

# Promoting local tourism potential in the province of Tizi-Ouzou In Algeria

**Ait Taleb Mourad<sup>1</sup>, Bouchama Ouahiba<sup>2</sup>**

1 Senior Lecturer B ENSB Alger

2 Senior Lecturer A ENSB Alger

1 Email: bouchama.wahiba@ensb.dz

## **Abstract :**

Algeria has a strategic role in the development of its tourist destination, given its natural potential and strategic assets for the development of this sector. The vastness of its territory and the diversity of its landscapes, cultures and traditions can all contribute to the liveliness and attractiveness of these areas. The Province of Tizi Ouzou is one of the world's top tourist destinations, with a wealth of local potential.

The aim of this study is to demonstrate the importance of geographic information systems in defining sites that may be of architectural, cultural or natural value, and consequently to seek to integrate them into the tourism development process. The use of this tool can provide a clearer picture of tourist sites, which will be of benefit to the various local players and to the tourists themselves in order to have prior knowledge of the places to be visited.

**Key words :** Tourism; Geographical Information System; tourism potential; tizi ouzou; Algeria.

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Worldwide, tourism is a major industry of the 21st century, and its approach must be both commercial and enriching for individuals [1]. What makes a destination rich is the pleasure of discovering different cultures and places [2]. The concepts of identity and authenticity are becoming essential values in today's world of globalised trade and standardised products [3].

In Algeria, the successful development of tourism is a major ambition, a national priority and a challenge, given that the areas available for tourism are so narrow and coveted, fragile and contrasting, but also rich and varied and sometimes unique in the world [4].

The wilaya of Tizi Ouzou is one of Algeria's regions with a great variety of landscapes and cultures of great value; it overlooks the Mediterranean Sea and has a picturesque natural environment. The wilaya is a region where all forms of tourism are possible, thanks to its cultural and historical heritage and the originality of its towns and villages.

In this article, we will try to identify the tourist assets of Tizi Ouzou and, at the same time, create a cartographic base through a geographical information system that can help to enhance them and, at the same time, integrate them into the tourism development process. There will also be an attempt to define the type of tourism to be promoted on the basis of the site's assets and constraints.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) defines tourism as "a social, cultural and economic phenomenon involving the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal, business or leisure purposes" [5]. These people are called visitors and may be tourists or day-trippers, residents or non-residents; tourism refers to their activities, some of which may involve expenditure on tourism [6]. Professors Hunziker and Kraft have given a multidisciplinary definition of tourism as the set of relationships and phenomena resulting from the travel and stay of people for whom the place of stay is neither their principal and permanent residence nor their usual place of work (Drouin, 2004). According to the UNWTO report (2017), the number of international tourist arrivals worldwide is expected to grow by an average of 3.3% per year between 2010 and 2030. Over time, the number of international tourist arrivals worldwide will reach 1.4 billion in 2020 and 1.8 billion in 2030 [7].

Similarly, Algeria is still struggling to find a place among the Mediterranean countries that are major tourist magnets, such as Morocco and Tunisia, its direct competitors, and the gap with southern European countries is even wider. In 2017 according to the Ministry of Tourism, Algeria recorded a modest flow of tourists (1.710 million) and slightly more in 2018 (around 2 million). While its Maghreb neighbours have seen a fivefold or even sixfold increase [8].

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

A theoretical and analytical approach [9] has been chosen for this study. The aim is to define our subject by means of data that are summarised and presented using a graphical method to illustrate the results of the study and improve the level of perception of the information. To achieve this, we adopted the implementation of a geographical information system using QGIS Desktop 3.4.5 with GRASS 7.6.0 and recent satellite images to identify key points and opportunities for tourism development.

