

# Tourism perspectives and their implication in favour of economic development case study municipality of Bejaia (Algeria)

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## **Abstract**

*the integration of the city of Béjaia into the economic development process is to determine other development horizons through the tourism option. Nevertheless, Algeria's urban areas have always been structured entirely around industry. The latter has hardly contributed to the growth of the city. It has been a factor in polarizing migratory movements towards the city, without generating significant induced urbanization, to the detriment of other sectors likely to boost the economy. Tourism could be a development alternative, given the country's diversity of landscapes and natural and cultural resources. But this sector has always been marginalized by development plans and urban policies.*

*We chose Bejaia as one of Algeria's coastal cities, located 230 km from the capital.*

*-Set between the sea and the mountains, it overlooks a bay that resembles that of Rio in Brazil.*

*- Rich in natural and cultural assets: the sea, the famous Gouraya park and historic monuments dating back to Roman times.*

*-Characterized by its architectural and urban diversity.*

*-With a port, an airport and a highly diversified transport network.*

*At the same time, it is lagging behind in its development, with a deteriorating quality of urban life and a lack of jobs, despite boasting one of the largest industrial zones in eastern Algeria and one of the country's most important ports. This situation prompted us to think about the notion of development: is it possible to sustain development in an urban environment through the promotion of tourism? The present work is the beginning of a coherent response to this problem. In other words, we want to map out the path to development, starting with the establishment of an economic platform based on the tourism alternative.*

**Key words** : challenges, tourism, economic development, the city of Bejaia.

## **1-INTRODUCTION:**

Tourism is vital for the success of many economies around the world. There are several benefits of tourism on host destinations. Tourism boosts the revenue of the economy, creates thousands of jobs, develops the infrastructures of a country, and plants a sense of cultural exchange between foreigners and citizens. Tourism is one of the largest and steadily growing economic sectors world-wide, as well as being a sector in which developing nations have a considerable stake. For this reason alone, tourism is a relevant factor in terms of development policies.

The exceptional expansion of urban tourism since the 90s has turned cities, and in particular their historic districts, into important economic resources of national income. While the urban quality of cities has been supported by embellishment projects and tourist infrastructure developments (luxury hotels and major airports in Turkey, upgraded archaeological sites in Jordan), uncertainty remains in the area of security and political stability. A condition that goes beyond urban considerations in the context of the tourism economy.

The average number of tourists visiting major cities such as Paris and New York each year is estimated at 30 million (Aouni,2014). For many developing countries, tourism is seen as a source of foreign currency to redress their imbalanced balance of payments and finance the rest of the economy. For some declining regions, tourism is the only way out of the economic doldrums. "It is also a key instrument for regional planning and a good way of combating regional imbalances ( Kouri djamel, )

In Algeria, tourism may have a future ahead of him. The hope is permitted. However, this future could be jeopardized likely to the unenviable position in which it is struggling due to many difficulties including the lack of citizen involvement in its promotion (Lamia oudaifia, 2015).

Bejaia, offers a rare geographical, historical and cultural diversity. All its urban and non-urban environments offer enormous potential for development of the tourism sector. Among the coastal towns with a vocation to the outside world, Bejaia stands out for its strategic geographical position with priceless tourist resources. Equipped with a large port that meets national and international standards, it also boasts a diversified transport network and a dynamic airport.

It's this question that raises the stakes of a significant study, and affects the character of the city, its image, its places, and its various urban communication networks.

The aim of this study is to highlight the tourist potential of Bejaia, the Algerian city with its coastline, history and panoramic landscapes, which is destined to become an essential asset for its development.

## **2-METODOLOGY**

This study was conducted following the movements of the research team in the field, the information collected was confronted with the reality on the site,

based on the materials and information acquired in the previous steps, the actual drafting of this material was started, trying to identify opportunities and possibilities to exploit them through tourism.

