

# Problems that Impede Sustainable Tourism Development in Egypt

Essam Abdel-Salam Gouda

**Abstract**—This paper analysis the tourism development on the Red Sea in Egypt (west bank) and the needed ongoing action toward a sustainable approach. It addresses, at the first, the development's evolution occurred in the coastal area, the environmental effects it left, and how to minimize those impacts in the future. The second main point is dealing with the most important issues that hinder the achievement of sustainable tourism development on the Red Sea coast and how we can overcome them in the future.

**Keywords**—Coastal management, Environment, Red Sea, Sustainable tourism.

## I. INTRODUCTION

THE tourism has taken an important role in the Egyptian economy, generating foreign exchange, creating employment, promoting development, reducing income and employment disparities among regions, and helping to alleviate poverty.

Egypt's beaches and climate are spectacular, and the Red Sea is one of the best scuba-diving sites in the world. The Red Sea coast is one of the most important tourist areas that attract huge numbers of foreign tourists each year, based in large part on its unique and fragile marine environment. Most of the tourists visit this area to enjoy the natural environment: such as diving, windsurfing, rowing and water polo. Tourism development on the coast began in the eighties as separated tourist villages without a prior integrated plan for the whole region. This development caused many problems:

- 1- destruction of the natural composition of the beach line,
- 2- damaging great part of marine environment (coral reefs),
- 3- lack of integration between natural and built areas.

Now, tourism development extends from about 30 km north of Hurghada nearly all the way to Safaga, it's about 100 km. This sector is a densely populated beach with hundreds of hotels and holiday resorts. The development of this area took place regardless of the natural environment obviously with severe negative impacts on littoral and marine habitats.

Imagine, after a number of years, as a result of the non rational uses of the coast with a limited space, destroying of the natural environment (plants and animals) and polluting of sea water, what kind of natural environment and tourism development do we expect for?

## II. ENVIRONMENTAL MORPHOLOGY AS A BASE OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Coastal Tourism depends essentially at the environmental opportunities: water, sun, beach, and surrounding landscape. The quality of this environment and its components form the type of tourism and its sustainability. Egypt's Red Sea shores and islands contain a significant portion of the world's reserve for coral reefs and lesser extent, associated ecosystem – e.g. mangroves and sea grasses. The Red Sea islands represent an important habitat for breeding seabirds, as well as, marine turtles [1]-[2]-[3]

The hinterland areas of the Red Sea coast are dominated by a backdrop of rugged mountains running parallel to the shore, some up to 2000 meters high in the south. These mountains create a series of coastal seaward draining watersheds and Wadis, resulting in extensive alluvial plans or deltas as they reach the sea [3].

The most important components of the natural environment which form the region landscape include the following:

### A. Wadis

The Wadis are areas of high desert biodiversity. While the main Wadis channels which carry the water and sediments are largely deprived from vegetation, the raised areas alongside and within the channels, and the Wadis deltas areas near the shore are areas of high biodiversity for desert flora. The Wadis areas close to the mountains are refuge for some of Egypt's most prized large mammals. Also common are many species of reptiles and smaller mammals.

In most stretches between the mountains and the shoreline, the desert coastal plain slopes gently, varying in width from 2 km in the northern to more than 14 km in the south. This area can be generally described as sand dunes and hummocks, sand flats and gravel plain. The vegetation includes reed swamps, date palms near the Wadis mouths, and halophytic plants in salt marsh habitat that run parallel along the Sea [3]-[4].

### B. Shore Line

An extensive reef flat is found along most of the shore, but in Wadis areas other features are noted. These include, a Sharm which is an area where freshwater runoff from the Wadis creates a V shaped channel, or a Marsa, which is usually a natural harbour in the form of a semi-enclosed inlet through the reef flat. Scattered in several places along Egypt's Red Sea shores are several large bays (e.g. Abu Soma) which are a larger sandy inlets where there is no reef flat. Other areas have a dominant Ras which is a coralline headland extending outward toward the sea, for example Ras Banas [1]-[3].

Essam Gouda is with urban planning department – faculty of engineering - Al-Azhar University, Nasr city, Cairo Egypt (phone: 00202-22739348, fax: 00202-22739348, email: essamabdelaziz@yahoo.com).

### C. Beaches, Tidal Flats and Mangroves

Exposed sandy shores and beaches are a dominant feature of the upper edge of the intertidal areas, with only a small part of the shore covered by water during highest tides. This area is dominated by tidal influences, resulting in a high diversity of marine molluscs, each adapted to various soft to hard substrates [3]-[4].

