

## INTENTIONS AND MOTIVATIONS TO REVISIT NATURAL HERITAGE SITES

Laurențiu STOENICĂ<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ARTIFEX University of Bucharest, ORCID 0000-0002-9829-7222

**Abstract:** *In the current context, which determines a rather cautious consumption behavior for tourism products/services in Romania and around the world, tourists' intentions to revisit some destinations take on a special significance for tourism organizations. Tourist destinations proposed to consumers increasingly include natural and cultural heritage attractions, places that offer many opportunities, more safety for visitors in post-pandemic conditions, activities that take place in the open air, with more space for them. An effective marketing communication of tourism organizations will increase the attractiveness of tourist destinations, of natural heritage, promoting the benefits of this type of tourist product, will generate a favorable image in the minds of consumers as well as intentions to revisit in the future. Tourists seek to identify, choose and finally make a decision to visit a destination that provides as much of what they want from travel, where they have something to see, attractive tourist experiences both in terms of the beauty of the landscapes and natural attractions. The study aims to identify influences on the intentions to revisit tourist destinations. Based on exploratory research of literature and descriptive research, in a marketing approach, the study brings to attention the need to know, understand and fructify the attitudes and behaviors of consumers of tourism services, their intentions and motivations to revisit tourist destinations. Given that tourists have access to information and benefit from more and more information about natural heritage sites, they will be motivated to plan periods of time and resources to revisit the tourist destination for relaxation and recreation. Intentions to revisit some tourist destinations are manifested as a result of consumer satisfaction, even in the conditions of new possible travels to other attractive tourist areas.*

**Keywords:** *revisit intention, motivations, tourist destination, marketing, natural heritage*

**JEL classification:** *M31, Z32*

### 1. Introduction

After a period of restrictions on travel, group holidays, avoidance of crowded areas, anything that means nature has become an attraction for tourists looking for destinations where natural heritage sites appeal to them and offer peacefulness and relaxation.

The importance of the natural environment in providing an attractive location for tourism cannot be overstated, so policies and factors enhancing environmental sustainability are an important aspect of ensuring the future attractiveness of a tourist destination (Uppink and Soshkin, 2022).

Each type of heritage attraction has its own unique combination of benefits and advantages; some focus more on the historical aspect, some on the cultural, and others mix geographic and heritage elements.

The aspects of ambiance affect the senses of visitors and these positive experiences can in turn affect whether a tourist will recommend this attraction to others or revisit the facility themselves in the future, or even affect his or her overall impression/attitude of the attraction. Each visitor is looking for a specific set of attributes and characteristics in a tourist destination that makes it appealing. This emotional uniqueness can serve as a form of competitive differentiation for that tourist destination (Bonn et al., 2007).

---

<sup>1</sup> [lstoenica@artifex.org.ro](mailto:lstoenica@artifex.org.ro)

The combination of tangible and intangible heritage and contemporary culture stimulates economic growth and sustainable development of each country through tourism, thus creating new jobs, regenerating rural and urban areas, protecting natural and cultural heritage sites. The funds generated by tourism can be instrumental to conservation activities for natural heritage. At the same time tourism can have negative effects on the local communities as well as the natural environment (UNESCO, 2021), an excessive number of tourists can lead even to the destruction of a natural heritage site (Canale et al., 2019).

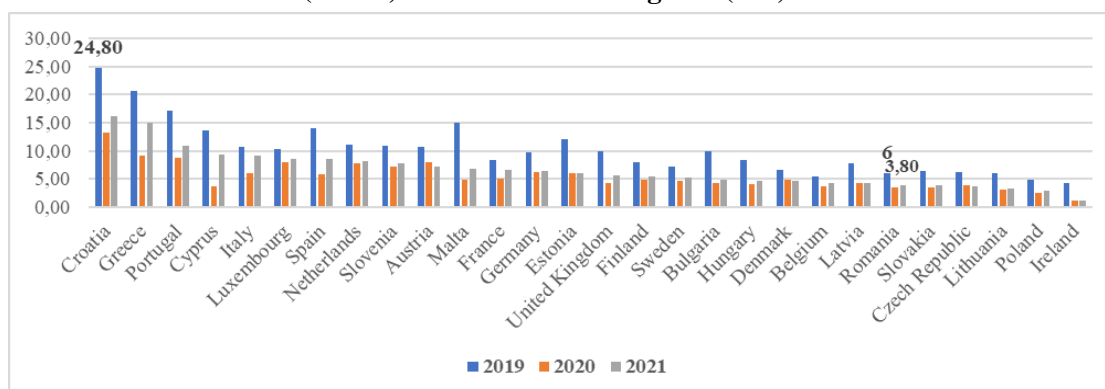
The need for a closer and improved connection with nature as the basis of human well-being reinforces the importance of natural heritage management, including wider and much improved access to information about tourism and nature recreation so there is a need for a development of a natural heritage brand for tourism and recreation, which features amplification of site identity and messaging, plus enhancement of its visibility (Mitova et al., 2021).

