

**Entrepreneurship, Sustainable Ecotourism, and Local Development: A
David Hume Perspective on the Malaysian Experience and Taghit, Algeria**
*Entrepreneuriat, écotourisme durable et développement local: une perspective de David
Hume sur l'expérience malaisienne et Taghit en Algérie*

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Abstract:

This study examines the role of entrepreneurship in fostering sustainable ecotourism and its contribution to local development through a systematic comparative analysis of the Malaysian experience and Taghit, Algeria. It adopts a Humean interpretive perspective, drawing on David Hume's ideas on commerce, labor, social conventions, property, and the relationship between individual economic activity and collective interests. Malaysia provides a relevant comparative experience due to its efforts to integrate ecotourism, environmental conservation, entrepreneurship, and local development within broader tourism development strategies. In contrast, Algeria, despite possessing substantial natural, cultural, and ecological resources, continues to face institutional, entrepreneurial, infrastructural, and policy-related constraints that limit the effective development of its ecotourism potential. Particular attention is given to Taghit as a case for examining the challenges and opportunities associated with ecotourism entrepreneurship in Algeria.

The analysis highlights the importance of strengthening entrepreneurial capacities, improving institutional coordination, encouraging local participation, and establishing supportive policy and investment frameworks. From a Humean perspective, the study emphasizes that sustainable local development depends not only on individual economic initiative and commercial activity but also on social cooperation, stable rules, and the alignment of private and collective interests. The study concludes by identifying transferable lessons from the Malaysian experience while emphasizing the need to adapt them to Algeria's specific socioeconomic, institutional, cultural, and environmental context. Such an approach could contribute to more inclusive local development while strengthening the environmental sustainability of ecotourism in Algeria.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Sustainable Ecotourism, Local Development, David Hume, Humean Perspective, Malaysia, Algeria.

Résumé:

Cette étude examine le rôle de l'entrepreneuriat dans la promotion de l'écotourisme durable et sa contribution au développement local à travers une analyse comparative systématique de l'expérience malaisienne et de Taghit, en Algérie. Elle adopte une perspective interprétative humienne, fondée sur les idées de David Hume relatives au commerce, au travail, aux conventions sociales, à la propriété et aux relations entre l'activité économique individuelle et les intérêts collectifs. La Malaisie constitue une expérience comparative pertinente en raison de ses efforts visant à intégrer l'écotourisme, la conservation de l'environnement, l'entrepreneuriat et le développement local dans le cadre de stratégies plus larges de développement touristique. En revanche, l'Algérie, malgré l'importance de ses ressources naturelles, culturelles et écologiques, continue de faire face à des contraintes institutionnelles, entrepreneuriales, infrastructurelles et liées aux politiques publiques, qui limitent le développement effectif de son potentiel écotouristique. Une attention particulière est accordée à Taghit en tant que cas d'étude permettant d'examiner les défis et les opportunités liés à l'entrepreneuriat écotouristique en Algérie.

L'analyse met en évidence l'importance de renforcer les capacités entrepreneuriales, d'améliorer la coordination institutionnelle, d'encourager la participation locale et de mettre en place des cadres favorables en matière de politiques publiques et d'investissement. Dans une perspective humienne, l'étude souligne que le développement local durable dépend non seulement de l'initiative économique individuelle et de l'activité commerciale, mais également de la coopération sociale, de la stabilité des règles et de la conciliation des intérêts privés et collectifs. L'étude conclut en identifiant les enseignements transférables de l'expérience malaisienne, tout en soulignant la nécessité de les adapter au contexte socioéconomique, institutionnel, culturel et environnemental spécifique de l'Algérie. Une telle approche pourrait contribuer à un développement local plus inclusif tout en renforçant la durabilité environnementale de l'écotourisme en Algérie.

Mots-clés : Entrepreneuriat, écotourisme durable, développement local, David Hume, perspective humienne, Malaisie, Algérie.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sustainable ecotourism has increasingly emerged as a potential pathway for diversifying local economies, particularly in rural, peripheral, and environmentally fragile areas where conventional development opportunities remain limited. Beyond its contribution

to tourism revenues, ecotourism can generate employment, stimulate local entrepreneurship, strengthen linkages between tourism and other productive activities, and create incentives for the preservation of natural and cultural resources. Its development, however, does not depend exclusively on the availability of attractive landscapes or cultural assets. Rather, the economic value of these resources depends on the capacity of local and national institutions to transform them into viable, innovative, and environmentally sustainable economic activities.

This perspective places entrepreneurship at the center of the ecotourism–local development nexus. Tourism entrepreneurs can act as intermediaries between local resources and markets by developing tourism services and complementary activities, provided that appropriate conditions and local participation are ensured. Such entrepreneurial activities can generate multiplier effects within local economies. Ecotourism entrepreneurship should therefore be understood not simply as a mechanism for private profit generation, but as a potential instrument for mobilizing local resources and strengthening the economic resilience of territories.

However, the existence of substantial natural and cultural tourism potential does not automatically translate into effective local development. Many developing countries possess considerable ecotourism assets but continue to face institutional weaknesses, inadequate infrastructure, and other constraints. This potential–performance gap constitutes an important economic and policy issue concerning the ability of destinations to convert environmental and cultural resources into productive and sustainable economic opportunities, while others remain largely underexploited.

This issue is particularly relevant to the comparison between Malaysia and Algeria. Malaysia provides an important comparative experience, given that ecotourism development has increasingly been associated with tourism diversification and the expansion of local economic opportunities.

Algeria, by contrast, possesses substantial and diverse ecotourism potential, ranging from coastal and mountainous ecosystems to desert landscapes and culturally distinctive territories. Nevertheless, the conversion of these assets into dynamic and sustainable local economic activities remains uneven. The region of Taghit, in Béchar Province, provides a particularly relevant case due to its distinctive environmental characteristics, which create significant opportunities for ecotourism and related entrepreneurial activities.

The comparison between Malaysia and Taghit is therefore not intended to suggest that the two contexts are identical. Rather, it provides an analytical framework for identifying how differences in institutional support, entrepreneurial ecosystems, infrastructure, and public policies may affect the capacity of ecotourism to contribute to local development. Such a comparison is particularly relevant for Algeria, where the diversification of local economies and the development of alternative sources of employment and income have become increasingly important policy concerns.