Mangrove trees are special features of this part of the shore, with the *Avicennia Marina* being the most dominant species and usually growing in mono-specific stands. Near Shalatein five trees of *Rhizophora Mucronata* were recorded. Both mangrove species are small in size and abundance but they are significant for the red sea region as they represent the northern latitude limit of mangrove of this region. These trees provide a special micro-habitat for a rich diversity of molluscs and fishes that make these trees important nursery areas for fishes to breed and shelter young, as well as food resources for shore birds.

Mangroves form a distinctive and important component of the Egyptian Red Sea coastal landscape, establishing around them an ecosystem totally on the existence of the mangrove trees. [3]-[5].

### D. Sea Grasses and Seaweeds

Further out to sea, the shore is dominated by dense underwater meadows of sea grasses in the shallow lagoons and sandy bays. These are found in association with coral reefs communities along the shore and on some islands. Fifty species of sea grasses are known throughout the world, and 11 are found in the Red Sea. Like Mangrove Sea grasses meadows help stabilize the coastal shore with their extensive root systems and are important food sources for many birds and other marine animals, as well as nursery areas for young species of crustaceans and fishes needing protection. Marine turtles rely on sea grasses as an important food source. Over 500 species of seaweeds have been recorded in the region. Seaweeds are also important from a biodiversity perspective as a micro-habitat for many associated marine animals [3].

### E. Coral Reefs

The special combination of warm, clear water and limited freshwater runoff from adjacent arid lands has contributed to extensive coral-reef development throughout the entire Red Sea region on both shores. In general reefs are well developed in the northern and central Red Sea (Egypt) but less dominant further south towards the Horn of Africa. In the entire Red Sea, over 300 species corals have been recorded, and 200 have been noted for Egypt alone. These numbers are greater than those recorded for the nearby Arabian Sea or the Caribbean Sea and are equal to the highest recorded number of species in the Indian Ocean.

The Red Sea coral reefs are Egypt's greatest reservoirs of biological and genetic diversity. They are perhaps the most precious of all of Egypt's natural heritage. Until recently they were ignored, undervalued, neglected, and over exploited. During the past two decades an exponential growth in both coastal developments and recreational activities has taken place in the region. In many cases (unfortunately) this is at a

high cost to the natural environment, including the coral reefs, upon which all development in the region is based [1]-[3].

There are about 600.000 dives per year taking place in the Hughada area alone [6].

These natural features which characterized the Red Sea coast are the most important economic assets. These natural components provide a good environment for a range of activities which include recreational, diving, water sports, scientific, and safari tourism [5].

### III. WHAT HAPPENED TO THE WONDERFUL RED SEA ENVIRONMENT?

The Tourism Development Authority (TDA) was established in 1991 to manage the tourism development areas outside the cities. The National plan for Tourism was conducted in 1987 [7]. The tourism development on the Red Sea coast has begun in the mid-eighties. It started with traditional touristic resorts encompass a main hotel and a number of chalets and villas with their entertainment amenities. This type of tourism is based on sun, sand and water. The object of the tourist is to enjoy the atmosphere and marine environment with doing some water sports. The huge actual witnessing development surge in the region is putting unprecedented pressures on the natural resources, degrading many areas very rapidly and threatening some with complete eradication [7]-[6].

At the regional planning level and strategic vision, the concerned authorities of the Red Sea's development did not have a regional comprehensive perception of development taking in consideration the natural characteristics of this sensitive zone. The Earlier development projects in this region were sectorial physical planning. The Tourism Development Authority has allocated most of the area along the coast until 3 km depth from shoreline as tourism development areas (tourist villages). Almost 75% of tourism activity in Egypt was leisure oriented and mostly concentrated on Sinai and Red Sea [6]-[7].

In the 1990s the global environmental facility supported a programme for environmental surveys of the Red Sea coast and littoral. The project resulted in a rich data base on the ecology, natural resources, biodiversity and land use of the area. In 1994, the U. S. agency of international development (USAID) conducted the first project of sustainable tourism on the Red Sea Coast (the Red Sea sustainable tourism initiative RSSTI). It established a management system, monitoring program and boat mooring system for the Red Sea islands [2].