As more people are interested in spending holidays in nature tourism industry are developing and this creates opportunities in areas characterized by natural attractions (Ray et al., 2018).

Tourism can bring numerous socio-economic benefits to a country by creating local jobs, stimulating local economies, generating foreign exchange earnings, stimulating the improvement of local transport infrastructure conditions and creating recreational facilities. Positive environmental effects often derive from these socio-economic benefits, such as promoting conservation action by convincing government officials and the general public of the importance of natural areas for generating income from tourism, stimulating investments in infrastructure and effective management of natural heritage sites (McNeely and Thorsell, 1989).

Regarding the natural heritage, we are thinking first of all of tourist destinations in rural areas which are outstanding examples of natural heritage, areas which, like urban areas, are facing economic, social and demographic imbalances, so that it is necessary not only to protect them but also to promote them as an driver of competitiveness, growth and sustainable local development (Barrientos et al., 2021). According to recorded statistics (Statista, 2022), the total contribution of travel and tourism to global gross domestic product (GDP) increased by 21.7% in 2021 compared to the previous year, after falling sharply in 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19). Overall, the contribution of travel and tourism to global GDP amounted to USD 5.81 trillion in 2021, denoting an increase of about USD 1 trillion compared to 2020, but remaining below pre-pandemic figures. By comparison, at the European level in 2021, the share of the total contribution of travel and tourism to GDP increased compared to the previous year, after a sharp decline in 2020. Overall, Croatia was the EU country where travel and tourism contributed the highest share of gross domestic product in 2021, around 16.1% of the country's GDP. Greece and Portugal followed in 2021, with travel and tourism accounting for 14.9 percent and 10.9 percent of GDP, respectively. In Romania, the share of travel and tourism's total contribution to GDP increased by only 0.3 percent year-on-year to 3.8 percent in 2021, after falling from 6 percent as recorded in 2019.

**Figure 1: Share of travel and tourism's total contribution to GDP in European Union member countries (EU 27) and the United Kingdom (UK) from 2019 to 2021**



Source: Statista, 2022

Romania's high potential of natural resources has had and continues to have a significant impact on the development of tourism.

According to Lificiu (2011) the natural heritage of Romania, with its mountains and forests, with plateaus, with subcarpathian hills and plains, with a hydrographic network of flowing waters and lakes on both slopes of the Carpathians, represents a universal value, a natural capital of exceptional diversity that includes 27 of national parks, natural parks and geoparks.

Tourism and travel in general have always contributed significantly to the economic and social development of a state, an area, a tourist destination.

The tourist reception structures in Romania have evolved, according to statistical data (National Institute of Statistics), from 3213 in 1990 to 8610 in 2020, an evolution that shows a continuous development of the tourist market. The evolution shows the same trend for the development regions of Romania, thus, in Transylvania and Banat the number of tourist reception structures evolved from 1292 in 1990 to 4446 in 2020, half of the number of tourist reception structures at national level, recording an average annual variation rate of 6.61%, which means that in the 2010-2020 period the number of tourist reception structures in Transylvania and Banat increased on average by approximately 7%

According to the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), in 2019, worldwide, tourism contributed 10.4% to GDP (USD 9.2 trillion), registered a share of 10.6% of total jobs (334 million), creating 1 in 4 of all new jobs (WTTC, 2021).

## 2. Literature review

A major determinant in tourists' decision to visit a destination is the perception of safety and security. Specific events or a series of events can undermine these perceptions of a tourist destination. These events or circumstances, individually or in combination, have a negative impact on perceptions of the safety, security or attractiveness of tourist destinations (Beirman, 2003). Tourism crowding may affect the quality of tourism and destination attractiveness, so that tourist destination attractiveness will have a significantly positive impact on revisit intention (Yin et al., 2020).

Changes in consumer behavior are observed, which could be attributed to the trends in vogue. Climatic and seasonal variations could affect consumer behavior and willingness to travel. Of course, there may be other factors that could affect consumers' propensity to travel, including travel distances, urban versus rural lifestyles, school holiday periods, perceptions of travel (Camilleri, 2018), the environment of the tourist destination, cultural heritage, facilities and modes of transport to the tourist destination as well as those available in the area.