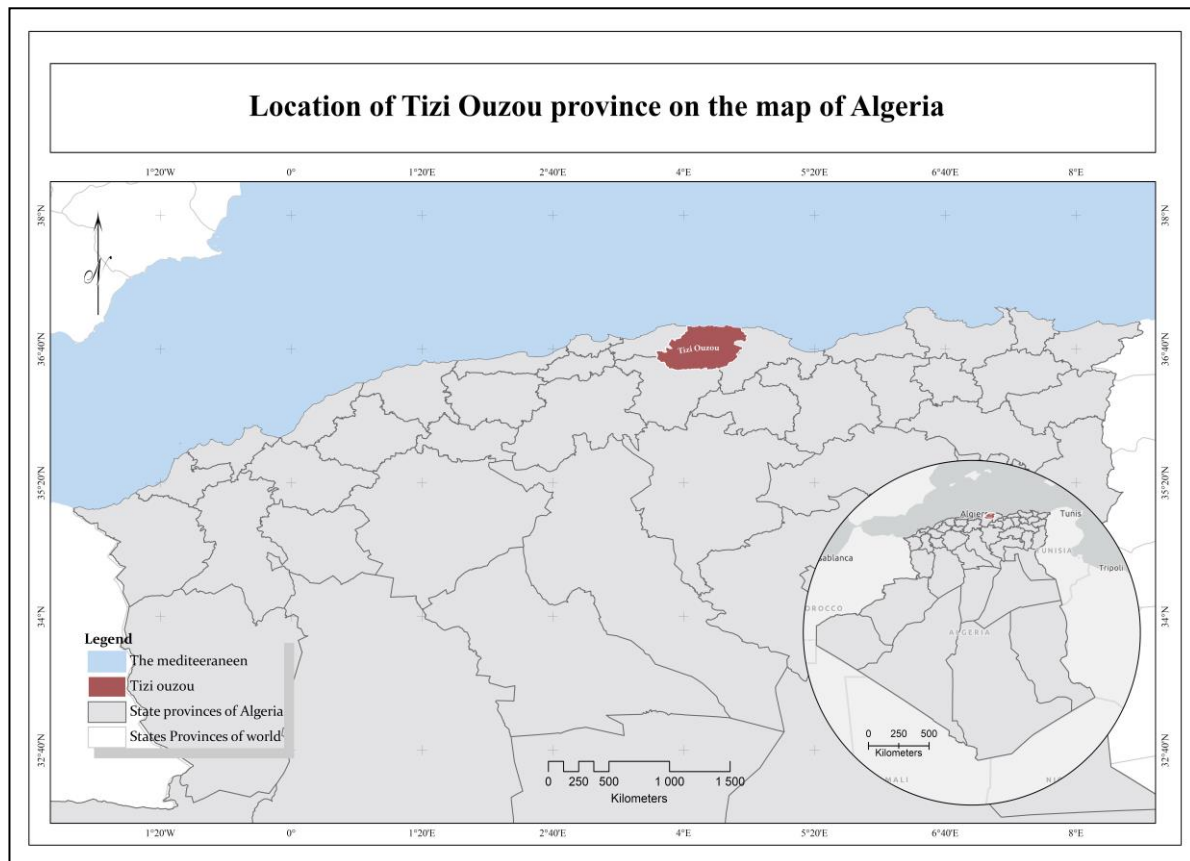
This system will provide us with the following functionalities:

- View data.
- Browse and map data.
- Create, edit, manage and export data.
- Publish and share information with stakeholders.

### General presentation of the study area:

The province of Tizi-Ouzou is located 100 kilometres from Algiers and 80 kilometres from the international airport of Houari Boumediene. Covering an area of 2994 km<sup>2</sup>, Tizi-Ouzou is located in the heart of the Djurdjura massif, with rugged mountainous terrain. More than half of the province of Tizi-Ouzou is covered by very high mountains. It also has a wide opening to the Mediterranean Sea, with more than 85 kilometres of coastline. It's bordered by :

- The Mediterranean Sea to the north;
- The department of Bouira to the south
- The department of Boumerdes to the west;
- The department of Bejaia to the east.



**Figure1. Location of Tizi Ouzou province in Algeria (Source: Authors,2023)**

### **The tourist potential of Tizi-Ouzou:**

Tizi-Ouzou is home to a wide variety of natural, cultural and archaeological heritage and has many assets in terms of the richness and diversity of its tourist attractions.

#### **- Natural potential:**

Tizi ouzou has a number of natural assets that could play a part in boosting tourism and even the economy.

#### **The Djurdjura mountain range:**

The Djurdjura is a mountain range whose highest point is Lalla Khedidja (2308m). The imposing Djurdjura mountain range represents a veritable source of tourism, offering an infinite variety of tourist products related to nature in general and the mountains in particular.

#### **Forests:**

Tizi-Ouzou consists of various forests, including dense forests, undergrowth and scrub, such as Yakouren, Athghobri and Mizrana. These forests cover an area of 112,182.64 ha, or 38% of the department's total area, and are mainly of the Mediterranean type.

### **-The coastline:**

There are 85 km of Mediterranean coastline. The coast is made up of long sandy beaches and cliffs, with a hinterland dominated by rugged terrain, wooded or cultivated and sometimes occupied by an urban fabric. It offers natural landscapes of great tourist value, in particular Tizirt and Azzefoun with their many beaches.

### **Cultural potential :**

The cultural wealth of Tizi-Ouzou is linked to its eventful history dating back to prehistoric times. It is also renowned for its high-quality, original traditional crafts. Among the most popular crafts in the department are jewellery, pottery, weaving and embroidery, all of which undeniably contribute to the development and promotion of tourism in the department.