Drawing on David Hume’s ideas on commerce, labor, social conventions, and the relationship between individual economic activity and collective interests, this study adopts a Humean interpretive perspective to examine the contribution of entrepreneurship to sustainable ecotourism and local development.

Accordingly, the central issue addressed by this study is the relationship between entrepreneurship, sustainable ecotourism, and local development, with particular attention to

the institutional and territorial conditions that determine whether ecotourism potential can be transformed into tangible economic and social outcomes.

The study adopts a systematic comparative perspective by examining the Malaysian experience alongside the case of Taghit in Algeria, seeking to identify common characteristics and contextual differences and to determine which elements of the Malaysian experience may provide relevant lessons for the Algerian context.

Against this background, the study addresses the following main research question:

How can a Humean perspective on commerce, entrepreneurship, and social conventions contribute to understanding the relationship between sustainable ecotourism and local development, and what lessons can be derived from the Malaysian experience for Taghit, Algeria?

This central question gives rise to the following sub-questions:

Q01: How does ecotourism entrepreneurship contribute to employment creation, income generation, economic diversification, and local value creation?

Q02: What institutional and policy conditions determine the capacity of entrepreneurship to generate sustainable local development through ecotourism?

Q03: What economic, institutional, infrastructural, and organizational constraints limit the development of ecotourism entrepreneurship in Taghit?

Q04: How do the Malaysian and Taghit experiences differ in their capacity to transform ecotourism potential into tangible local economic outcomes?

Q05: What elements of the Malaysian experience could be adapted to the institutional and territorial context of Taghit to strengthen ecotourism entrepreneurship and local development?

Q06: How can Humean concepts of commerce, social conventions, property, and collective interests contribute to understanding the relationship between entrepreneurship, sustainable ecotourism, and local development?

Hypothesis:

Based on the research problem and the six sub-questions, the hypotheses are relived to:

H1: The development of ecotourism entrepreneurship is positively associated with local economic outcomes, particularly employment creation, income generation, economic diversification, and local value creation.

H2: Institutional support, public policies, infrastructure, access to finance, and entrepreneurial capacity significantly influence the development of sustainable ecotourism entrepreneurship.

H3: Limited institutional support, inadequate infrastructure, weak entrepreneurial capacity, and insufficient community participation constitute major constraints to the development of ecotourism entrepreneurship in Taghit.

H4: Differences in institutional frameworks, public policies, infrastructure, innovation, community participation, and entrepreneurial ecosystems contribute to differences in the local development outcomes associated with ecotourism between Malaysia and Taghit.

H5: The adaptation of relevant elements of the Malaysian experience to the Algerian institutional and territorial context could strengthen ecotourism entrepreneurship and enhance its contribution to sustainable local development in Taghit.

H6: Humean concepts of commerce, social conventions, property, and collective interests provide a useful interpretive framework for understanding how entrepreneurship can connect local resources, economic activity, social cooperation, and sustainable local development.

Objectives: The main objective of this study is to assess the role of entrepreneurship in transforming sustainable ecotourism potential into local economic and social development through a systematic comparison of the Malaysian experience and the case of Taghit in Algeria. The study specifically aims to:

- Apply a Humean interpretive perspective to the relationship between commerce, entrepreneurship, sustainable ecotourism, and local development.
- Establish a conceptual framework linking entrepreneurship, sustainable ecotourism, and local development.
- Examine the institutional and policy framework supporting ecotourism entrepreneurship in Malaysia.
- Diagnose the current conditions and constraints of ecotourism development in Taghit.
- Compare the two experiences according to key dimensions, including institutional support, infrastructure, entrepreneurship, innovation, community participation, market integration, and environmental sustainability.
- Identify the factors that contribute to differences in the economic and social outcomes of ecotourism.
- Derive context-sensitive policy implications for strengthening ecotourism entrepreneurship and local development in Taghit and Algeria.

Methodology:

- **Comparative Approach:** This approach is used to compare the Malaysian and Algerian experiences in ecotourism entrepreneurship and analyze variations in policies, practices, and outcomes.
- **Descriptive and Analytical Approach:** This approach is used to analyze the current state of ecotourism in Malaysia and Taghit and describe the actors, resources, and challenges facing sustainable local development.
- **Inductive Approach:** This approach is used to examine specific data from each experience, including programs, projects, legislation, and development outcomes, in order to derive general insights into the conditions that support tourism entrepreneurship.
- **Hypothetical and Forward-Looking Approach:** This approach is used to explore the prospects for sustainable ecotourism development in Algeria by 2030 and develop future scenarios based on relevant international experiences.
- **Humean Interpretive Framework:** The study employs selected concepts from David Hume's political economy and social philosophy, particularly commerce, labor, social conventions, property, and collective interests, as an interpretive lens for examining entrepreneurship, ecotourism, and local development. Hume's ideas are not treated as a modern theory of entrepreneurship or ecotourism, but as a historical and philosophical framework through which contemporary cases can be interpreted.

A Humean Perspective on Entrepreneurship, Commerce, and Local Development

This study does not claim that David Hume developed a theory of entrepreneurship, ecotourism, or sustainable local development in their contemporary meanings. Rather, it uses selected Humean concepts as an interpretive framework for examining the economic and social mechanisms linking commerce, individual initiative, social cooperation, and local development.

David Hume's thought can be employed to analyze entrepreneurship and local development through his ideas concerning commerce, labor, interest, habits, social conventions, and property. This does not mean that Hume developed a modern theory of entrepreneurship or ecotourism; rather, some of his concepts in political economy and social philosophy provide an interpretive framework for understanding how commercial activity and individual initiative can contribute to the development of local communities. Hume attached considerable importance to commerce and economic activity in explaining the development of commercial societies, particularly in his essays published in *Political Discourses* in 1752. He associated the expansion of commerce with the development of labor and production, as well as with changing habits and tastes, viewing commercial society as a context in which economic and social transformations become interconnected (Schabas & Wennerlind, 2011, pp. 217–230).