Tourism development involves the planning of resources in order to satisfy the needs of current and potential tourists (Fernández-Hernández et al., 2022).

Hu and Ritchie (1993) described a tourism destination as a package of tourism facilities and services, which, like any other consumer product or service, is composed of a number of multidimensional attributes that together determine its attractiveness to a particular individual in a given choice situation.

Destinations are a combination of tourism products, offering consumers an integrated experience. Destinations are often artificially divided by geographical and political barriers that do not take into account consumer preferences, seen as a defined geographical region that is understood by its visitors as a single entity with a political and legislative framework for tourism marketing. Destinations provide a mix of tourism products and services, which are consumed by visitors under the brand name of the destination (Buhalis, 2000).

Nikolova et al. (2021) propose the following definition: natural heritage is a geospatial natural element of the socio-ecological system, which provides material and spiritual benefits of timeless importance for previous, present and future generations. That natural heritage is a source of a constant flow of information and benefits.

Natural heritage refers to natural features, geological and physiographical formations and delineated areas that constitute the habitat of threatened species of animals and plants and natural sites

of value from the point of view of science, conservation or natural beauty. It includes private and publically protected natural areas, zoos, aquaria and botanical gardens, natural habitat, marine ecosystems, sanctuaries, reservoir (UNESCO, 1972).

In a more current approach (UNESCO, 2019) shall be considered as natural heritage elements the natural features consisting of physical and biological formations or groups of such formations, which are of outstanding universal value from the aesthetic or scientific point of view; geological and physiographical formations and precisely delineated areas which constitute the habitat of threatened species of animals and plants of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation; natural sites or precisely delineated natural areas of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science, conservation or natural beauty .

In Lificiu's (2011) approach, natural heritage means the set of physical-geographical, floristic, faunal and biocenotic components and structures of the natural environment, whose ecological, economic, scientific, landscape and recreational value is relevant for meeting the requirements of life, well-being, culture and civilization.

Bonn et al. (2007) analyzed the effect of environmental basics on visitors to heritage sites, illustrating that the physical environment of heritage sites plays an important role in determining both visitors' attitudes towards the tourist destination and their future intentions to revisit, as well as their willingness to recommend the experience to friends and relatives. The physical environment indeed affects how consumers perceive a tourist attraction, as well as their intention to visit again and recommend that attraction. According to Bonn et al. (2007) positive experiences of tourists can influence their behavior to recommend the tourist destination, to revisit in the future or even significantly affect the overall impression/attitude.

Natural heritage sites have become increasingly important for people to connect with nature, can bring tangible and intangible benefits to society, moreover, the features of these sites often become significant factors that attract people to visit (Nursyamsiah and Setiawan, 2022).

In the approach of Ariesta et al. (2020) attractiveness is a very important part in the development of a tourist destination, tourist attractions with good attractiveness can generate positive opinions of potential tourists so that they visit a tourist destination and even repeat the experience.

The decision to revisit a tourist destination is seen as a complex decision involving numerous interrelated factors (satisfaction with the tourist experience, tourists' motivations, previous experience of visiting the tourist destination, paying particular attention to the effects that satisfaction regarding tourist experience and the number of previous visits have on the intention to revisit (Alegre and Cladera, 2009).

Su et al. (2018) define revisit intention as individuals' willingness to revisit the same environment or place and to recommend the location to other people. The more satisfied they are, the greater are their tourist destination attachment and revisit intention. In Pai's et al. (2021) opinion revisit intention refers to the intention or commitment of tourists to revisit the tourist destination and actively recommend it to others potential visitors.

Understanding and knowledge the intentions to revisit and identify the reasons for tourists to revisit a natural heritage tourist destination is important as the flow of the repeat visits is a revenue generator for the natural heritage sites, for the local community (Abdullah and Lui, 2018).

The concept of tourist attraction takes into account the affective, cognitive-aesthetic side of the various elements in the structure of the tourist potential that produce impressions of high intensity that can directly influence certain segments of the tourist demand, potential tourists being attracted by the image, uniqueness and beauty of some components of the natural heritage and not only, all of which primarily give them satisfaction (Câdea et al., 2012).

