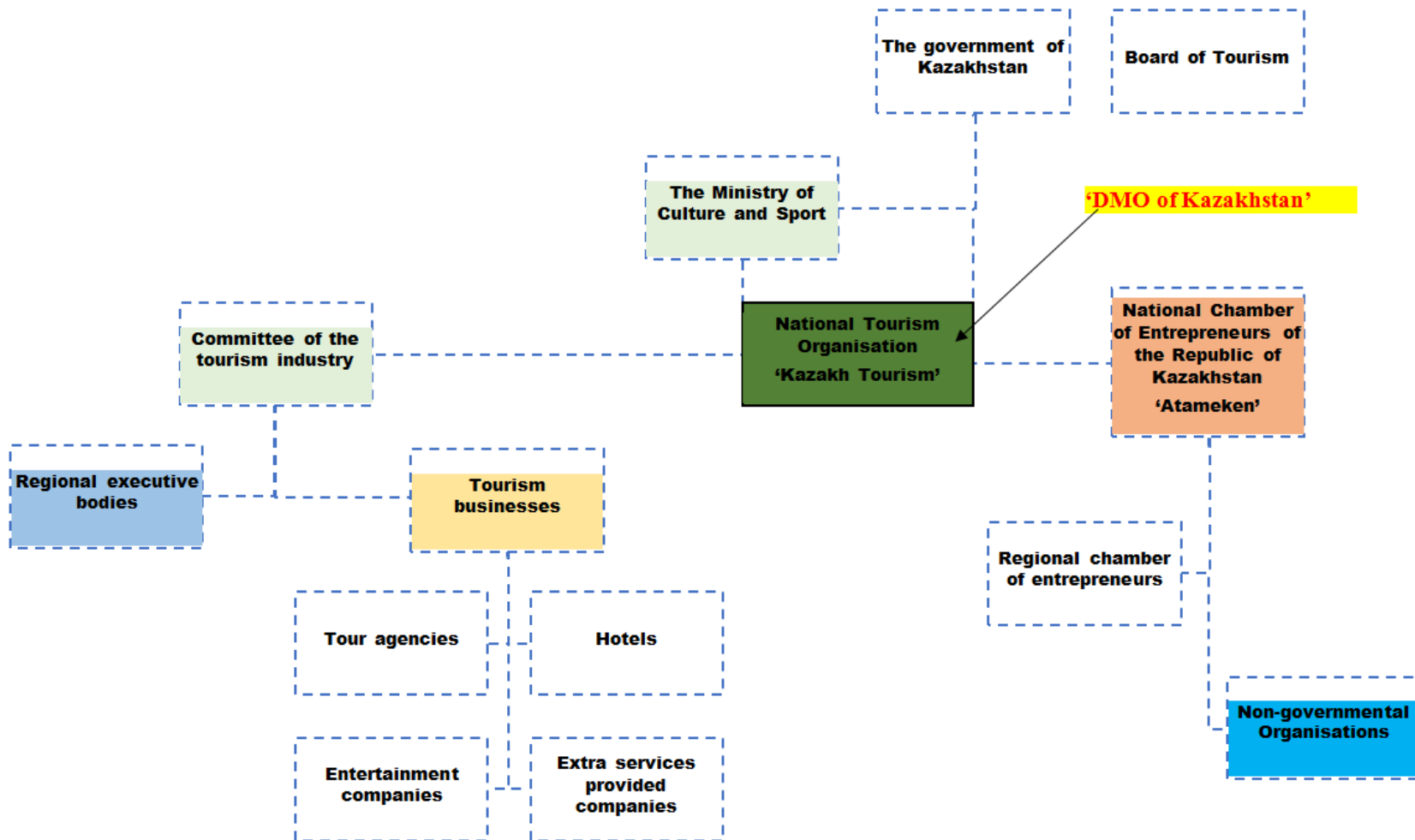
1005

1006

1007

1008 Table 2. Coding structure and themes, codes and sub-codes. The figures show the number of
 1009 quotes appropriate to each code. **Red bold** colour signifies most popular sub-codes.

Themes	Codes	Sub-codes	% of participants
The tourism potential of Kazakhstan	Natural resources	<i>Diversity of landscapes</i>	20 (91%)
	Rich history	<i>The Great Silk Road</i>	15 (68%)
		<i>Building heritage</i>	12 (55%)
	Culture	<i>Traditions</i>	12 (55%)
Types of tourism holding the greatest potential for development in Kazakhstan	All types of tourism	-	15 (68%)
	Nature-based tourism	<i>Eco-tourism</i>	14 (64%)
		<i>'Green' tourism</i>	7 (32%)
	MICE tourism	<i>Business tourism</i>	12 (55%)
		<i>Events tourism</i>	6 (27%)
	Cultural tourism	<i>Cultural tourism</i>	15 (68%)
		<i>Heritage tourism</i>	9 (41%)
		<i>Ethno-tourism</i>	5 (23%)
	Rural tourism	<i>Agritourism</i>	6 (27%)
		<i>Farm tourism</i>	3 (14%)
Space tourism		3 (14%)	
The main challenges of tourism development in Kazakhstan	Under-developed infrastructure	<i>Poor roads</i>	17 (77%)
		<i>Lack of tourist signage</i>	15 (68%)
		<i>Poor telecommunications</i>	8 (36%)
	Finance	<i>Lack of investment</i>	12 (55%)
	Visa regime	-	9 (41%)
	Location of Kazakhstan	<i>Lack of international flights</i>	4 (18%)
The role of the Kazakhstani DMO	Key function	<i>Management and marketing</i>	22(100%)
		<i>Attracting investments</i>	2 (9%)
		<i>Sustainable tourism development</i>	1 (5%)
	Main responsibility	<i>Coordination of the tourism industry</i>	8 (36%)
		<i>Enabling stakeholder collaboration</i>	6 (27%)
Understanding of sustainability/sustainable development	The principles of the sustainability	<i>The maintenance of the environment</i>	16 (72%)
		<i>Minimising impact on the environment</i>	13 (59%)
	Three pillars of sustainable development	<i>Social, economic and environmental pillars</i>	3 (14%)
		<i>People, planet and profit</i>	1 (5%)
Perception/attitude to sustainable tourism development	Largely negative	Profit over sustainability	14 (64%)
	Largely positive	Sustainability equals profit	12 (55%)
		Sustainability over profit	10 (45%)
Sustainability and the Kazakhstani DMO	Extent of integration	<i>Low/Non-existent</i>	21 (95%)
Barriers to integration of sustainability into DMPPs of the Kazakhstani DMO	Human resources	<i>Lack of tourism professionals</i>	22 (100%)
		<i>High staff turnover</i>	15 (68%)
	Expertise	<i>Lack of sustainability knowledge</i>	20 (91%)
		<i>Lack of sustainability training</i>	18 (82%)
	Decision-making	<i>Lack of stakeholder collaboration</i>	18 (82%)
		<i>Lack of local community involvement</i>	13 (59%)