### **Pottery**

Considered the most authentic activity in Kabylia. This typically feminine art is made by hand and includes drawings and decorative symbols.



**Figure 2. Potery d'Ath Kheir**  
Source: Photos taken by the Authors 2023.



**Figure 3. Pottery seller in Yakouren**  
Source: Photos taken by the Authors 2023.

### **Jewellery**

Kabyle jewellery is a man's craft. It is made of silver. It is decorated with cloisonné enamel and coral cabochons. It is handmade and comes from the Ath-Yanni region. This region is very rich in jewellery.



**Figure 4. Ath yenni jewellery**  
Source: Photos taken by the Authors 2023.



**Figure 5. Azazga jewellery**  
Source: Photos taken by the Authors 2023.

## Weaving

The women of the Kabylia region have always made use of the natural resources of their immediate surroundings and transformed them into exceptional works of art. Weaving is a cultural heritage. It is still a widespread activity in the region.



**Figure 6. Tapestry Ath Hicham**  
Source: Photos taken by the Authors 2023.



**Figure 7. Weaving Kabyle**  
Source: Photos taken by the Authors 2023.

### Valuable historic sites:

The department of Tizi Ouzou has a wealth of historic sites, including:

#### The castle of Bordj Turc

A historical monument dating from the Turkish period at the beginning of the 18th century. In 1720, the Turkish government in Algiers decided to keep watch over Kabylia in order to maintain the Turkish presence in the Sébaou basin. In 1851, the bordj of Tizi-Ouzou was converted into the residence of BELKACEM OUKACI. After independence, the Ministry of Defence took over the surveillance role of the bordj.

#### -The AIT KACI House

It was one of the first houses to be built in the new village of Ait Kaci in the new village of Tizi-Ouzou. It's a beautiful building, built in the style of the Algerian houses, it has a number of outbuildings and it is surrounded by an orchard. The residence dates from the 19th century.

#### -City Museum

This architectural masterpiece is a historical monument dating back to the colonial period and was designed to house the offices of the Town Hall of Tizi-Ouzou. It was inaugurated on 29 February 1896. It is a tangible witness to the history of the town of Tizi-Ouzou. The building is located in the centre of Tizi-Ouzou (between Boulevard de Colonel Mellah and Boulevard de Mohand Saïd Azeffoun).

#### -The upper town:

The upper town of Tizi-Ouzou, or more precisely the old village or smala of Tizi-Ouzou, commonly called "dechra" as opposed to the colonial village area "El bilage"; designations highly significant of the division of space. This part of the city of Tizi-Ouzou is a remarkable

destination for the visitors, which allows them to discover the history of the Kabylia through this site.