The coastal development project since the beginning was a territory subdivision, every plot of land dedicated to a tourist village that provides all its needed service. There was not an environmental ecosystem survey to determine the areas characteristics and therefore take that in consideration during the planning process. A lot of environmental sensitive areas have been destroyed. Construction was done in a traditional and primitive ways without an environmental impact assessment, either before or during construction implementation or after operation.

Traditional tourism on the Red Sea coast (resorts, tourist villages) consumed a great portion of environmental sources in the developed area (Hurghada-safaga zone). It exploited the areas associated to the shore for establishment facilities, regardless of the eco-system fragility. A lot of resorts, destroyed the beach through landfill in the sea, and destructed coral reefs, either through pollutants resulting from these resorts or through unsafe diving operations. The unsustainable development in Hurghada the capital of the Red Sea governorate has had disastrous results, with 80% of the live coral along that portion of the coastline effectively destroyed [2]-[5]. There has been growing recognition that traditional tourism management practices have led to such undesirable social and environmental impact, thus threatening the tourism industry's prospects for continued prosperity [8].

Red sea coast is dominated by private tourism investment with priority on maximizing profits. This tourism is seen as simply entertainment services consumed by tourists. The challenge of sustainable tourism development is to balance the principles of encouraging conservation and providing benefits to the local population with the truths that tourism consumes resources, creates waste and requires certain kind of infrastructure [9].

Excessive private tourist development on the Red Sea coast is denying equitable human access to beaches and coastal waters, cutting off local populations from their coastal heritage. Distribution of existing land uses in terms of location, type and intensity impact significantly on environmental sustainability within the region due to a number of important points, a 1: limited depth of the coastal strip 2 - focus on the uses of the beach tourism 3 - took control of the private sector to most parts of the beach.

The biggest problem is that we cannot restore the ecosystem of the fragile areas that were destroyed because this environment has formed by a variety of factors throughout a long period of time. Now, we must deal with these areas through two important Approaches: stopping their extension and siege its negative impacts on the surrounding environments particularly on marine environment.

The abstract is the traditional tourism place direct pressure on fragile ecosystems that causing degradation of the physical environment and disruption to wildlife. Planning and development of tourism took place in isolation and did not consider as part of the sustainable development of communities. There is over-dependency of economy and society on tourism.

The committed mistakes in Hurghada-Safaga area may be repeated elsewhere if nothing is done about the strategy of the Tourism Development Authority. Pristine stretches of coastline still exist but the TDA want allocate the entire Red Sea coast for mass tourism development.

#### IV. CURRENT SITUATION OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT ON THE RED SEA COAST

The most commonly used definition of sustainable development is still that given in the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (1987), i.e.

sustainable development is 'a process to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs [10].

There sometimes confusion between eco-tourism and sustainability, but it is certain that ecotourism is a part of sustainability particularly in the distinctive environments, such as the Red Sea coast.

In the terms of geographical features of the Red Sea coast (west bank), it extends for more than 1200 km from north to south. The depth of the coastline may be limited to several meters when, the mountain chains approaching from the sea and no more than 20 km in the most depth areas. In this coastal region vary coastal environment, and abound environmental sensitivity areas, which helps in the formation of the natural ecosystem of the region. Large sections of the coast have areas of lakes, mangrove forests, valleys and bays. These are micro natural environments integrated with each other to maintain the whole ecosystem. The environment is the most important source of the economy in this region.

Despite all previous natural and environmental possibilities taking in consideration the principals of sustainability is very retarded.

The first step was taken towards conservation the natural resources and establishing Protected Areas in Egypt was the issuance of Law 102 for 1983, the legislation that established the frame work for declaring and managing Protected Areas in Egypt. Currently, Egypt has 9.42% of its total area, as natural reservation, which includes 24 protected areas about 94183 km<sup>2</sup> [2]. There are 17 other natural conservations that are expected to be added in the year of 2017. The area of natural conservation will reach 15% of Egypt's total area [6]-[11].

There are seven islands, and their reef systems in the near shore of Hurghada area are connected with the Gebel Elba protected area, and they are protected by the Law 102/1983 [6].

The proposed protected areas, specially the great reef barrier of the Red Sea, will conserve critical habitats and natural resources, support and complement the Eco-tourism, by maintaining the quality of the natural environment and providing attractions to visitors, and, most importantly, they will work to insure the long term viability of all economic activities in the region by rationalizing the use of vital natural resources.