This perspective is particularly evident in Hume's essay "**Of Commerce**," in which he examined commerce as an activity closely connected to labor, industry, and the expansion of exchange among individuals and regions. From this perspective, the significance of commerce extends beyond the pursuit of profit to include the stimulation of labor and the expansion of economic exchange. Contemporary scholars have revisited this dimension of Hume's thought, emphasizing that his conception of economic development was based on the interaction between agriculture, manufacturing, and commerce, together with changing tastes and an expanding supply of goods and services. Entrepreneurship at the local level can therefore be understood as a mechanism for transforming the resources available within a community into new economic activities, whether through commercial enterprises, services, or locally produced goods (Brewer, 1997, pp. 1–22).

From this perspective, entrepreneurship becomes part of a broader process of mobilizing local resources. Natural and cultural resources do not automatically become sources of development; they require initiative, investment, organization, and marketing. Local entrepreneurs can play an important role in this process by identifying new economic opportunities, connecting local products and services to markets, creating employment opportunities, and encouraging activities associated with heritage, culture, and tourism. This is consistent with a contemporary interpretation of Hume's thought, according to which the prosperity of commercial society is associated with what may be described as a commercial spirit—that is, an appreciation of labor, production, exchange, and economic activity, all of which can encourage initiative, innovation, and economic cooperation (Matson, 2024, pp. 443–465).

However, economic activity, from a Humean perspective, cannot be separated from the social and institutional rules that regulate it. Commerce requires a certain degree of trust, stability, respect for property, and reciprocal expectations. This brings into focus the concept of social convention, which represents an important idea in Hume's philosophy. Certain social rules may emerge from the interaction of individuals and from their recognition that adherence to particular rules provides mutual benefits, without necessarily resulting from an explicit contractual agreement among all parties. In the context of local development, this idea can be applied to cooperation among entrepreneurs, residents, local authorities, service providers, associations, and other local stakeholders. The continuity of economic activity therefore

depends not only on individual initiative but also on the existence of shared expectations and rules that facilitate the organization of economic and social relations.

This idea is also connected to Hume's theory of property. From a Humean perspective, stable property rights depend on social rules and conventions that make respect for property possible and reduce conflict, thereby creating a more favorable environment for exchange and commerce. Contemporary scholarship on Humean property theory indicates that property rights are connected to conventions among individuals whose interests may overlap and, at times, conflict. The stability of such rules serves a broader social interest because it enables individuals to exchange goods and engage in economic activities under more stable conditions (Smith, 2021, pp. 36–69).

This perspective is particularly relevant to local development and ecotourism because natural and cultural resources may constitute shared economic assets whose use and protection require appropriate forms of regulation. The success of a tourism enterprise cannot therefore be measured solely by the number of visitors or the volume of revenues; it is also related to its ability to preserve the resources on which tourism depends and to ensure that local communities benefit from tourism activity. A Humean perspective can consequently help analyze the balance between individual and collective interests: an entrepreneurial project may pursue private economic benefits, but its long-term sustainability requires respect for the rules, resources, and interests shared by the local community.

Accordingly, David Hume's thought can serve as an analytical framework for understanding the relationship between entrepreneurship, commerce, and local development through three interconnected ideas. First, commerce and economic activity can stimulate labor, production, and new initiatives. Second, economic initiative requires a social and institutional environment based on trust, convention, and respect for rules. Third, sustainable development requires a balance between individual economic interests and the collective interests of the community and its local resources.

On this basis, the Malaysian experience and Taghit in Algeria can be examined by asking how local resources are transformed into economic opportunities, what role entrepreneurs play in organizing these opportunities, what kinds of relationships emerge between entrepreneurs and local communities, and what rules facilitate the preservation of natural and cultural resources. This does not imply that contemporary experiences constitute direct applications of Hume's theory. Rather, Hume's thought is employed here as an interpretive lens for examining the relationship between individual initiative, commerce, social cooperation, and local development.

Thus, a Humean perspective allows local development to be understood as a process that goes beyond the mere expansion of economic activity. Commerce may create new opportunities, and entrepreneurship may transform resources into products and services, but the sustainability of this process requires stable rules, cooperation among stakeholders, and consideration of collective interests. From this perspective, applying David Hume's thought to the study of ecotourism and local entrepreneurship can contribute to understanding the transition from local resources to economic activity, from economic activity to social cooperation, and from cooperation to more sustainable local development.

2. Conceptual and theoretical framework of ecotourism and entrepreneurship

Ecotourism is one of the most prominent forms of sustainable tourism, which combines recreational activities and environmental preservation and contributes to the development of local communities, especially in rural and environmentally fragile areas, and ecotourism has evolved in recent decades to turn into a vital economic and environmental tributary that attracts entrepreneurs and investors who are looking for innovative opportunities and compatible with the requirements of sustainable development (Honey, 2008).

2.1. *The concept of ecotourism*

2.1.1. *Definition of ecotourism*

Ecotourism leadership is defined by the International Ecotourism Association (TIES) as "responsible travel to natural areas that preserves the environment and improves the well-being of local communities". (TIES, 2015)

This definition refers to multiple dimensions that include environmental responsibility, community empowerment and authentic tourism experience, and ecotourism today is considered a tool to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals through its contribution to reducing marginalization and achieving environmental and social justice (Weaver, 2001).

2.1.2. *The concept of ecotourism entrepreneurship*

Entrepreneurship in ecotourism refers to the creation and development of tourism projects of an environmental nature led by individuals, local groups or economic actors and contributing to the creation of economic, social and environmental value at the same time.

This leadership is more than just a business but a strategic vision towards local development based on environmental and cultural elements in light of a growing global demand for sustainable tourism experiences (Saarinen, 2006).

2.2. *Intersection between ecotourism and sustainable local development*

Ecotourism plays a dual role in serving the environment and society, contributing to job creation, stimulating local markets, preserving natural and cultural resources, and opening the way for marginalized communities to be partners in the tourism economy through local entrepreneurship (Scheyvens, 1999).

Multiple studies suggest that the success of ecotourism depends on a stimulating regulatory environment, effective local partnerships, and political and legislative support for the environmental vision (Lane, 2009).

2.3. *Ecotourism in the context of global entrepreneurship*

Global experiences such as Malaysia, Costa Rica and Kenya have shown that investing in ecotourism supported by local entrepreneurship can transform the economic structure of rural communities and reorient development towards more sustainable options provided environmental governance and local empowerment are in place (Fennell, 2020).