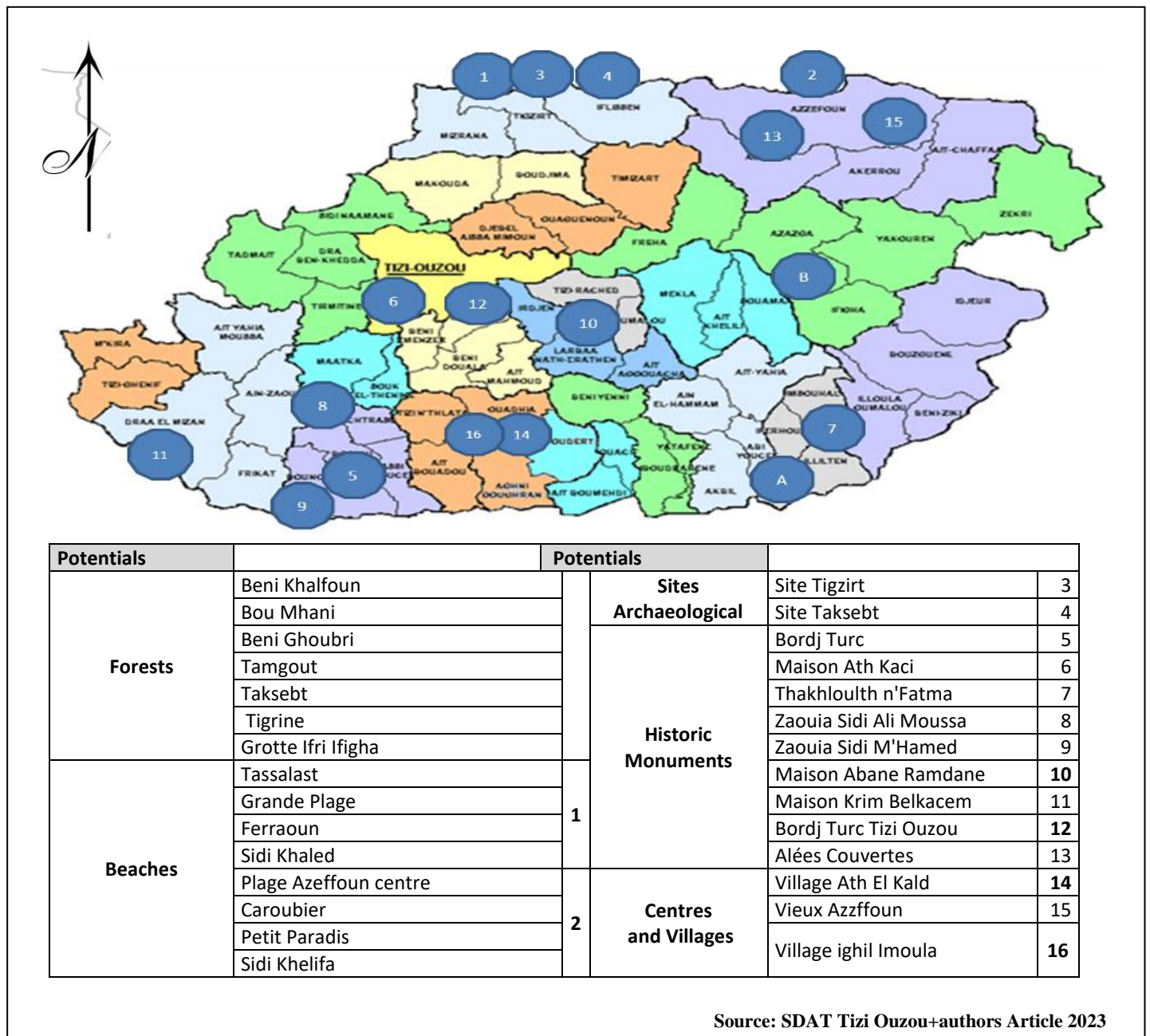


**Figure 8. City Museum**  
Source: Photos taken by the Authors 2023.



**Figure 9. Bognhi Bordj Turc**  
Source: Photos taken by the Authors 2023.

**Figure :The tourism potential of the Wilaya of Tizi-Ouzou**



Source: SDAT Tizi Ouzou+authors Article 2023

**Figure 10 :The tourism potential of Tizi-Ouzou**

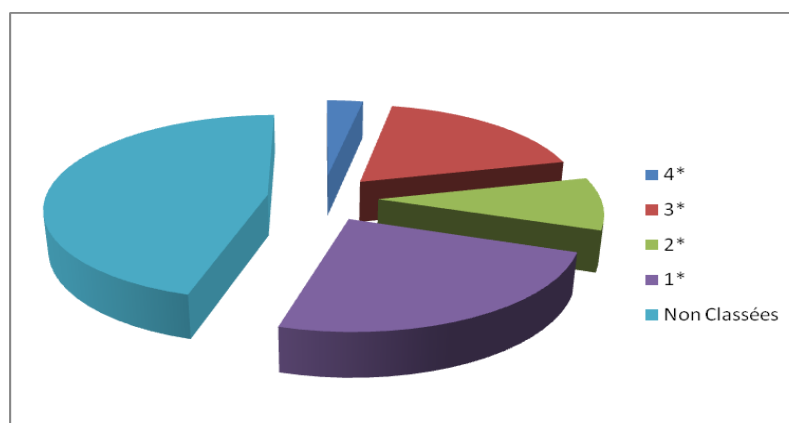
**Table1. Category Hotels in Tizi Ouzou (Source : DTH, 2019, completed by authors)**

Category Hotels	Legal status	Number	Rooms	Beds
4*	Private	1	31	65
3*	Private	6	203	346
2*	Private	3	105	165
1*	Private	8	234	480
Unclassified	Private	15	426	710
<b>TOTAL</b>	-	<b>33</b>	<b>1967</b>	<b>3467</b>

There are 33 hotels open in the department, with a capacity of 999 rooms and 1,766 beds. They are distributed as follows :

In second place are the hotels dedicated to seaside tourism on the coast. They represent 26.50% of the total number of hotels open and are mainly frequented by seaside tourists in the summer. The communes with the greatest capacity for accommodation on the coast are the communes of Tigzirt and Azeffoun.

Finally, there are only 2 hotels with a climate-controlled environment open to the public, in Draa Ben Khedda and Ouadhias.



**Figure 11. Breakdown of hotel establishis**  
Source : Authors Article

13 public sector hotels are currently closed for refurbishment. This follows years of neglect, particularly during the black decade.