### 3-RESULT –CASE STUDY BAJAIA MUNICIPALITY

Municipality of Bejaia is located in the province of Bejaia, at a distance of 230 Km to the east of the capital Algiers, in a bay 7 km. Inserted in a very diverse physical environment, between mountains, plains and the sea, vulnerable to natural hazards, including floods and earthquakes. Bejaia is characterized by moderate Mediterranean climate (figure1).

Its population has grown rapidly because of the phenomenon of massive rural migration and natural growth, which it increased from 101,657 inhabitants in 1977 to 177,988 inhabitants in 2008 according to the National Statistics Office. This demographic and urban growth has caused greater pressure on land use, including urban expansion took place from the old city with a high concentration of historical monuments to two growing areas, the plain of El khmis and coastline. Indeed, urbanization was a huge jump from 500 hectares to 2285 hectares in just three decades (1980-2010), as the city has grown from 60 hectares in ten centuries of the period at the time Hammadid French (planning Department of the wilaya of Bejaia, 2007), urban boom has marginalized the old centre, especially with the departure of affluent layers replaced by a poor rural population and the invasion of various harmful economic activities in this fragile area.



Source : Authors 2023

Figure 1. Geographical location of the municipality of Bejaia.

### 4- NATURAL POTENTIAL OF BEJAIA:

Tourism has long been closely linked to the natural to the natural opportunities of the sites. The city of Bejaia has a number of urban urban wooded areas, giving it the image of a "green" city. The woods of Sidi Ahmed, the olive groves and the sacred wood are natural areas that should be classified. In addition, Bejaia has a wealth of natural resources, including to name:

**4-1-Gouraya National Park:** The Gouraya National Park, located in the town of Bejaia, is a natural and cultural reserve of great heritage value. This rich and diverse heritage is very important for the city's development in terms of tourism and the economy, and is of particular interest to society as a whole, representing its identity and culture.

It considered the lungs of the town, this 2080-hectare park boasts exceptional ecological and aesthetic riches, including flora, fauna and historic and picturesque sites. It is home to 198 species of flora and fauna. Added to this is the importance of the marine influence, as the park is bordered to the north by the Mediterranean for 10.6km. Situated on the outskirts of the town of Bejaia, the park is an attractive educational area for relaxation and recreation.

From a functional point of view, the park is cut off from the city by the absence of direct communication routes such as the cable car, making the site an enclave. As a result, the site is overrun by illegal waste dumps and illegal housing.



Source :Authors 2022

**Figure 2 .** National parc of Gouraya

**4-2-Oued Soummam:** also regarded as another abandoned natural feature that constitutes a disjunction in urban continuity, the two banks of the Soummam, which are currently inaccessible, need to be reclaimed and developed by the city. In developed countries, such natural elements are essential components of the urban landscape, as is the case of the Seine in France, which is considered a curiosity of the city.

**4-3-Lac Mézaia:** a wetland located in downtown Bejaia. It is an artificial body of water measuring 2.5 hectares in surface area, with a depth of up to 18 m at the center of the lake. Originally a clay deposit, the development of a vegetation belt consisting mainly of reeds and rushes, and the visit of a few migratory birds, has finally contributed to the creation of a new lake ecosystem (figure 3).



Source :Authors 2022

**Figure 3.** Lake of Mezaia

**4-4-Coastline:** a synchronization of several landscapes: waves gently caressing a shoreline of extreme beauty, lush green mountains that gently their feet gently in a sea of intense blue and golden filaments reflected on the water's surface like a never-ending mirror. this untouched area is of rare beauty, its beautiful beaches and immense natural heritage offer great tourism development. High-quality seaside tourism the West Coast from oblivion and make it the driving force behind the development of the entire Bejaia coastal area. an opportunity that must be seized. As for the richness of the fauna, is also highly diversified, with the magot monkey, red fox, porcupine porcupine, genet, griffon vulture, Egyptian vulture, Bonelli's eagle, white-winged eagle, long-eared owl, horned owl owl, tawny owl, barn owl, partridge, hare, fox, wild boar, etc. Favored by a fairly appreciable rainfall rate and the most favorable climatic conditions, Bejaia's coastline is covered with a carpet of greenery. The richness of the flora and fauna is very high. diverse range of plant species: olive, fig, carob, caper, poplar, oaks (cork, zen, afres and green) and other Aleppo pines, cedar and Numidian fir.

