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The Use of Wetland Areas WithinThe Scope of Eco-Tourism:Uluabat Lake Sample

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Abstract

Natural spaces bare touristic attractions with the natural and cultural landscape components they provide such as climate characteristics, wildlife, flora, water resources, rural lifestyle and the scenery. This type of tourism which is carried out within natural environmental aspects and which is sensitive to natural spaces, local cultural characteristics and to the preservation of traditional authenticity is called Eco-Tourism. Besides their ecological importance, the wetland areas, which are of the most important natural environments around the world, are used tourism and recreational purposes.

One of the most important wetland areas in Turkey that attract both domestic and foreign tourists is Uluabat Lake, which is the subject matter of this study. The lake is assigned as protected area and included in Ramsar Sites and Living Lakes Network. The regulations on protection of the biodiversity of the lake and its surrounding are insufficient. Therefore, this study aims to associate the natural and cultural environmental characteristics of the lake with tourism. Moreover, the study targets to specify criteria for the tourism activities to be carried out around the lake and to determine tourism types that adopt preservation culture. Study methods consist of data gathering, analysis, synthesis and evaluation.Uluabat Lake, which lies within the borders of the provinces Bursa, Kütahya, Balıkesir and Bilecik, forms the main material of the study.

Keywords: Eco-Tourism, Wetland Areas, Natural Landscape, Uluabat Lake