**\*Youth hostels and campgrounds**

They are equally distributed between coastal towns (Azeffoun and Tigzirt) and central towns (Tizi Ouzou, Tizi Rached and Beni Yeni). Of the 6 campsites, 4 are located on the coast and the other two are in Yakouren and at the Taksebt dam [10].

**\* Secondary residences**

The main concentration of holiday homes is on the coastline, particularly in the Azeffoun and Tigirt areas, representing 37 % and 23 % respectively of the total number of holiday homes in the département.

### Development zones and tourist areas (ZESTs)

#### \*The seaside ZESTs:

- Azzefoun ZEST: 25 ha
- Sidi Khelifa ZEST: 637.5 ha
- Djemaa Nerbat ZEST: 171 ha
- Blerouna ZEST: 637.5 ha
- Tassalast ZEST: 168 ha
- Ferraoun ZEST: 70.6 ha
- ZEST of Abechar : 116,4 ha
- Zegzou ZEST : 147 ha

#### \* The mountain ZESTs:

- Tizi-Oudjaaboub ZEST: 118 ha

## RESULTS /ANALYSIS:

### Weaknesses of the tourism offer

The Province suffers from a number of shortcomings which, as things stand, are hampering its prospects for developing tourism. These weaknesses and threats are summarised below as key issues.

**Table2. Weaknesses of the tourism in Tizi Ouzou (Source : by authors)**

<b>Weaknesses</b>	
<b>Accommodation</b>	<b>The region's tourism potential</b>
There is an imbalance between urban, coastal and climatic zones in the geographical distribution of hotel accommodation. There is a very high concentration of hotels in the town of Tizi Ouzou (almost 50% of accommodation capacity).	The department's coastline is relatively undeveloped. Its beaches are also of "average" quality and are plagued by pollution problems.
Imbalanced geographical distribution of hotel accommodation between urban, coastal and climatic zones. There is a high concentration of hotels in the town of Tizi Ouzou (almost 50% of the department's total accommodation capacity).	More generally, the department of Tizi Ouzou is suffering from a deterioration in its natural environment, linked to the same problem of pollution of its natural features (rivers, beaches, etc.).
Inadequate actual capacity of accommodation: a large number of hotels are closed (44% of the total number of hotels in the department).	Some archaeological sites and historic monuments, such as the remains of the Roman ruins at Tigzirt, are suffering from a crying lack of maintenance and development. The Tacherchourt site at Zekri has also been the target of several looting incidents.
Low number of classified hotels (particularly on the coast, where only 5 hotels are classified: again, uneven distribution of hotels)	The failure to renovate or upgrade infrastructure is very evident in certain locations, such as Talla Guilef,
Lack of diversification of tourist infrastructures (accommodation in local homes to be developed)	



### Using GIS to manage historical and tourist sites:

New Information Technologies (IT) have become very popular with those involved in managing cultural heritage [11]. In our case, GIS involves the combination of computerised data with cartographic and spatial data. The implementation of GIS involves three levels of information. The first level is always cartographic, while the other levels are dependent on the type of data under management (natural sites, historical sites, tourist sites, etc.). The development of a database for each attribute involves the following stages

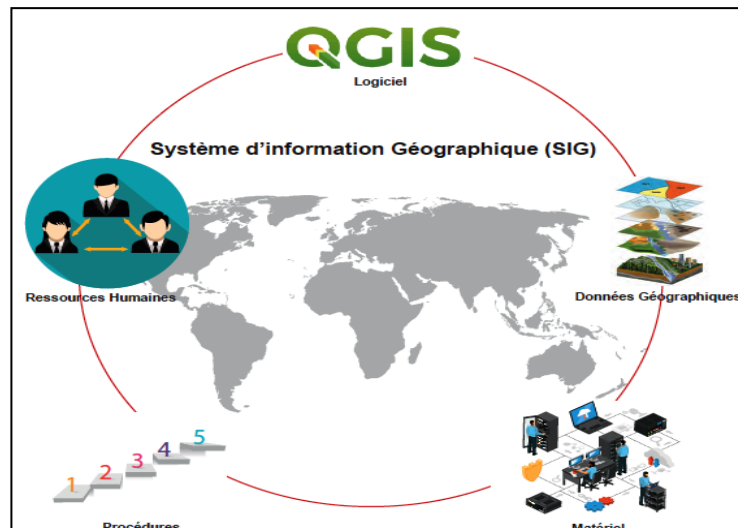


Figure 12. Organisational diagram of a GIS  
Source : Guide produced by MEER 2018 (GIZ, 2018)

#### \*Metadata entry and geodatabase creation :

This process is based on introducing basic information about existing archaeological and tourist attractions collected and sorted first as name [12], location, function, name origin, construction period and attribute table.