With a regard to development projects that focus on the principles of sustainability, a cooperation protocol was hold among PA Consultant Group, TDA and USAID to prepare an Ecotourism regional plan for South of Red Sea Sector that extends along about 100 km from Marsa Alam to Wadi Lohmy. The main objectives of this project were: Distribution of uses depending on the degree of the environmental sensitivity, Areas development regulations, Eco-tourism program outlines [5].

A lot of potentialities that help sustainable tourism on the Red Sea coast, such as cultural heritage, protected areas and eco-tourism have not yet been used. The indigenous at the hinterland have a unique Culture and social background. They

have their specific style, their language, customs, feasts, traditional food, etc.

Generally, at the level of protected areas' declaration, a good effort have been made since 1983 and need to be completed by an natural surveys with advanced technologies for set up the final natural map and identify areas of value. Protected areas that have been declared, lack policies of management and development. In concern the sustainable tourism development, there are privileged studies held in collaboration with international organizations, these collaborations need to be applied and implemented in real projects. Now, some tourism projects are applying some principles of sustainability with promotion of "best practices" for water, sanitation, energy, solid waste and landscaping, but not with an integrated vision. There is a complete absence of investors who feel their responsibility towards promoting eco-tourism and its future role. Government agencies represented in the Tourism Development Authority need a technical supports and specialized training for its cadres in sustainable tourism and ecotourism. The local community, the key element in sustainable development is still out of active participating in the tourism development in the Red Sea region.

The real problem facing sustainable development on the Red Sea coast is the lack of integration of all region's areas in the development and rely on the coastal front only.

For sustainability purpose, it is necessary to limit consumption of natural resources, limit destination space, and limit pollution size. In short it is important to limit and control tourism development based on mass tourism strategy and expand high quality tourism for achieving the sustainability requirements.

#### V. MAIN ACTIONS FOR SUPPORTING THE SUSTAINABILITY ON THE RED SEA COAST

There are many international experiences in the sustainable development of coastal areas as well as guidelines of coastal development. Those could be a useful base for any anticipated development on the Red Sea coastal area. An inter-ministerial coastal development commission is the based framework for the coastal development in Egypt. The objective of this commission is to develop a comprehensive plan to sustain Red Sea's coastal resources and to provide for a healthy economy in the coastal area. A scientific sub-commission could present innovative ideas in land use planning and designing, revitalization and restoration, economic development, smart growth, and storm water management. We must recognize the truth reached by others and which held conferences for it, "protecting the Environment Encouraging Economic Development".

Environmental protection was proposed by The Nature Conservation Sector (NCS) and Egyptian Environmental Affaire Agency (AAEE) that all the coral reefs of the Egyptian Red Sea be declared as a protected area. However, this recommendation has not yet been implemented. This proposed protected area is composed primarily of a narrow strip of coastal waters that encompasses the coral reefs which fringe the Egyptian Red Sea coast. The area extends from the 200 m. coastal set-back to a distance of 10 km off shore.

The protected area would have two main functions with regards to tourism development: one to promote, the other to maintain resources. The mere fact that the entire Egyptian Red Sea coral reef system would be managed as a natural conservation region that attract an immense attention of worldwide nature lovers. This can be used as a very effective marketing tool, since visitors will be assured a high quality experience and pristine nature, as a result of conserving the resources of the region. The maintenance of the natural resources, which are the basis for tourism in the region, will ensure the long term viability of the tourism industry [1].

Eco-tourism based on small projects must be one of the key activities of development. Consequently, the local community has to participate and enable in the tourism development process. Traditional tourism growth needs to be reduced and designating in small environmental low sensitivity areas, while leaving great spaces for open public uses.

#### VI. PROBLEMS FACING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM ON THE RED SEA COAST

Now, the idea of sustainable tourism is widespread in the whole world and its examples and approaches become applicable in different environments, but each environment have its own problems that hinder this application. The problems that hinder sustainable tourism in Egypt are the following:

##### *A. Traditional Planning and Development Process*

Traditional planning characters are: dealing only with physical elements, adopting the action plan method at the short term and did not have a long term vision, isolating tourism development from other activities, neglecting the environment as a crucial factor in the development process, making the environmental assessment studies just decorative and supplementary. This type of planning and development led to Over-use of resources that caused resources depletion, particularly in the beach front.

This traditional approach of development in the Red Sea coast focus on: Concentration of development in the narrow coastal plain, Concentration of tourism activity in particular on the coastal front where the dense use of resorts occupies the whole coastal beach. These practices have led to such undesirable social and environmental impacts that threatening the tourism industry in the region.