Thus, through this conceptual and theoretical framework of ecotourism and entrepreneurship, the deep overlap between them in the context of sustainable development emerges, it has been shown that ecotourism is no longer just a recreational activity but has become a development strategy that contributes to stimulating the local economy, preserving the environment and empowering communities.

It has also emerged to us through ecotourism entrepreneurship that the impact has become mutually reinforcing between entrepreneurship and sustainable development, considering that entrepreneurship has become a real ability to create innovative and sustainable job opportunities based on locally available natural and cultural resources.

It should also be noted that successful global experiences in this field have proven that the availability of a stimulating legislative environment, supportive policies and real partnership with the local population are among the most crucial factors capable of transforming ecotourism into an effective tool to achieve sustainable local development.

In light of the reviewed concepts of ecotourism entrepreneurship and its strategic role in achieving sustainable local development, there is a need to study the realistic models that embodied these concepts on the ground, and therefore Malaysia is among the most prominent countries that have succeeded in transforming ecotourism into an effective development engine by integrating tourism innovation with preserving the environment and activating the role of local communities in managing entrepreneurial tourism projects, and therefore the Malaysian model represents a practical example of how Translating theoretical concepts into tangible results, which allows a realistic comparison with the Algerian experience later and identifying the factors of success or stumbling in similar contexts, which will focus on the second axis.

3. Malaysian experience in ecotourism entrepreneurship

Malaysia is one of the world's leading countries in adopting a sustainable ecotourism entrepreneurship model, as it was able to achieve a balance between preserving the environment and developing the tourism sector to contribute to advancing local development, and Malaysia has relied in this context on an integrated strategy based on partnership between the public and private sectors, empowering local communities, activating innovation tools and environmental sustainability.

3.1. Supportive Government Policies

The Malaysian government has developed a set of national plans to promote ecotourism, most notably:

- National Ecotourism Plan: It has developed 60 ecotourism sites in various states.
- Malaysia's Green Policy: It is a policy that links tourism, forest protection and the development of environmentally friendly infrastructure; The Malaysian government has allocated more than RM2.5 billion (about \$500 million) to develop ecotourism over the last decade in cooperation with international organizations such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

3.2. Examples of successful Malaysian entrepreneurial projects

- Belum Rainforest Resort Project: Located in the north of Perak, this project is also one of the most successful models in employing ecotourism to protect ancient rainforests and create jobs for the local Malaysian population.
- Village for fireflies "Kampung Kuantan": This firefly village has become a global tourist destination thanks to a local initiative that has turned a natural environmental phenomenon (night fireflies) into an economic resource through sustainable tours managed by the villagers.
- Island "Langkawi": This island has been transformed into a model of sustainable ecotourism by establishing eco-centers, eco-friendly lodges and marine parks to protect biodiversity.

3.3. Community Engagement and Empowerment

The Malaysian experience has focused on forming local communities through training programs on tourism project management, supporting traditional handicrafts and encouraging women's participation in rural tourism and this has contributed to raising the level of local income by up to 40% in some rural areas (UNWTO, 2023).

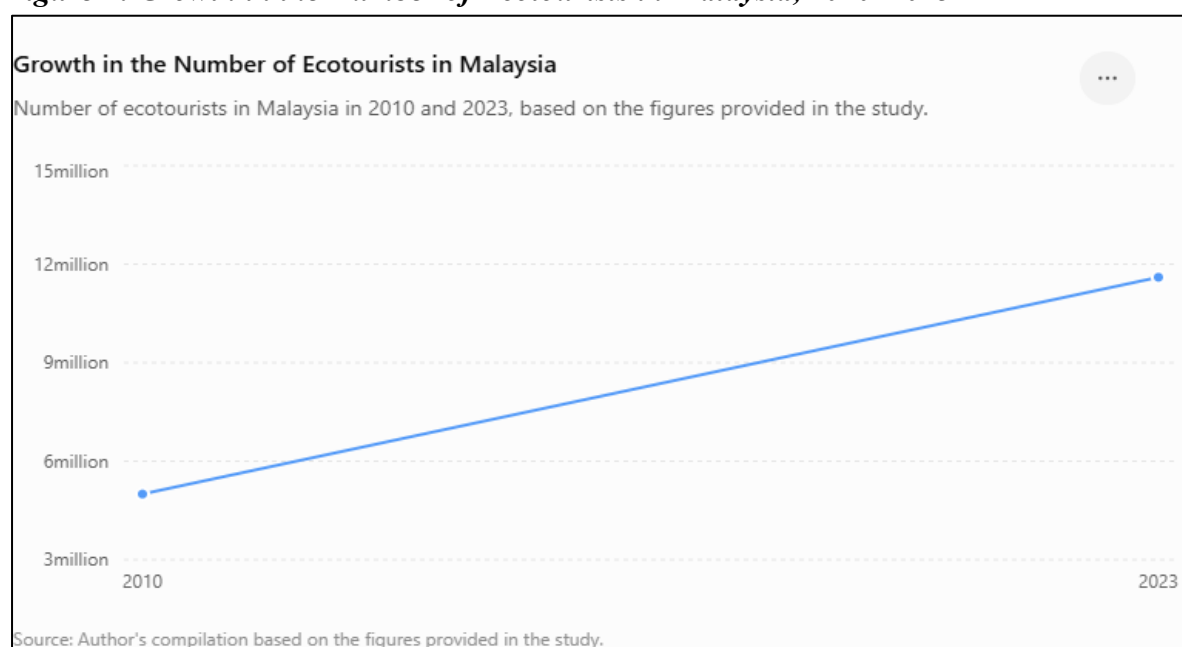
3.4. Statistical results and achievements

Table 1: Statistical Results and Achievements of Ecotourism in Malaysia

Indicator	2010	2023	Change	Interpretation
Number of ecotourists	5.0 million	11.6 million	+6.6 million	Significant expansion in ecotourism demand
Share of ecotourism in national tourism revenues	—	13%	—	Indicates the economic importance of ecotourism
Direct local jobs linked to ecotourism	—	>150,000 jobs	—	Indicates a substantial contribution to local employment

Source: Author's compilation.

Figure 1: Growth in the Number of Ecotourists in Malaysia, 2010–2023



Source: Author's compilation.