Bejaia's coastline is made up of four beaches authorized for bathing, as shown in the table below( table1).

**Table 1.** Beaches authorized for swimming.

<b>Beach designation</b>	<b>Length</b>
Les aiguades	200M
Boulimat	1200M
Tala-guilef	600M
Saket	800M

**Source :** CNERU,2022

However, these beaches are left to their own devices, monopolized by individuals who take advantage of holidaymakers and damage the image of seaside tourism.

Four tourism development zones (ZETs) have been set up to exploit the area's natural wealth for tourism and economic purposes, but they are little used.

- ZET pointe des Moules: Located 23 km from the main town. It covers an area of 52 hectares. Building land capacity is 07 hectares. Consumed land capacity is 4 hectares.

-ZET Pointe Boulimat: Located 18 km from Bejaia, the building land capacity is 10 hectares. The surface area consumed is 6 hectares. A large seaside resort is planned.

ZET Adrar Imoula: Located 13 km from the main town on the west coast, the building land capacity is 15Ha. The surface area consumed is 1 hectare. The development prospects are for a large seaside resort with daily seaside activities and major accommodation facilities.

ZET Gouraya: Located 03km from the main town, it includes the Plateau Des Ruines historic site. It covers an area of 134 hectares. Building land capacity is 21 hectares. The ZET is located within the Gouraya National Park, making it ideal for a cable car project linking the town of Bejaia to the Gouraya mausoleum.

In fact, Bejaia has a great deal of natural potential, thanks to its privileged geographical location, its coastline, its golf course compared with Rio de Janeiro or Naples, its forested mountains and its dense vegetation.



## 5-HERITAGE ASSETS:

The heritage, cultural and historical riches of the local population are increasingly preferred tourist destinations (OGM 2000). Urban tourism is a factor of economic growth, with tourist activities helping to diversify and even expand the city's functions.

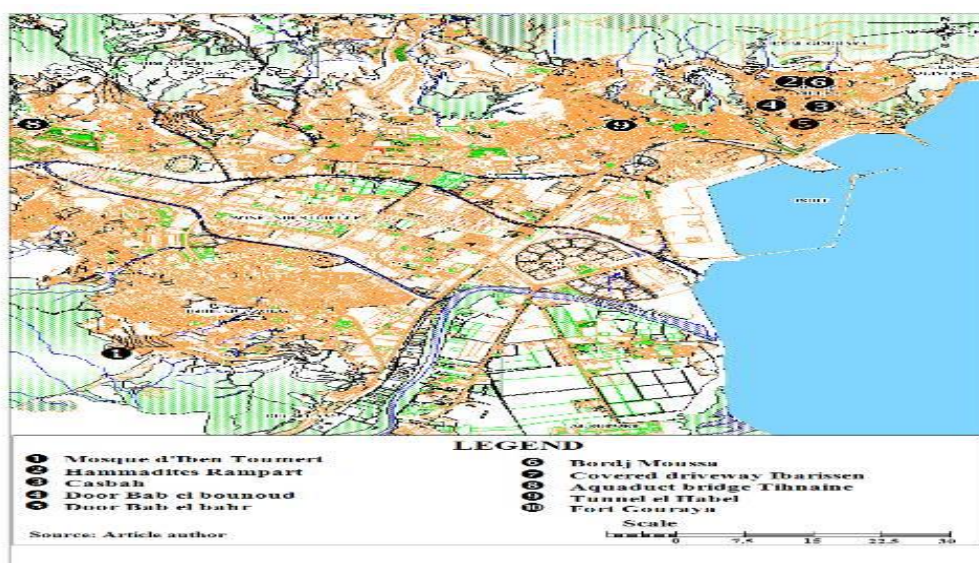
In return, the city must promote the development of its tourism offering. This mutual benefit could be an opportunity and a factor in urban development and economic growth. Cities with strong tourism potential rely on the urban promotion of their old centers, by enhancing their historical heritage.