Hill's study (2002) shows that natural heritage in the broadest sense is increasingly promoted among local communities as generating opportunities for new economic and social developments. It is increasingly recognized that the level and quality of natural heritage in an area can generate economic opportunities, being the main determining factors for the competitive advantage of rural areas and for

their development opportunities. In general, opportunities vary considerably from location to location, as do local priorities. This suggests the need for strategies and policies specific to each area to maximize the role of natural heritage in community development, identifying some general points aimed at:

- tourism activities related to the wild fauna in the area and the natural environment that offer considerable economic potential
- the need to develop an adequate tourist infrastructure
- the need to develop a coordinated marketing strategy at local, regional and national level
- local areas need to exploit their competitive advantage, communities with active networks and partnerships are likely to be best placed to take advantage of any existing funding opportunities
- the cooperation and participation of the people who manage the main resources in the area are essential.

Abbasi et al. (2021) mention that more attention needs to be paid to the elements that can stimulate tourist satisfaction, which ultimately affect the tourist's perception of the quality of tourism services offered to him, improve the image of the tourist destination, stimulate the perceived value attached to the destinations and create more revisit intentions.

Conducted studies (Rather et al., 2021) show that there are differences between visitors who come to the tourist destination for the first time versus those who return and revisit, they have different, unique needs and desires, these customers belong to different market segments, which require distinct elements of the marketing mix to create satisfaction and revisit intentions. For those who come to a tourist destination for the first time, the reduction of the uncertainty factor would be achieved by spending a vacation in a known destination, although this aspect can also manifest itself in those who revisit the destination because they still have limited information, because they do not know the real quality level of the vacation product they will have this time (Alegre and Juaneda, 2006).

Regarding heritage marketing (Misiura, 2006) it is stated that the essence of this process is to identify what the customer needs and wants from a tourism experience and to provide this, subject to any constraints that may prevail, such as the need to protect or preserve certain parts of the heritage site or historic property due to increased wear and tear that would result from additional tourist traffic stimulated by marketing initiatives.

Understanding consumer satisfaction with tourism services and their intentions to revisit will better inform tourism destination managers, local authorities, on ways to adjust service and marketing efforts to increase visitor satisfaction and future revisit intentions (Constantin et al., 2022).

A better understanding of satisfaction, tourist destination loyalty and revisit intentions plays an important role in managing sustainable tourist destinations, because high levels of tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty are the most common indicators of destination quality.

The study of Stumpf et al. (2020) shows that there is a link between revisit intention and consumer satisfaction with tourism services (such as quality of accommodation, safety of accommodation, natural features, general price level, how tourists are received, services available and facilities offered) as well as demographic, motivational and behavioral characteristics of potential tourists and tourists. In addition, a better understanding of satisfaction, tourist destination loyalty and revisit intentions plays an important role in managing sustainable tourist destinations because high levels of tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty are the most common indicators of destination quality.

Canale et al. (2019) reveal that in the case of territorial heterogeneity of natural heritage sites attractive to visitors, heritage conservation and valorization policies are needed that focus on large areas and not only on individual sites, improving the tourist services offered. A connection of different natural heritage sites even if located in different regions can be achieved through an efficient transport system, thus visitor flows could be oriented and the overestimation of tourist demand for certain heritage sites could be balanced through marketing research, identifying behavioral characteristics of visitors, potential visitors to each site.

### 3. Methodological notes

In order to analyze the reasons and intentions to revisit natural heritage sites two categories of research variables have been considered, the first concerning the reasons to revisit natural heritage, the second concerning the determinants of visitors' satisfaction when revisiting natural heritage sites, as well as a variable related to intentions to revisit natural heritage sites. Concerning the types of natural heritage we considered components of the structure of the tourism offer referred by Neacșu et al. (2016).

Natural and anthropogenic components are seen as tourist attractions or tourist resources that include natural tourist resources: relief, climate, flora, fauna, hydrography, natural protected areas, these constituting the basis of the tourist offer that essentially determines tourists to visit a certain tourist destination (Neacșu et al., 2016).

The reasons why the natural heritage sites are visited were related to: the beauty of the landscapes of the visited tourist destination (NH1), the well-maintained environment of the tourist destinations (NH2), the climatic regime of the tourist destination (NH3) and the diversity of hydrographic network - rivers and the natural and/or anthropogenic lakes of the visited tourist destination (NH4).

The beauty of the landscapes, the well-maintained environment, the climatic regime and the diversity of the hydrographic network make tourists to revisit natural heritage sites. Landscapes, the environment, climate and the water network can be components of the natural environment.

In the context of this research, the beauty of landscapes, the extent to which the environment is well maintained, the climatic regime and the diversity of the hydrographic network were considered as reasons for revisiting natural heritage sites.