Table 2: Economic and Social Achievements of Ecotourism in Malaysia, 2023

Dimension	Indicator	2023 Value	Economic/Social Significance
Tourism demand	Number of ecotourists	11.6 million	Demonstrates the expansion of nature-based tourism
Tourism revenues	Share of national tourism revenues	13%	Highlights the reported contribution of ecotourism to tourism revenues
Employment	Direct local jobs linked to ecotourism	More than 150,000	Indicates a significant contribution to local employment

Source: Author's compilation.

Figure 2: Key Ecotourism Indicators in Malaysia, 2023



Source: Author's compilation.

Table 3. Summary of the Reported Statistical Achievements

Statistical Achievement	Value
Ecotourists in 2010	5.0 million
Ecotourists in 2023	11.6 million
Absolute increase, 2010–2023	6.6 million
Percentage increase, 2010–2023	132%
Estimated CAGR, 2010–2023	6.67%
Reported share of tourism revenues, 2023	13%
Reported direct local jobs	>150,000

Source: Author's compilation.

The number of eco-tourists in Malaysia increased from 5 million in 2010 to 11.6 million in 2023. Ecotourism accounted for 13% of total national tourism revenues in 2023 (Malaysian Ministry of Tourism). More than 150,000 direct local jobs linked to ecotourism have been created.

The Malaysian experience has shown how well-thought-out policies and local entrepreneurial initiatives can turn ecotourism into a real development lever. This experience highlights the importance of investing in green infrastructure, training human resources, and developing integrated tourism products, especially in light of the current global environmental and economic challenges.

Thus, we can clarify through the Malaysian experience that the success of entrepreneurship in ecotourism is not only linked to the presence of natural assets, but also requires a comprehensive strategic framework that supports innovation and sustainability and at the same time involves local communities and does not exclude them in development processes.

In fact, Malaysia has shown an effective ability to:

- Formulate policies and provide financial and technical support to promote environmental entrepreneurial projects.
- Investing natural resources in a way that takes into account biodiversity and protects the

environment, which increases the attractiveness of the tourism product.

- Empowering the local population through training and rehabilitation, which enhanced their economic benefit.
- Creating an integrated tourism infrastructure in line with the requirements of sustainable global tourism.

These are all the factors that have enabled Malaysia to achieve sustainable growth in the number of eco-tourisms, raise the level of local income and boost employment opportunities despite global economic and environmental challenges.

On the other hand, the experience of Algeria, specifically the Taghit region, presents a model that reflects great challenges in activating ecotourism entrepreneurship, despite its availability of enormous natural and geographical elements capable of attracting tourists and bringing about sustainable local development. Here, the gap between possibilities and concrete reality appears as a result of factors such as:

- Weak legislative and regulatory frameworks supporting environmental entrepreneurship.
- The absence of clear and integrated strategic plans at the local and national levels.
- Lack of empowerment of local communities and lack of adequate training and qualification.
- Weak tourist infrastructure, especially environmentally friendly.

Therefore, the next axis, represented by the third axis, will aim to study this Algerian experience in depth by analyzing the reality of entrepreneurship in the Taghit region and identifying its strengths and weaknesses, while comparing it with the successful Malaysian model.

This will finally enable us to draw lessons learned and propose ways to develop the eco-tourism sector in Algeria so that the Algerian tourism sector can turn into a real lever for sustainable local development in light of the current crises and challenges.

4. Ecotourism in Algeria: the reality of entrepreneurship in Taghit region as a model

In light of the global challenges and economic and social changes that the world has witnessed, it has become necessary to search for sustainable development alternatives that enhance the capabilities of local communities and provide job opportunities that contribute to reducing poverty and marginalization, and ecotourism is one of the most important of these alternatives because of its pivotal role in protecting the environment, preserving cultural heritage and stimulating the local economy in balanced and environmentally friendly ways (Awamer, 2019).

In Algeria, despite the presence of enormous natural resources and distinctive environmental and geographical potential, ecotourism still faces many obstacles that hinder its effective investment within the vision of sustainable local development (Bensalah, 2021). The Taghit region in southwestern Algeria is an exemplary case of how local actors interact with this vital sector, with unique environmental and natural elements ranging from deserts to oases to scenic areas, and a cultural richness rooted in the heritage of its inhabitants (Mehrez et al., 2022).

Despite this, the region still suffers from poor infrastructure and the lack of clear development policies that support entrepreneurship in ecotourism, which limits the ability of local enterprises to grow and continue (Moussa, 2021).

This has really been the depth of the contradiction between the enormous potential and the deteriorating field reality of the focus of this study, which will seek to analyze the reality

of ecotourism entrepreneurship in Taghit and highlight the obstacles and challenges it faces compared to successful global experiences, with the aim of proposing visions and applicable strategies that support the development of this vital sector in line with the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 horizon (Buhari, 2020).

Therefore, this theme will address ecotourism in Algeria through the Taghit model from the perspective of entrepreneurship, with a focus on assessing the current situation through a deep analysis of all influencing factors and monitoring opportunities for improvement, while benefiting from global experiences to develop an integrated framework that supports sustainable local development and transforms ecotourism into a real economic and social tributary in the region.

4.1. Environmental and cultural components of the Taghit region

The Taghit region is home to an exceptional ecological diversity that combines desert sand dunes, natural oases and rock formations that characterize the region (Mehrez et al., 2022).

In addition, the local culture of the region reflects a rich heritage of handicrafts, folk arts and community customs that are an attraction for tourists looking for authentic experiences (Zarqi, 2020).

These assets represent real strengths if effectively exploited within the framework of sustainable ecotourism.

4.2. The reality of tourism entrepreneurship in Taghit

Despite the natural and cultural potential, entrepreneurship in the field of ecotourism in the Taghit region is still facing a set of fundamental challenges, which limit its ability to contribute effectively to sustainable local development, the most prominent of which are:

- Lack of tourist infrastructure: Weak, flabby, old, non-modern and modernized means of transportation, along with the lack of quality tourist facilities with the lack of accommodation and guidance services, constitute major obstacles to attracting tourists (Awamer, 2019).
- Weak institutional support: Also, the tourism sector in Algeria still lacks clear policies for financial and training support by government agencies and competent bodies, in addition to poor coordination between local actors (Moussa, 2021).
- Lack of experience and qualification: This challenge is clearly highlighted by the gross lack of management and marketing skills among local entrepreneurs that hinders the launch of successful and sustainable tourism projects (Benaissa, 2023).
- Socio-economic pressures: Difficult economic conditions also affect the local population, leading to labour migration and the instability of tourism entrepreneurship (Buhari, 2020).