There are certain tools that can be used to help achieve balance in the development, such as assessment of carrying capacity, classifying the areas according to the environment sensitivity, finding the limits of acceptable change and doing cost/benefit analysis [5]. These planning and designing tools should help to enhance visitors understanding of key region themes and values. In this integrated development process community and visitors need to be carefully investigated and monitored through satisfaction surveys.

In the new areas for development we should conserve the environment through, scale and density of new development and the extent of urbanization. In many areas, new structures should be avoided in order to keep the place natural. Policies

should seek an optimum amount of natural space particularly in the front beaches. It is necessary to establish great set back limits for new development in distinguished areas (minimum distance from the high water mark [12].

#### *B. The Lack of a Special Style*

At the level of tourism activities, the Red Sea region did not take advantage of its natural features to create its own image and to give it a distinguished unique form different about other touristic regions. A very important component of sustainability is the singularity that means to look for the characteristics and features not found in other places to breed a kind of sustained demand on the quality of activities provided by.

At the landscape level it's important to encourage and enhance distinctive landscape characters of the region to have a distinctive pattern and attractive image that has her vocabulary related to natural and cultural characteristics of the region. This image confirms in the visitor's mind and makes him more relevant to the place.

Tourism-related structures must be very carefully designed and operated. They should reflect protected area values and clearly accord with sustainable policy [13].

#### *C. Weakness of Local Community Awareness*

Awareness of the local people has an important role of sustainable tourism and natural conservation [6]. Protecting the priceless resource of the Red Sea coast required changing the behavior of many people. The behavior change required education, wide system intervention, and a connection in people's minds between local community, investors, and administrative authorities.

Till now, there are not any specific courses concerned environment to learn the new generation the importance of ecology, ecosystem, nature and heritage. We need to establish environmental education classes in local schools.

Some NGOs as GreenCOM and Egyptian educators created a learning supplement about the Red Sea, and teachers were trained to identify innovative ways to capture the attention of students. It requires from the Red Sea Governorate to apply one class session per week to environmental education in all public schools [14].

Making tourism more sustainable is not just about controlling and managing the negative impacts of the industry. Tourism is in a very special position to empower local communities, economically and socially, and to raise awareness and support for conservation of the environment.

The lack of awareness is result of the usefulness of this environment benefits to the local communities. Locals do not represent any percentage of the tourism industry. There are no local investors from the region. There are also no local input actively engaged in the tourism market, handmade as handicrafts and traditional markets. Also, the manpower percentage that participates in the tourism market of the region is down, due to the requirements of the tourism market, which is not available with the local population.

#### *D. Private Sector*

The most influential stakeholders in tourism from an environmental perspective are found to be the government, shareholders, chains, hotel associations, travel agencies and tour operators, customers, competitors, employees, NGOs and other suppliers. Most of these parties are from the private sector [12]-[15].

In the Red Sea Region, there are a lack of investors who are convinced of the importance of sustainable tourism and direct part of their profit to encourage this type of tourism and environmental conservation. The majority of investors in the Red Sea tourism sector are from outside the region and their main activity are linked to hospitality and traditional resorts, therefore there is no attention to environmental aspects in general and there is no awareness of the value of the region resources.

#### *E. Absence of Local Participation*

The lack of active participation of local community in the processes of tourism development and the lack of small tourism projects based on indigenous people separated society from development in the region. The local community of the Red Sea region did not engage and empower at any previous development period in the management and future tourism development of their region.

Giving people responsibility is a fundamental principle of sustainable development. Moreover, tourism projects that engage local communities directly in their planning and implementation are much more likely to be successful in delivering local benefits and to be sustained over time [8]-[10]-[12].

Sustainable tourism can clearly create opportunities for spreading the economic benefit of tourism to villages, remote areas and protected areas; as long as the government policy aims to have more tourism in these areas then the local people should participate in the process. Along these lines, policy-makers should be aware that smaller-scale business operators are more appropriate for activities related to ecotourism and government policies need to support this level of tourism services [9].

The challenge is to find better ways of channeling visitor spending towards poor people, including through the informal economy [10].

Solutions to adverse tourism impacts are to be found in the shared interest of local communities, tourism businesses, and tourism consumers to maintain the natural wealth and social heritage of the tourist destination [16].