In this context, there is no precise data to differentiate between tourist visits to existing heritage elements, in order to identify their specific importance. Cultural tourism in the region is still in its infancy, lacking the echo necessary to enhance its value and thus its tourist potential, as we shall see below. We have therefore taken into consideration the places with the most urban and natural elements that have marked the site's history, rather than those that are most frequented. This allows us to identify specific tourist attractions or areas of the tourist offer related to history.

Bejaia is characterized in its western part by contacts between sea and land in the form of coves, but also by more pronounced contacts forming an uninterrupted series of capes and coves. The most important of these are Cap Carbon, Cap Bouac and Sidi Yahia cove, which ends the gulf on the north side. The upper part of Cap Carbon contains an Andalusian-style fort with a lighthouse on its dome. Beyond Cape Carbon, on the way up to the west coast, lies the Plateau des Ruines, where we find historic caves and remains of fortresses. The most important of these is undoubtedly Les Aiguades, encircled between the sheer cliffs of Cape Bouak and Cape Carbon.

### -Location of heritage features :

The monuments are located in a disorganized environment, enclosed within the natural environment of Gouraya Park or within the urban fabric. The ancient fabric is superimposed on a succession of ridges and talwegs on the one hand, and relatively flat on the other, located on the plains and at the entrance to the town from the sea (figure 4).



**Figure 4** .Location of historic monuments and valuable sites in the city of Bejaia.

The advanced and abundant state of degradation affecting these sites is due to the ineffectiveness of management by objective of the protection policy. Indeed, most of the monuments are overgrown with vegetation, illicitly inhabited or squatted by families and often inaccessible. This state of affairs has minimized their urban, tourist and cultural value (figure 5 and 6).



**Figure 5.** Bab El-Bahr



**Figure 6.** Fort of Gouraya

On the other hand, Bejaia is very poor in terms of facilities, given its vastness and invaluable tourist potential scattered throughout its territory.

It's not enough to bring tourists here, feed them or accommodate them. Tourists travel for a specific purpose, to take advantage of tourist resources and practice certain activities, so they need to be given this opportunity through entertainment facilities, in order to enjoy tourist resources directly and ensure they are exploited, just as they enable the animation of the resort or accommodation center.

As a result, the tourism sector recorded a rate equivalent to 4.83% of the national market. The lack of tourist facilities, and the modest quality of their services, may justify the very low rate of foreign arrivals and overnight stays, equivalent respectively to 3.63% and 1.85% of the national market (national economic census, 2011), thus weakening Bejaia's polarity.

## **6-ACCRESSIBILITY TO BEJAIA:**

Bejaia has the advantage of maritime access. However, the port of Bejaia is largely specialized in the movement of goods, particularly hydrocarbon exports, as we'll come back to in the section on Bejaia's commercial centrality. Passenger traffic is still in its infancy, with passengers and goods taking turns sharing the same loading dock. The redevelopment and expansion of this infrastructure to include a full-fledged passenger station will at the same time provide a first step towards tourism. The port's proximity to historic sites makes it doubly accessible to two types of tourism: urban tourism and seaside tourism. The port serves just one destination, the port of Marseille, on a line that opened in 1973.

As far as the airport is concerned, the cramped nature of its reception infrastructure, which means that boarding and disembarkation areas are shared between passengers and goods, is a real obstacle to the emergence of an access hub.