4.3. Examples of tourism entrepreneurship in Taghit

However, despite these obstacles, for the sake of scientific and academic fairness and taking into account the integrity of the research, it is necessary to mention some individual initiatives that have tried to develop eco-tourism products based on the exploitation of natural and cultural resources.

Among these initiatives, we find the following:

- Organizing excursions: As interested young people organize excursions inside the oases or desert trips on camels
- Providing some local craft products to tourists: Some local youth take individual initiatives

to market their handicraft and traditional products influenced mainly by the artisanal and traditional character of the region, sell them in the form of icons and acquire them for the memory of a desert journey deep in Algeria (Kassimi, 2022).

However, we must emphasize that these individual experiments are still limited in circulation and lack official support and adequate promotion.

4.4. Data and indicators on the tourism sector in Algeria

Statistics show that Algeria received about 2.5 million tourists in 2023, but ecotourism remains a marginal sector that suffers from poor investment and development (Algerian Ministry of Tourism, 2024).

The unemployment rate in rural areas such as Taghit exceeds the national average, underscoring the urgent need for sustainable development that provides real job opportunities for the local population (NAST study, 2023).

Therefore, the study of the reality of ecotourism entrepreneurship in the Taghit region highlights a set of pivotal conclusions that reflect the complexities and transformations of the sector in Algeria, namely:

- Despite the region's vast natural wealth and cultural heritage, poor infrastructure, lack of government support and lack of clear and integrated strategies for the development of ecotourism remain the main obstacles to the success of entrepreneurial projects in this field (Mehrez et al., 2022).
- This lack of support and guidance makes it difficult for entrepreneurs to attract the necessary investments and develop sustainable tourism products that meet the aspirations of the local and international market.
- The lack of innovation and modernization in the management methods of ecotourism projects, which reduces their competitiveness compared to global experiences, is linked to the lack of training and technical qualification of local actors and the weak integration between the private sector, civil society and local authorities, which leads to the spread of sporadic and unsustainable initiatives (Bensalah, 2021).
- The study emphasizes the importance of employing the culture and heritage of the local community in shaping the ecotourism experience, as the disconnect between entrepreneurship projects and the population of the region reduces the value of tourism and limits its economic and social impact, and the participation of local people in the design and implementation of initiatives is a decisive success factor to achieve sustainable local development (Moussa, 2021).
- The Algerian experience in Taghit shows that there is promising potential that can be invested if structural and administrative obstacles are overcome taking into account the effects of the current global crises that compound the complexity of the tourism business environment and impose the need for innovation in the face of challenges such as climate change, epidemics and economic fluctuations (Buhari, 2020).

Based on these last conclusions of the third chapter, it becomes necessary to move to a comparative reading with a successful global experience, which will be addressed in the fourth axis of the study, where this comparison will allow us to identify the lessons learned from successful experiences in ecotourism entrepreneurship only in order to crystallize strategies and activate them in the Algerian context in line with the specificities of the Algerian tourism sector and respect its local conditions, and thus this comparison will provide a forward-looking

vision to enhance Algeria's ability to Developing ecotourism in a sustainable manner and achieving the desired development goals by 2030 by promoting creativity and innovation and improving government and institutional support mechanisms.

5. A comparative and forward-looking reading between the two experiences and the prospects for activating tourism entrepreneurship in Algeria

In light of what has been addressed in the previous axes, it is now clear before us that ecotourism and entrepreneurship represent a strategic tributary to achieve sustainable local development, especially in light of the global challenges and crises that afflict economies and societies, the first axis reviewed the conceptual and theoretical framework for ecotourism and entrepreneurship, explaining the scientific foundations that determine the relationship between environmental protection, developing the local economy and creating innovative and sustainable job opportunities, based on sober international studies and references (Awamer, 2019; Saleh, 2021), As for the second axis, he presented a detailed study of the Malaysian experience as a successful global model in activating ecotourism entrepreneurship, reviewing government policies that support innovations in tourism products and the positive economic and social results achieved despite international challenges, as Malaysia was able to enhance its global competitiveness by integrating technology and sustainability into the tourism industry (Abdul Rahman, 2020; Tan, 2022), and in the third axis, the focus was on the Algerian reality through a case study of the Taghit region, where The unique natural and cultural potential that has not been properly exploited due to many obstacles, including poor infrastructure, lack of institutional support and lack of innovation, which limited Algeria's ability to catch up with the leading countries in this field, were highlighted. (Mahrez et al., 2022; Moussa, 2021)

Thus, this intersection between Malaysian success and Algerian challenges imposed the need to conduct a comparative and forward-looking reading that highlights the strengths and weaknesses of each experience and foresees the prospects for activating ecotourism entrepreneurship in Algeria, and accordingly the fourth axis comes to analyze those experiences in their realistic context and propose practical mechanisms and procedures that can be adopted to promote this vital sector because the goal is to create a sustainable development vision capable of investing local resources effectively and supporting entrepreneurial projects that integrate the preservation of Environment and local economic development in line with the sustainable development directions of the 2030 goals.

Thus, this axis provides a knowledge and strategic framework that links global experiences with lessons learned from the Algerian reality in order to develop practical recommendations that contribute to raising Algeria's tourism status and transforming it into a leading and sustainable environmental destination at the regional and international levels.

The fourth axis constitutes a decisive stage in the study, in which the results of the detailed analysis of the successful Malaysian experience and the faltering Algerian experience in ecotourism entrepreneurship are combined with the aim of drawing lessons learned and proposing future visions for the development of ecotourism in Algeria, as well as this axis comes within the framework of the need to integrate knowledge and expertise to respond to local development challenges that affect the tourism sector, especially in light of the current global economic and environmental crises.