According to de Araujo and Bramwell (1999:356), participation in tourism planning by many stakeholders can help to promote sustainable development by increasing efficiency, equity and harmony [15]. One of the most important objectives of Sustainable tourism is helping local communities to advance and continue according to its own terms of humanity and environmental.

In the Red Sea region purchases made by tourists outside the resorts are very small percentage. Locally owned

businesses represent a very little number out of the total number of projects.

Coastal management is a shared responsibility. All people should be responsible for the consequences of their actions, and have the duty to act with care to avoid damage to others and their coastal environment. We strive for a time when all Egyptians feel that the coast is ours.

#### *F. Lack of Promotional and Informational Aspects*

One of the main problems facing sustainable development marketing in Egypt is the lack of brochures and maps related to ecotourism destination [6]. There are a great lack of suitable programs and information for the unique environment of the Red Sea Region and its destinations.

82 per cent of Dutch tourists believe that integrating environmental information into travel brochures is a good idea [10].

#### *G. Weakness of Governmental Incentive*

The weakness of governmental stimulation include: the lack of encouraging investors to achieve sustainability and attract eco-tourism lovers, spread the concept of sustainable eco-tourism and attract a large numbers of domestic tourism, stimulating the local community to be active participants through the direct and indirect benefits returning to them.

Governments should provide an environment that enables and encourages the private sector, tourists and other stakeholders to respond to sustainability issues. It have many tools that can be used to make a difference—such as the power to make regulations and offer economic incentives, and the resources and institutions to promote and disseminate good practice [10].

Encouraging domestic tourism helps to bring balance, especially in the downturn periods of international tourism. Focusing on the international tourism on the Red Sea make the government and investors forget completely domestic tourism. The percentage of this tourism is very low and there is a kind of seclusion between the Egyptians and the Red Sea coast. This local tourism concept is known as green tourism. Green tourism seeks to provide recreational attractions and hospitality facilities to local people within their local regions [16].

The issue of the relationship between international and domestic tourism on the Red Sea coast remains need a profound study.

#### *H. Local Culture Changes*

Growing changes in the culture of the local community as a result of interaction with the traditional tourism and also the increase in migration of the local population to tourist cities threatens the privacy of the local environment. Tourism can exert considerable pressure on host communities and lead to dislocation of traditional societies [10].

Three in four British tourists agree that their trip should include experiences of local culture and food. 61 per cent of US tourists are looking for travel experiences involving well preserved natural, historical or cultural sites. 53 per cent agree that they have a better travel experience when they learn as

much as possible about their destination's customs, geography and culture. By providing a source of income based on local culture, tourism can encourage communities to value their cultural heritage more higher [10].

To promote culture and traditions we need to incorporate aspects of local cultural heritage and distinctiveness into various elements of visitor experience, such as furnishing in tourism establishments, local cuisine in restaurants, traditional designs in architecture, and art and sculpture in public spaces [10].

The tourism might produce unique social impact upon the local tourist community, including the interruption of local customs and lifestyle, changes in social, economical and traditional daily life. The large numbers of uninformed foreigners about local social system can undermine pre-existing social relationships and values [16].

#### *I. Insufficient Attention to the Natural Environmental and Ecological Balance*

Damage to marine structures, such as coral reefs, from diving or boating activities is the most important risk facing tourism in the Red Sea. Tourist behavior vis-à-vis the environment in the Red Sea is far from satisfactory, and there is a lack of code of conduct which is followed and respected, by either tourists or tour operators [1]. There is a need to instill a positive attitude towards the environment in the region.

Some tourists are (voting with their feet). They are attracted to destinations that have a positive reputation, and are actively avoiding destinations that have social or environmental problems. A high quality resource can sustain high quality tourism, thereby making, in effect, a virtuous circle [17].

83 per cent of British package holidaymakers say that a dirty beach or polluted sea matter a great deal to them when choosing a destination societies [10].

#### *K. Bad Conditions of Public Services and Facilities*

There are a physical and visual degradation of the urban environment. It is not at the required level. There is an obvious lack in the essential services in the coastal cities such as: roads and transport services, water and energy, health services, outdoor amenities, leisure and entertainment facilities.

An important problem facing urban environments on the Red Sea coast is lack of integration between tourism environment and old cities. This problem is due to the difference in the urban form and the quality of services. Facilities and amenities developed for tourists are not available to members of the local community.