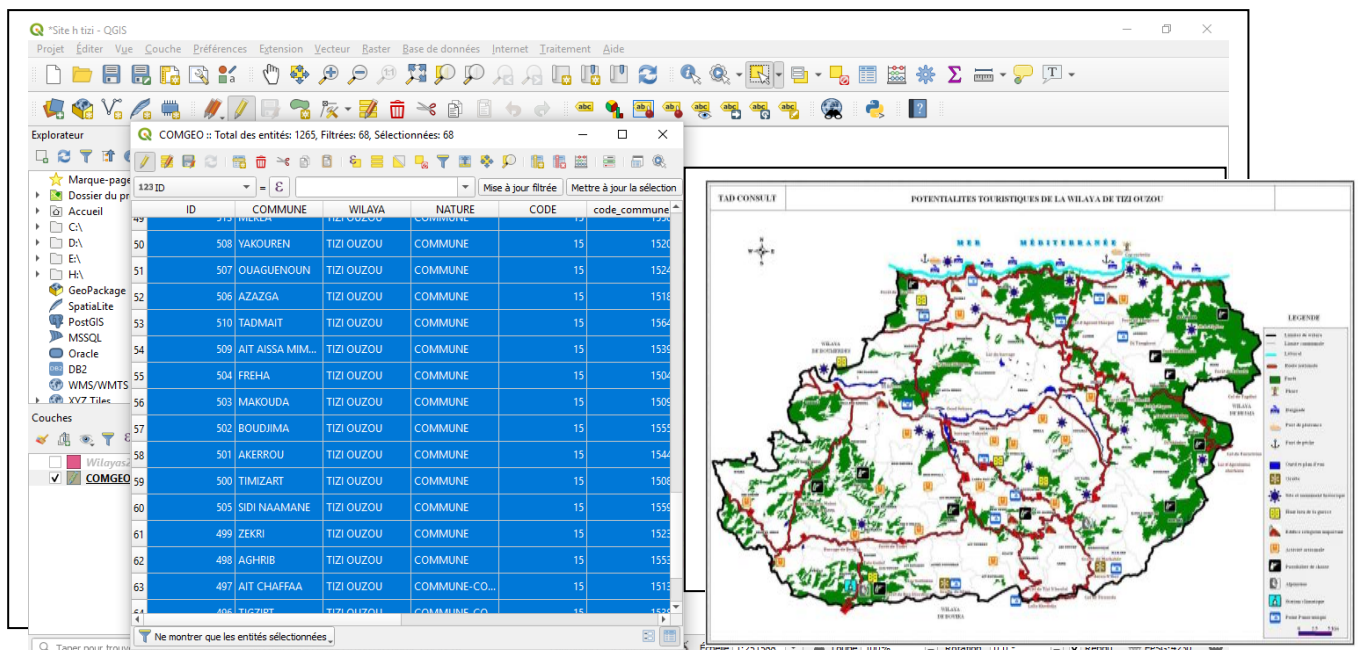
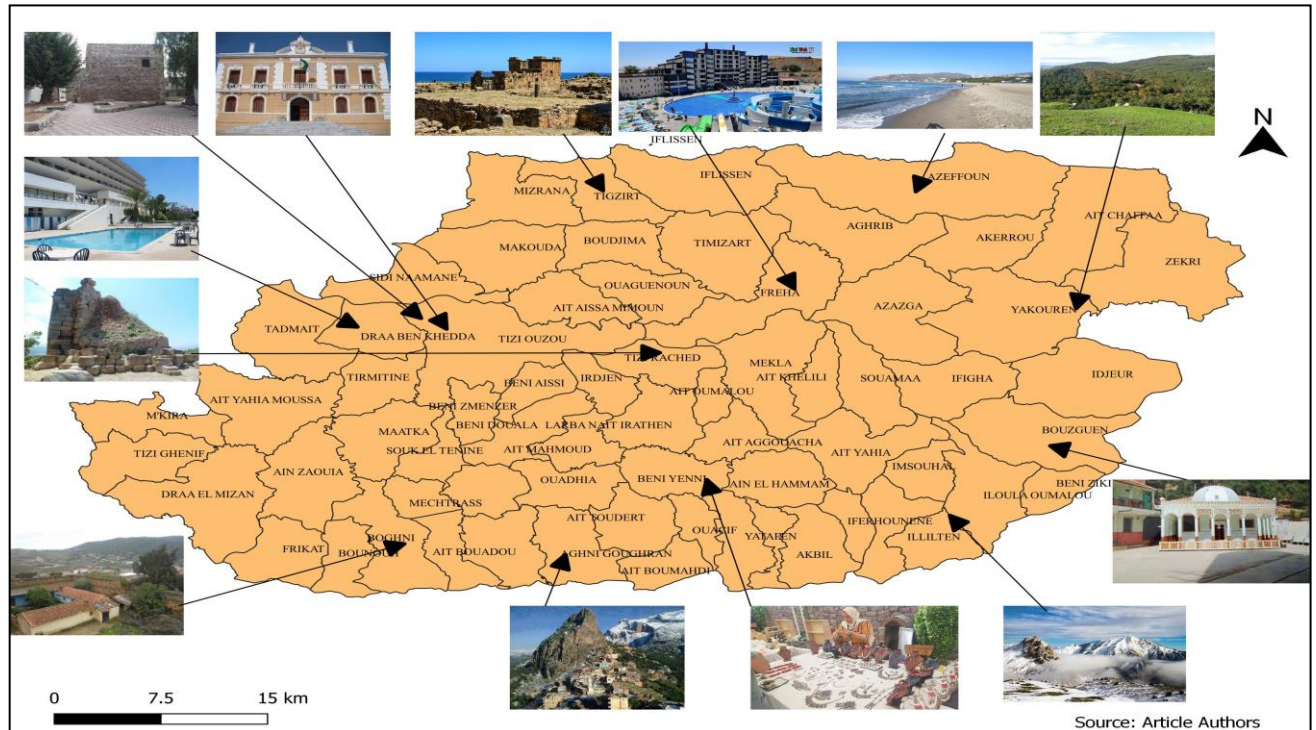