5.1. Reading a comparison between the Malaysian and Algerian experiences "Taghit as a model"

- Through the institutional support structure and government policies: The Malaysian experience: The Malaysian experience is characterized by a strong institutional framework that supports ecotourism entrepreneurship through clear national strategies such as the National Sustainable Tourism Development Plan 2020, which has allocated about RM5 billion to promote small and medium tourism and environmental projects (Malaysian Tourism Council, 2022); This strategy also included infrastructure development, financial support and technical training programs for young entrepreneurs with tax incentives for green investments (Abdullah, 2023); - The Algerian experience: On the other hand, we find that the Algerian experience still suffers from the dispersion of institutions and poor coordination between the sectors concerned, as there is still no clear unified national strategy for ecotourism entrepreneurship, and the budgets allocated to this sector are also very small, which has reduced the ability of entrepreneurial projects in Algeria to grow and expand (Ben Amor, 2021); This significant deficiency has been able to explain at least in part the weakness of innovation and the difficulty of accessing international markets.
- Through innovation and technology: The Malaysian experience: Malaysia has relied on the integration of digital technology in the marketing of ecotourism products, where smart applications have been developed that allow tourists to identify natural sites and book tourist experiences easily with a focus on preserving the environment through electronic environmental monitoring systems (Al-Hasani, 2022); The number of tech entrepreneurship in the Malaysian ecotourism sector has grown by 15% annually over the past decade with more than 45,000 direct jobs created in the sector (Abdullah, 2023); The Algerian experience : Algeria still lacks innovative applications in this field, as evidenced by the fact that most entrepreneurs in Algeria still rely on traditional methods, which has limited to the maximum extent the ability of projects to expand and sustain, in addition to the lack of digital infrastructure supporting ecotourism (Bouchiba, 2022).
- Through community participation and training: The Malaysian experience: The Malaysian experience has been characterized by the comprehensiveness of projects in terms of involving local communities, especially in rural areas and forests, which enhanced environmental awareness and motivated the population to protect natural resources through continuous education and training programs (Malaysian Tourism Council, 2022); Therefore, the number of local entrepreneurs in ecotourism projects is estimated at about 30,000 people, with female participation rates increasing by 40% (Abdullah, 2023); The Algerian experience: Algeria still suffers greatly from the lack of training programs and the absence of policies geared towards empowering the local population in tourist areas such as Taghit that make community participation limited and lead to poor interaction between entrepreneurial initiatives and local development goals (Mehrez et al., 2022).

5.2. Prospects for Activating Ecotourism Entrepreneurship in Algeria

Based on the previous comparison, it becomes clear to us the prospects and recommendations that can contribute to the promotion of ecotourism entrepreneurship in Algeria:

- Developing a comprehensive national strategy: It is that strategy that includes: Clear goals; Financial support mechanisms; The integrated institutional framework that ensures

- coordination between government and private agencies and civil society (Ben Omar, 2021).
- Strengthening digital infrastructure: By taking a set of steps, which are: Creation of electronic platforms for the marketing of ecotourism; Connecting entrepreneurs with investors and tourists locally and globally (Al-Hasani, 2022).
 - Launching continuous training and rehabilitation programs: They are those pioneering programs that aim to: - Raising the capabilities of local entrepreneurs in Taghit and other areas with tourism potential; Focus on innovation and competitiveness (Mahrez et al., 2022).
 - Enhancing community participation: Which are through: Involve local people in the planning and implementation of tourism projects; Investing traditional knowledge in natural resource management; Promoting economic and environmental sustainability (Bouchiba, 2022).
 - Providing financial and incentive incentives: It is represented in: Tax exemptions; Subsidized loans for the establishment of entrepreneurial projects in the field of ecotourism (Ben Amor, 2021).
 - Keeping pace with global challenges: Represented in: Climate change; Effects of epidemics; Adopt resilient and sustainable models; Ensuring the continuity of tourism activity in times of crisis (Abdullah, 2023).

Accordingly, a comparative reading indicates that the success of the Malaysian experience in ecotourism entrepreneurship is due to integrated factors that combine supportive government policies, technological innovation, community participation and continuous training, while the Algerian experience suffers from structural and administrative challenges that require a review of policies and strategies with the adoption of new approaches that benefit from lessons learned internationally and adapt to local specificities, especially in the Taghit region.

The issue of activating ecotourism entrepreneurship in Algeria is a tributary to economic growth and sustainable local development, and it is also an inevitable strategic choice to face global crises and challenges and achieve the sustainable development goals by 2030.

Therefore, we conclude through this presentation that it has become necessary for Algeria to adopt a comprehensive national strategy for ecotourism and to develop a clear and integrated national strategy to support ecotourism entrepreneurship, benefiting from the Malaysian experience, which has achieved tangible successes thanks to the existence of a clear government vision and supportive policies (Ben Omar, 2021).

In addition to the integration between technology and innovation, as this integration between them is the decisive element for success, because the Malaysian experience has confirmed beyond any doubt that the integration of digital technology and smart marketing is a key factor in enhancing the sustainability of tourism entrepreneurial projects, an aspect that Algeria still suffers from a shortage, which negatively affects the competitiveness of the sector (Abdullah, 2023).

It should also be noted that the involvement of local communities in tourism development contributes to the protection of natural resources and raises environmental awareness, an element that has been partially ignored in Algeria, which led to poor effectiveness of projects (Mahrez et al., 2022).

The visible gap in financial support and incentives that restricts the growth of tourism entrepreneurship in Algeria and deepens the weakness of financial support and the lack of tax incentives in Algeria limits the ability of entrepreneurs to establish successful and sustainable projects, while compared to the Malaysian model, we find that the latter has provided a stimulating environment for investment and innovation (Ben Omar, 2021).