On the other hand, there are only two modes of travel for passengers after disembarkation: public transport by bus, cabs and private vehicles. Despite its proximity, the train remains on the sidelines due to its rather discreet location.

Linking the airport with ground transportation modes (tramway, rail) will be a good opportunity to launch a traffic dynamic.

Indeed, Bejaia is relatively well equipped with a variety of service modes. But a balance is lacking between these different modes. A virtually derelict railroad and a road network that becomes congested every day due to the absence of a tramway and a cable car are increasingly isolating the region's tourist attractions.

Indeed, Bejaia is blessed with a double endowment. It's a city dating back to the Phoenician and Roman periods, with a few vestiges still standing, flanked by a landscape shaped by the sea, mountains, plains and a diverse flora and fauna. And yet, most of the region's tourism activities are focused on a single sector: seaside tourism. This is the only type of tourism of any real importance, and the current form of development, which creates a functional break between the city and the sea in terms of leisure activities, excludes seaside activities within the city itself. In terms of urban tourism, the offer currently remains under-exploited. Its spatial and functional characteristics also remain to be defined.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS :**

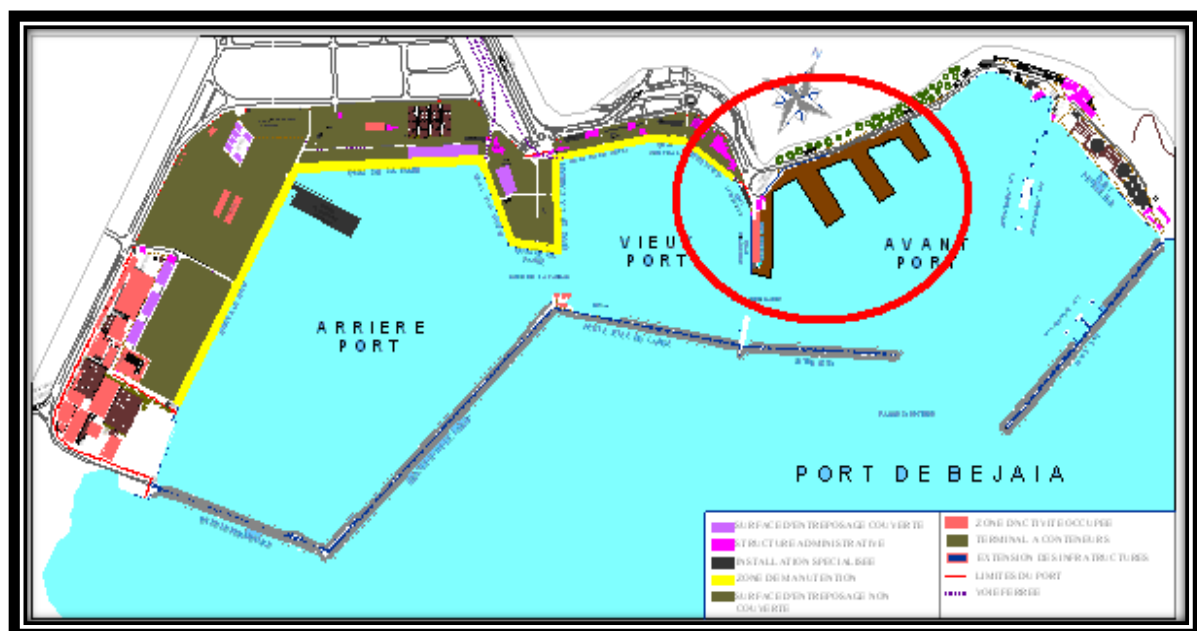
- Enhance the competitive advantages of the coastline and protect ecosystems.
  - The Bejaia industrial zone will gradually be relocated to reclaim the land.
  - The local-global balance: to develop the local economy, we need to focus on the global market and ensure that foreigners, foreign capital and international institutions have the right living and business conditions to attract and retain them.
- The region's development must be structured by and for "service" in general, and tourism in particular.
- Expand, diversify and modernize the road network.
  - Develop public spaces and green areas.
  - Creating urban landmarks...
  - Develop the banks of the Soummam River with two traffic arteries along the banks and a large recreational park. The project must simultaneously take into account the nearby railroad line, pipeline and gas pipeline, and set an example in terms of city-nature cohabitation with strict respect for ecology and biodiversity.
  - The reconstitution of forests by reintroducing historic species and creating a large nursery with a research laboratory and training center to study the species to be developed and the conditions for their preservation and flourishing. They must be strictly preserved and protected for the quality of their landscapes. This classification prohibits any change of use or land use that could compromise the conservation, protection or creation of woodlands.
  - The association and interaction of all stakeholders, and the harmonization of their different strategies, are important conditions for the successful implementation of development projects. In other words, territorial governance is essential if economic and social objectives are to be reconciled. Here, territorial governance means harmonizing actions to satisfy the interests of all stakeholders.