1010

1011 Figure 1: Management structure of the tourism industry in Kazakhstan

1012

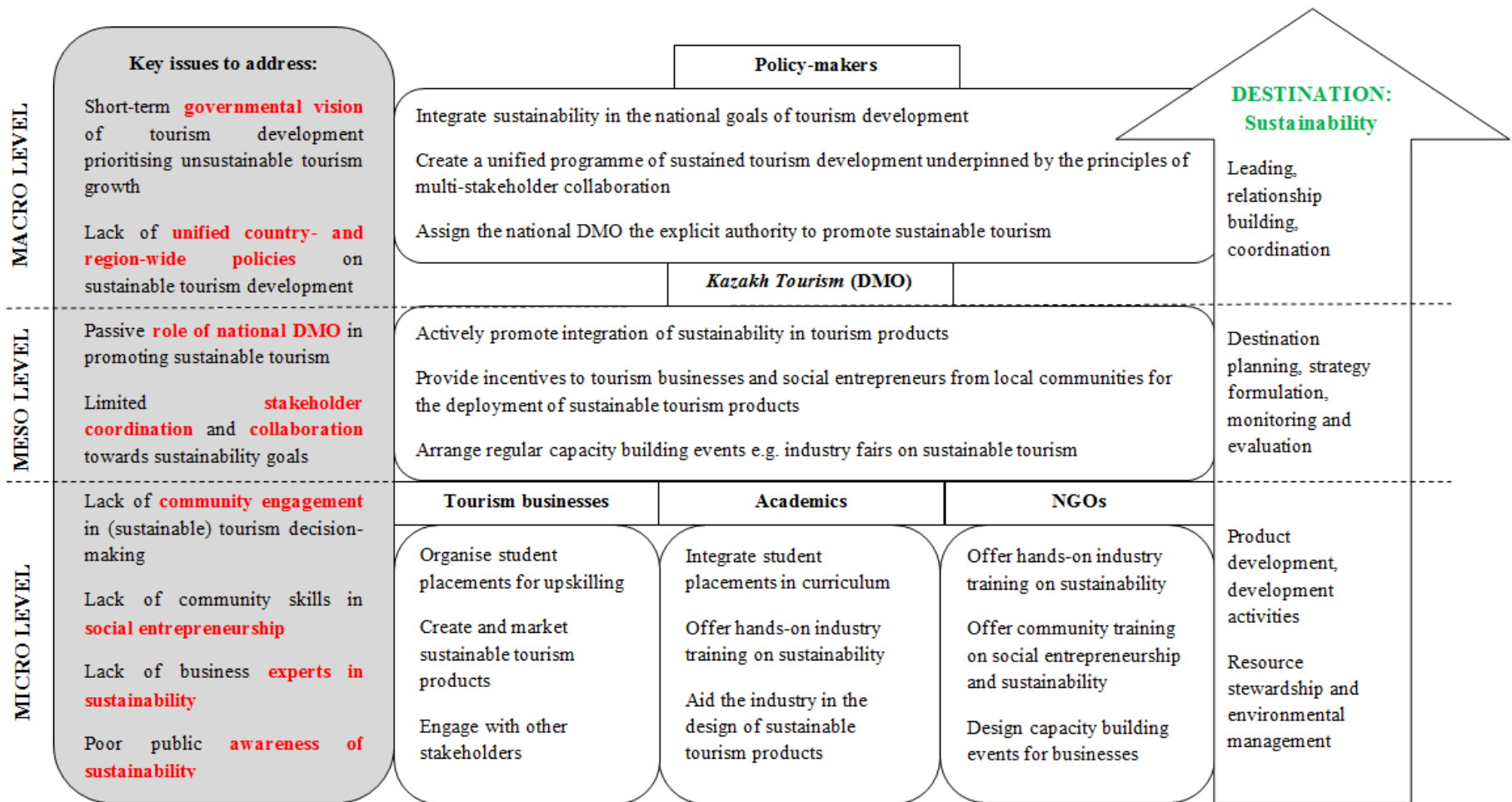


Figure 2: Multi-level, multi-stakeholder action framework for integration of sustainable tourism into DMPPs of Kazakhstan