Figure 13. : Creating a database of historic sites.  
Source :Article Authors 2023

\* Database management (Archiving) manipulation and interrogation of geographical data (Analysis) formatting and visualisation (Display) real representation (Abstraction) . Figure No. ... represents a portal and guide to tourism in the department, which can be used by the various departments, associations and tourism agencies....



**Figure 14. Portal and guide to tourism in the department of Tizi Ouzou**

Tizi Ouzou is aware of its tourist assets in the context of a Kabyle cultural and geographical identity. It has chosen the scenario of Tizi Ouzou, Kabylie d'here and d'aujourd'hui [13]. to guide its tourism development along the following axes :

- 1) Promoting Algeria as a destination to increase its attractiveness and competitiveness.
- 2) Development of tourism centres and villages of excellence by rationalising investment and development[14].
- 3) Implement a Tourism Quality Plan (PQT) to develop the excellence of the national tourism offer, integrating training through professional education, openness to information and communication technologies (ICT) and positioning in new tourism niches in line with new global trends [15].
- 4) Promote multidisciplinary and coherent actions by linking tourism chains and establishing public-private partnerships.
- 5) Define and implement an operational financing plan to support tourism activities and developers and to attract national and international investors.

**Conclusion:**

The province of Tizi-Ouzou has a wide range of tourist facilities that can be used to promote a variety of tourist activities, including eco-tourism, beach tourism and cultural tourism. The development process in this area is very slow and unstable. This is due to the lack of a clear strategy that takes into account the tourist attractions and their development, as well as the inadequacy of the reception facilities.

Introducing Geographical Information Systems in the management of the tourist potential of the region under study can be a means of enhancing the latter and, at the same time, a tool aimed at its visibility and attractiveness.

**Acknowledgements :**

We are grateful to the engineers of the All departments of the Province of Tizi Ouzou, , for their help in data collection. We would also like to thank all the scientists interviewed for understanding and helping us to carry out our study.