This differentiation between the luxurious tourist areas on the beach and background areas for the poor creates an ugly contrasted urban area. Tourists feel that the revenues of their trips are not beneficial to the local community, while local community feels unequal. In light of this contradiction within the coastal environment, it becomes difficult to sustain development.

### *J. Lack of Communication with Other*

There is a significant lack in the relationship between tourists coming to the Red Sea and the local community. This lack is the result of the ignorance of local community in the development process, whether as investors or tourist laborers. There are two types of communities in the region: the first residents on urban centers, they come often from outside the region and most of them working in commercial and service sectors (restaurants, Bazaars, cafes), the second habits in the hinterland, they are the indigenous community.

The nature of tourism, as a service industry that is based on delivering an experience of new places, means that it involves a considerable amount of interaction, both direct and indirect, between visitors, host communities and their local environments [10].

Visitors contact mostly with the tourism sector community but there is no contact with the local community. Workers in the tourism sector have a narrow view, always interested in the financial and commercial aspects. The sustainable tourism encourage finding a type of social interaction. Red Sea community is completely isolated within the region because it is unable to participate. The majority of people don't speak foreign language, only the labors in the hotels and touristic resorts and commercial sectors speak little of foreign languages. The people who do not speak foreign language couldn't communicate efficiently; they use only the commercial language and could not interact on the social and humanitarian level.

Tourists on the Red Sea Region live in isolated "islands" within the touristic resorts, do not learn important thing concern the characteristics of the environment and the local community. As well as the local community does not provide adequate identification for tourists about the natural environment and social life.

Much of tourism is based on visitors seeking authentic historic and cultural traditions, and welcoming hosts with whom they have a good relationship. This close and direct relationship creates a sensitive situation, whereby tourism can be both very damaging but also very positive for sustainable development [17]

The tourist must respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserve their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values, and contribute to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance.

There are shortening to inform tourists about local traditions and local culture before and during the trip and also to inform local communities about the culture of their potential visitors. Our strategy should be to encourage all tourists to be more aware of the impacts of their travelling and be more interested and concerned about host populations.

## VII. RESULTS

Learned lessons through existing conditions analysis:

- The current pattern of mass tourism on the Red Sea coast (sun and sand tourism) the most destructive type of tourism to the environment.

- The Red Sea is a mono activity region, where tourism is mainly economic activity. Except oil exploration in some areas there are no other important activities and this threatening the sustainability of development in the region.

- Excessive private tourist development on the Red Sea coast is denying equitable human access to beaches and coastal waters, cutting off local populations from their coastal heritage.

-Till now, there are some serious studies to maintain the environmental and sustainable development, but without coordination and did not reflect any effect on the development projects.

- There is no supreme commission leading the process of development within the region, but there are mis-coordination among the authorities working in the region, as Tourism Development Authority, Ministry of Environment and the Red Sea Governorate in addition to some other bodies.

- Reliance on recreational beach tourism as the sole type of tourism is accelerating the depletion of natural resources and threatening the sustainability of tourism as a result of high competition between large tourism projects, leading to significantly prices drop.

Future Actions

- Maintain the environmental and cultural configuration through a sustainable tourism development plan of the coast is the solution to maintain the natural potentiality of the Red Sea coast and the guarantee for the continuation of touristic activity.

- There are certain tools that can be used to help achieve balance on the Red Sea coast, particularly on the undeveloped area, such as assessment of carrying capacity, finding the limits of acceptable change and doing cost/benefit analysis.

- Smaller-scale business operators and locally owned businesses are more appropriate for activities related to ecotourism and government policies need to support this level of tourism services.

- In a Red Sea integrated comprehensive plan, it is inevitable to establish designated coastal areas where development will be forever restricted. Protection of these areas should be stringently enforced.

- In Areas where coastal development can be socially and environmentally justified, tourism development should be designed as a form of low-impact activity.

- At the whole Red Sea region, appropriate tourism uses should be designated for each area according to levels of sensitivity and risk.

- Coastal areas that have not been exploited represent an important source for promoting eco-tourism as sustainable development approach and this will greatly help to get out of environmental problems in this region.

- One of the future main issues on the Red Sea coast is ensuring equitable access to coastal areas by all people.