- In the absence of a local development strategy, local authorities need to think rationally and seriously about tourism as an alternative means of developing and exploiting local resources, including the historic town. This is a space that will be devoted to tourism activities involving craft production, commerce of all kinds, leisure and relaxation. A succession of boutiques, small hotels, restaurants, terraces, squares, gardens... well laid out in several itineraries, this will have the advantage of giving a destination and an address to the streams of visitors (following the example of Djamaa El Fna in Marrakech).

-Adopt an urban planning approach that generates land specifically for service activities, by seeking ways and means of recovering the various types of land (land to be recovered in the industrial zone at the heart of the city) in order to create a city that aims to serve as an interface between Algeria and the world, through the development of its CBD (banks, hotels, corporate and institutional headquarters, design and consulting firms, etc.).

From a socio-urban standpoint, the city is fragmenting and segmenting itself into a mosaic of housing and facilities, and this augurs a certain crisis. It has to be said that urban planning as a public action does not contribute to the social and economic construction of the city. These spaces are veritable commercial turbines in developed countries, especially in times of crisis, provided that the players in the institutional sphere agree to work together and develop projects on the right scale, but to try to enhance and characterize places in terms of their intrinsic value, as well as their induced effects. Enhancing the value of public spaces and major transport infrastructures, for example. Yet it is through urban planning that we can revive the urban economy and create a qualitative and innovative land supply, make areas attractive, requalify historic sites, revitalize areas in crisis, and so on. For example, we recommend restructuring the mole Casbah and reclaiming the site for a ferry terminal. The Vieux Port will become a marina, yachting harbour and ferry terminal, and in the longer term, these infrastructures will expand to occupy the entire Brise de mer promenade after extensive redevelopment (figure 7).



Source : PDEAU intercommunal 2007

Figure 7. Development of the mole of casbah and the old port

-Establish a geographic information system, enabling users to quickly identify the location of various tourist attractions.

-Tourism in Bejaia is hampered by the inadequacy of its reception facilities, road network, access roads, etc. To remedy this situation, we first need to encourage the development of the Zones d'Expansion Touristique (tourist expansion zones), which are encountering a number of problems at their embryonic stage of development, including delays in the development studies entrusted to the Agence Nationale de Développement de Tourisme (ANDT), the absence of basic infrastructure in some zones (gas, telecommunications, sewage disposal, etc.), the proliferation of illegal constructions and the lack of a tourism development plan. ), the proliferation of illegal constructions, the degradation of tourist resources (pollution, sand plundering, dangerous advance of the sea...), and land disputes.

-The creation of beach facilities that ensure a friendly and lively atmosphere, such as health facilities: thalassotherapy centers, fitness and relaxation centers offering therapeutic treatments.