The Malaysian experience has highlighted high flexibility in dealing with challenges such as the Corona pandemic and climate change by adopting sustainable and flexible tourism models, while Algeria is quite the opposite, and therefore it is required today before tomorrow to adopt more sophisticated contingency plans to ensure the continuity of the sector in times of crisis (Abdullah, 2023)

When all these landmarks are established in the way of the tourism sector through an elite political will aware of the challenges and stakes, then the field will be open to talk about opening these promising future prospects, provided that the lessons learned are activated, so that the adoption of the Malaysian model as a model adaptable in the Algerian context, taking into account local specificities, would actually open new horizons for the development of ecotourism and entrepreneurship in Algeria, which would promote sustainable economic development and reduce unemployment. Outbreaks (Bouchiba, 2022)

Table 3: Humean Analytical Framework for Comparing Ecotourism Entrepreneurship and Local Development in Malaysia and Taghit

Humean concept	Analytical question	Malaysia	Taghit
Commerce	How are local resources connected to markets?	Local tourism resources are connected to tourism markets through entrepreneurial initiatives, tourism products, and market-oriented services.	Local natural and cultural resources are used through individual tourism initiatives, but their integration into wider markets remains limited.
Labor and industry	How does tourism create productive activity?	Ecotourism supports employment and complementary tourism-related economic activities.	Ecotourism provides opportunities for employment and local economic activity, but these remain constrained by limited infrastructure and entrepreneurial capacity.
Social conventions	How do local actors cooperate?	Cooperation among public institutions, entrepreneurs, local communities, and other tourism stakeholders supports ecotourism development.	Cooperation among local actors remains limited, with insufficient coordination and community participation.
Property and rules	How are natural/cultural resources regulated?	Ecotourism development is supported by institutional policies and	Natural and cultural resources are regulated within existing institutional frameworks, but

		environmental management frameworks.	implementation and institutional support remain challenging.
Collective interests	How are tourism benefits distributed locally?	Ecotourism contributes to local employment, income opportunities, community participation, and environmental conservation.	Tourism benefits remain limited by institutional, infrastructural, financial, and entrepreneurial constraints, despite significant local potential.

Source: Author's elaboration based on Hume (1752/1985), Brewer (1997), Schabas and Wennerlind (2011), Lindsay (2021), and the literature reviewed in the study.

6. CONCLUSION

Finally, the image of entrepreneurship in ecotourism is formed from a complex mosaic of theoretical and applied factors that harmonize and vary across geographical and cultural contexts, as revealed by our study between the Malaysian experience and the Algerian experience in the Taghit region, in the first axis, the conceptual and theoretical framework was established, which clarified that ecotourism is not just an economic activity, but rather an integrated development vision based on innovation, environmental protection and the integration of local communities. Here the importance of entrepreneurship as a driving force towards sustainable development was manifested in front of us. Then we moved in the second axis to the Malaysian experience, which embodied this vision effectively, where government policies, modern technologies and community empowerment played a pivotal role in the success of eco-tourism projects, which resulted in sustainable economic growth and the creation of multiple job opportunities despite global challenges, and that experience really formed a model to be followed and proved the ability of entrepreneurship to adapt and thrive in changing environments, while the third axis highlighted the Algerian reality, especially in the Taghit region, where The unique environmental potential and the underlying natural assets have not been invested in a way that parallels development ambitions, due to limited institutional support, weak integration between actors, and numerous challenges in management and financing.

Finally, the fourth axis came to dismantle these contradictions and propose a comparative and forward-looking reading that confirms that Algeria can benefit from the Malaysian lessons, provided that policies are reformulating, providing a stimulating environment for entrepreneurship, enhancing community awareness and activating sustainable innovation, as it highlights here the need to overcome the current crises and challenges through renewed strategies based on integration between the economy, the environment and society.

In the end, the study revealed to us that entrepreneurship in ecotourism in Algeria is not only a strategic choice to achieve sustainable local development, but it is an inevitable necessity imposed by the current global conditions and a real opportunity to redraw the map of development in Algeria based on its unique components that have long awaited those who invest it with a future vision and practical will.

From a Humean perspective, the comparison suggests that the contribution of entrepreneurship to sustainable local development cannot be understood solely in terms of private investment or tourism revenues. It also depends on the institutional and social

conditions that facilitate commerce, cooperation, respect for property and shared rules, and the alignment of individual economic incentives with broader community interests. In this sense, Hume's ideas provide an interpretive lens through which the relationship between entrepreneurial activity, local resources, social cooperation, and sustainable development can be examined in both Malaysia and Taghit.

The study reached several basic findings and recommendations, most notably:

Results:

- The Humean analytical framework highlights that entrepreneurship and commerce contribute to local development not only through private economic activity, but also through cooperation, shared conventions, stable rules, and the alignment of individual and collective interests.
- The clear disparity in the level of development of ecotourism entrepreneurship: The study showed that there is a large gap between the advanced Malaysian experience in adopting policies supportive of environmental entrepreneurship, and the Algerian experience, which suffers from a clear weakness in this field despite the availability of natural and human resources.
- The role of government policies in supporting and promoting entrepreneurship: The Malaysian experience has proven that the existence of a clear regulatory and legislative framework that supports ecotourism entrepreneurship while providing financial and technical incentives has a direct impact on the success and sustainability of projects.
- The importance of community involvement and protection of natural resources: Community involvement has been a key factor in the success of ecotourism projects in Malaysia, which has contributed to the protection of the environment and the promotion of social development, which has not been sufficiently achieved in Algeria.
- The need to adopt technology and innovation: The Malaysian experience has shown that the integration of modern technologies in marketing and management has contributed to increasing the attractiveness of ecotourism, while Algeria still suffers from poor use of these digital tools.
- The impact of global crises on the tourism sector: The study showed that resilience and resilience to crises such as the coronavirus pandemic and climate change were stronger in Malaysia, helping to maintain the sustainability of projects, while Algeria was severely affected by the absence of effective contingency plans.

Recommendations:

- Develop a comprehensive national strategy to support ecotourism entrepreneurship: Algeria should adopt a clear plan with measurable goals that support the development of ecotourism with the involvement of all local actors and government agencies.
- Activating the role of financial institutions and providing incentives: by encouraging tourism entrepreneurs by facilitating financing, tax incentives and subsidized loans, which enhances the ability of enterprises to grow and sustain.
- Strengthening partnership with local communities: i.e. the need to involve local people in all stages of planning and implementation to conserve natural resources and ensure their economic and social benefit.
- Investing in technology and innovation: by adopting digital marketing tools and online platforms to improve the tourist experience and attract new investments.

- Developing training and qualification programs: by raising the efficiency of entrepreneurs and workers in the eco-tourism sector through continuous training courses in the field of management, marketing and environmental preservation.
- Establishing effective crisis management mechanisms: relying on the preparation of emergency plans and flexible strategies to face health and environmental crises that may affect the sustainability of the tourism sector.

These recommendations constitute a preliminary pillar for activating local energies and achieving a qualitative leap in the mechanisms of environmental management of tourism, thus contributing to strengthening the citizen's relationship with his surroundings and consolidating the foundations of sustainable development from the bottom up.

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