- Integrated, cooperative approaches and plans involving all stakeholders and related economic activities in the area grantee a shared vision of the regional development.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

The Red Sea coast is a source of opportunity for many Egyptians. Development processes has been conducted until now makes its usefulness is dedicated to a very small group. Mass tourism creates conditions for possible over consumption of resources. It is dominated by private investment with priority on maximizing profits. After nearly 30 year of traditional tourism development and its negative impacts on the Red Sea coast, the region needs a new approach of development encourage the conservation and take in consideration the importance of the natural ecosystem for the sustainable development of the region. Our coast requires a dedicated, co-ordinated and integrated management approach to sustain the coastal ecosystems on which coastal benefits depend.

There are some important points impede this approach, these points are related to three key topics : local community and its acts toward the environment and sustainability, Government structures and lack of its role, investors and encouraging new sorts of tourism on the Red Sea coast.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Nature Conservation Sector (NCS) and Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA), "Towards establishing a network plan for protected areas in Egypt," Cairo. Egypt, 1998.
- [2] Nature conservation center, Egyptian Environmental Affaire Agency, Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs, "Protected areas of Egypt: toward the future," Maadi, Cairo, Egypt, 2006.
- [3] Tourism Development Authority, Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency and Red Sea Governorate, "Egyptian Red Sea coastal and marine resources management Project – part1: strategy Development," Cairo, Egypt, 1998.
- [4] Tourism Development Authority, Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency and Red Sea Governorate, "Egyptian Red Sea coastal and marine resources Management Project", part2: ecosystem guidance and CMPA Action Plans," Cairo, Egypt, 1998.
- [5] Emad, Mahmoud, "Approaches of ecotourism areas' planning in Egypt", Cairo University, (Unpublished Master's Thesis), 2006.
- [6] Mohamed, Eraqi, (2007), "Ecotourism resources management as a way for sustainable tourism development in Egypt", tourism analysis, Vol. 12, pp. 39-49, USA.
- [7] Hossam-Aldin Anwar, "Principles and considerations of background areas of coastal tourism development zones: case study the Red Sea coast", Cairo University, (Unpublished Master's Thesis), 2008.
- [8] United Nation, "Managing sustainable tourism development", ESCAP tourism review, No. 22, United Nation publication, New York, 2001.
- [9] Basiuk Robert, "challenges and opportunities for sustainable tourism development", ecotourism: challenges and opportunities, National Workshop on Sustainable Tourism Development, China, 2000.
- [10] United Nation Environment Programme, Division of Technology, Industry and Economics;b" Making tourism more sustainable, a policy for decision makers", World Tourism Organization, 2005.
- [11] Farouk, Attallah, "Sustaiaable tourism development: assessment of some of planning standards in Hurghada-Safaga Sector", Cairo university, Al-Fayoum branch, (Unpublished Master's Thesis), 2003.
- [12] Jan C. Post and Carl G. Lundin, "Guidelines for integrated coastal zone management", environmentally sustainable development studies and monographs series No. 9, The World Bank, Washington D.C., 1996.
- [13] World commission on protected areas (WCPA), "Sustainable tourism in protected areas: Guidelines for planning and management", IUCN Publication Services Unit, UK, 2002.
- [14] Center for environmental strategies, "From awareness to action sustainable solutions for a better environment", Greencom Project: 1993-2004, Washington, USA, 2006.
- [15] Zainub Ibrahim, "Tourism development and the Environment on the Egyptian Red Sea Coast", Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, 2009.
- [16] The International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, "Sustainable tourism: a local authority perspective", background paper, Seventh session, New York, 1999.
- [17] Paul F. J. Eagles, Stephen F. McCool and Christopher D. Haynes, "Sustainable Tourism in protected Areas, Guidelines for planning and management", World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA), Adrian Phillips, Series Editor, 2002.
- [18] Kevin L. and all, "Coastal Mississippi land development suitability model", ESRI International User Conference 2003: paper 506, 2003.
- [19] Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, "Towards sustainable coastal development in South Africa", coastal policy green paper, Cape Town, 1998.

**Essam Abdel-Salam Gouda:** A Member (M) of Urban Planning Departement – Al-Azhar University in 1997, a Lecturer Member (LM) in 2003, and Assistant professor in 2010.  
Place and date of birth: At Al-Behira governorate - Egypt in March 14, 1974.  
Educational background:  
-PHD from Paris7 University, Paris - France, 2003.  
-Master of urban design from Paris 7 University, Paris - France, 2000.  
-Bachelor of urban planning, Faculty of engineering, Al-Azhar University, Cairo - Egypt 1997.  
Major Field of study: Urban Planning.