-It is also a question of encouraging training in the tourism professions, for which there is no tourism training institution. Nor does the university provide any training in this field. Individuals who want to work in this sector train outside the region, precisely at the three major institutions Algeria has for tourism training: the Ecole Nationale Supérieure du Tourisme in Algiers, the Institut National des Techniques Hôtelières in Tizi Ouzou and the Institut National d'Hôtellerie et du Tourisme in Bou-Saâda. What's more, due to a lack of professionalism and a concern for economy (underpaying unskilled labor), tourism employers are often reluctant to use skilled labor. This does not mean, however, that tourism training is not an essential element in the tourism development process. For future needs in particular, it is essential to equip our study area with tourism training institutions, and to involve its university in this process. Such a project will create a learning dynamic, by involving local professionals, and a tourism entrepreneurship dynamic (project leaders).

Enfin il est recommandé de Promoting historical tourism, The World Conference on Sustainable Tourism in Lanzarote, Canary Islands Spain, 27-28 April 1995. A l'issue de la réunion, les participants ont lancé un appel à la communauté internationale et ont invité les gouvernements, les décideurs, les professionnels du tourisme, les associations et les institutions publiques et privées dont les activités sont liées au tourisme, à adopter les principes et les objectifs de la déclaration qui contient 18 articles. La plupart d'entre eux définissent l'approche suivante :

-Démontrer l'efficacité d'une gestion durable, pour les entreprises touristiques, dans le respect et la protection du patrimoine historique et de ses composantes.

- Minimiser les impacts négatifs sur le patrimoine culturel et maximiser ses bénéfices.

- La nécessité et la prise de conscience de développer de nouvelles pratiques touristiques : des formes alternatives de tourisme, en particulier le tourisme durable, afin de réduire les effets néfastes du tourisme sur l'homme et l'environnement.

-Développer des formes alternatives de tourisme, apparemment plus durables, tourisme de nature, tourisme local, écotourisme, agriturismo, historique ? sont autant de notions qui s'apparentent à cet esprit. L'objectif est de créer un espace cohérent avec son environnement et parallèlement de créer des relations d'interdépendance entre les différents éléments de la ville.

## CONCLUSION

La ville de Bejaia est privilégiée par une double dotation. C'est une ville datant de l'époque phénicienne, projetée au milieu d'un paysage façonné par la mer, la montagne, la plaine et une faune et une flore diversifiées. La présence d'un patrimoine historique exceptionnel confère souvent à la ville une singularité, une image identitaire et surtout une reconnaissance touristique dépassant même leur échelle d'influence locale, tout comme l'existence d'un cadre naturel particulièrement attractif est une valeur sûre pour le développement des activités touristiques. En effet, le développement harmonieux de ces dernières est entravé par des dysfonctionnements :

- Problèmes d'accessibilité, de fonctionnement urbain et économique sur le tissu ancien, notamment la partie basse du noyau colonial français en concentrant un large éventail d'équipements, et une périphérie dépourvue de ces structures.

- Manque de coordination entre les acteurs responsables des politiques d'aménagement et de développement socio-économique. Elle reste sectorielle en termes de vision et de planification. Toutes les actions ont été soumises à un système de décision centralisé, d'où une méconnaissance des situations locales et une lenteur dans l'application des options de planification.

As a result, we tried to demonstrate the need for coherence for a better exploitation of urban land, and the fight against urban sprawl, stimulated by the distribution of the residential function that allows the development of individual mobility. We have also found that tourism is an interesting alternative in the perspective of a social reconciliation with space, but also of openness and exchange in the context of the phenomenon of globalization. But the attractiveness of it depends on its interaction with the whole urban fabric; it is the relationship between the global and the local.

Indeed, tourism's contribution to socio-economic growth and development is no mean feat: it's a source of revenue and also of large potential job opportunities. To exploit these opportunities, economic powers such as the United States and France have not hesitated to invest massively in the development of tourism activities. Developing countries have followed suit, attracting millions of tourists every year. Our neighbors Morocco and Tunisia have made tourism one of their main sources of foreign currency.

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