The authors sincerely thank the reviewers for their meticulous work in proofreading and correcting, which significantly improved the manuscript.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Aroub ,R (2015). Le Tourisme Saharien Etat Des Lieux Et Stratégie De L'état Pour Son Développement [Saharan Tourism State Of Place And State Strategy For Its Development]. *Journal of Economic Reforms and Integration in the World Economy*, 20( 10), 7-17, in French ,<https://www.asjp.cerist.dz/en/article/13615>.
- [2] Cole, S. (2006). Cultural tourism, community participation and empowerment. In *Cultural tourism in a changing world. Publications Channel View*, 4 (2), 89-103. <https://doi.org/10.21832/9781845410452-008>
- [3] Benbelaid, Y. (2022). Tourisme alternatif à Djanet et à Taghit: Quelle contributions des touristes nationaux [Alternative tourism in Djanet and Taghit: What contributions national tourists make]. *Journal of Tourism Research Téoros*, 41 (1), 27-32, in French, <http://journals.openedition.org/teoros/10744>
- [4] Alloui, A.M., & Linda, S. (2021). The putting territories into tourism, a tourism diagnosis tool case of the wilaya of Algiers. *Geojournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 35(2), 456-463. <https://doi.org/10.30892/gtg.35225-672>
- [5] Girard, L.F., & Nijkamp, P. (2009). *Cultural tourism and sustainable local development*. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., Eds, 55-68.
- [6] Boumaraf, H., & Amireche, L. (2020). Thermal comfort and pedestrian behaviors in urban public spaces in cities with warm and dry climates. *Open House International*, 46 (1), 143-159. <https://doi.org/10.1108/OHI-06-2020-0060>
- [7] Boulhila, S., Alouat, M., Rezzaz, M.A., Schmitz, S. (2022). Towards a development model of local cultural tourism through the involvement of local actors (province of constantine, Algeria). *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 40(1), 9–19. <https://doi.org/10.30892/gtg.40101-797>
- [8] Bouchama, O., Alouat, M., Berberi, R., & Drouiche, A. (2022). Towards a territorial equity through the criterion-based assessment of socio-economic inequalities. Case of the Province of Boumerdes. *Technium Social Sciences Journal*, 37, 635-647.
- [9] Fertas, L., Alouat, M., & Benmahamed, H. (2022). Thermal tourism as a driver of local development, an illustration of opportunities and constraints. case study of hammam-guergour in the province of sétif, Algeria. *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 40(1), 136–143. <https://doi.org/10.30892/gtg.40116-812>
- [10] Kelfaoui, A., Rezzaz, A.M., & Kherrou, L. (2021). Revitalization of mountain rural tourism as a tool for sustainable local development in Kabylie (Algeria). The case of Yakouren municipality. *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 34(1), 112-125. <https://doi.org/10.30892/gtg.34115-62>.
- [11] Souiher, K., & Abdessamed Rezzaz, M. (2020). Rehabilitation of infrastructure in urban tourist areas (province of Algiers, Algeria). *Loisir et Société/Society and Leisure*, 43(3), 393-406 [Doi.org/10.1080/07053436.2020.1849159](https://doi.org/10.1080/07053436.2020.1849159)
- [12] Waridin, & Astawa, I.P. (2021). Shifting Of Land Use In Sustainable Tourism: A Local Cultural Approach In Indonesia. *Geojournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 35(2), 270–274. <https://doi.org/10.30892/gtg.35201-647>.
- [13] Lak, A., Gheitasi, M., & Timothy, D.J. (2020). Urban regeneration through heritage tourism: cultural policies and strategic management. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, 18(4), 386-403. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14766825.2019.1668002>
- [14] Kherrou, L., Hattab, S., & Rezzaz, M.A. (2020). Archaeological sites and tourism: protection and valorization, case of Timgad (Batna) Algeria, *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 28(1), 25-36. <https://doi.org/10.30892/gtg.28123-470>
- [15] Morar, C., Grama, V., Stupariu, I.M., Nagy, G., Boros, L., Tiba, Al., Gozner, M., & Szabo-Alexi, S. (2020). Local perspectives over cultural tourism to heritage sites. the case study of oradea fortress (Romania). *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 33, 1470-1479. <https://doi.org/10.30892/gtg.334spl04-595>
- [16] GIZ, MEER (2018) ; Guide pour la mise en place d'un système d'information géographique (SIG) pour la gestion d'une aire protégée en Algérie. [Guide to setting up a geographic information system (GIS) for the management of a protected area in Algeria] (First Edition). Algeria
- \*\*\*DTH: Direction of Tourism and Handicrafts (2012). Master Plan for Tourism Planning of Tizi ouzou province, Algeria.
- \*\*\*DPPBM: Direction of Planning (2019). Programming and Budgetary Monitoring of Tizi Ouzou province, monograph of the province of Tizi Ouzou, Algeria.
- \*\*\*DC: Direction of Culture of Tizi Ouzou province (2019). Algeria.
- \*\*\*DRAE (2019). Directorate of Religious Affairs and Endowments for the province of Tizi Ouzou.
- \*\*\*ONS: Office Nationale des Statistiques (2019) (National Office of Statistics, The urban frame RGPH 2008). The main results of the exhaustive exploitation. National Office of Statistics, Algiers, in French.
- \*\*\*OMT: Organisation mondiale du tourisme (2018). *Faits saillants OMT du tourisme (UNWTO Tourism Highlights)*, Madrid, in French.
- \*\*\*SDAT (2013). Schéma Directeur d'Aménagement Touristique de la wilaya de Tizi Ouzou [The Master plan for Tourism Development in the wilaya of Tizi Ouzou, Algeria] (Final edition).