Regarding the variables considered as determinants of visitor satisfaction when revisiting natural heritage sites, in the literature we identified the quality of tourist services offered in tourist destinations (Tosun et al., 2015; Abbasi et al., 2021), cleanliness of tourist destinations (Abbasi et al., 2021), good reputation of tourist destinations (Wang et al., 2021), safety and security of tourist destinations (Ghaderi et al., 2016).

Thus, these aspects were considered as variables that define the determinants of visitor satisfaction of natural heritage sites: the quality of tourist services offered in natural heritage destinations (VS1), the cleanliness of the visited tourist destination (VS2), the good reputation of the tourist destination (VS3), the personal security of tourists while visiting the sites of natural heritage (VS4).

Visitor satisfaction is an effect and in the research the satisfaction of visitors to natural heritage sites was described through the quality of tourist services, cleanliness of the tourist destination, good reputation of the tourist destination and personal safety of visitors.

The intention to revisit the tourist destination (VS5) was described through four determinants: quality of tourist services, cleanliness of the tourist destination, good reputation of the tourist destination and personal safety of visitors.

In order to collect the data necessary for the research, the survey was used as a method of collecting information, taking place between June and September 2022, the collection tool being a questionnaire that includes 47 questions, in order to generate the data necessary to achieve the research objectives. In order to measure the degree of interest of the respondents, visitors to the tourist destinations in Romania that attract through elements of natural heritage, a semantic differential type scale was used in which the score 1 signifies a low interest of the visitors for the tourist destination and the score 5 a high level of interest.

In order to analyse the associations between reasons for visiting natural heritage sites and determinants of satisfaction as well as between revisit intentions and determinants of satisfaction, Pearson correlation coefficients were determined.

The research aims to identify the influences on the intentions to revisit tourist destinations, the elements of natural heritage sought by visitors in tourist destinations as a result of which intentions to revisit these tourist destinations manifest themselves.

A number of 219 respondents answered the request to complete the questionnaire, 59.4% men and 40.6% women, with a predominantly secondary education level, 79.9%, but also university studies, 18.3%.

The majority of respondents are between 21-40 years old, respectively 82.7% of the total, and 17.4% are between 41 and 60 years old. Tourist destinations that include elements of natural heritage were visited for the first time by 20.1% of the respondents, with those who visited such tourist destinations several times being in proportion of 79.9% of the respondents.

The residence environment of the respondents is predominantly urban, 79.9%, they obtain incomes mainly between 2350 and 5000 lei.

The tourist destinations preferred by the respondents are located more in the Central development region (38.4%), less in the South-Muntenia (20.1%), South-Eastern (16.4%) development regions and very little in the Western development region (1.4%).

#### 4. Main findings

Concerning the aspect of frequency of visiting natural heritage sites, the fact that a significant proportion of respondents stated that they visited natural heritage tourist destinations more than once (79.9%) indicates their increased interest in such destinations and the attractiveness of these destinations.

The results of the survey (Table 1) show that natural heritage is of high interest to visitors to tourist destinations in Romania (with a specific average score of 4.05). The beauty of the landscapes, including mountain, hill and foothill areas, landscapes in plain and lowland areas, the Romanian coastline, the Danube delta (with a specific average score of 4.45), the well-maintained environment (with a specific average score of 4.11), climate regime, here including climate as a tourist resource in areas such as the coast, hills and foothills, mountain areas, intra-mountainous depressions (with a specific average score of 4.06) were ahead of hydrographic networks, flowing waters, glacial, volcanic, natural, salty, anthropic lakes, thermal waters (with a specific average score of 3.59), tourists showing a higher interest in the first three types of natural heritage. It can be seen why tourists visit or revisit natural heritage sites, with respondents mentioning that visiting natural heritage sites was primarily motivated by the beauty of the landscapes they enjoyed, then, in this order, the well-maintained environment, the climate regime and the diversity of the hydrographic network in the targeted tourist destination.

**Table 1: The variables' averages and standard deviations**

	NH.1	NH.2	NH.3	NH.4	VS.1	VS.2	VS.3	VS.4	VS.5
Valid	219	219	219	219	219	219	219	219	219
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	4.45	4.11	4.06	3.59	4.16	4.20	4.24	3.97	4.80
Std. Deviation	0.685	0.842	0.904	1.723	0.948	0.810	0.840	1.163	0.451
Minimum	2.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	3.000
Maximum	5.000	5.000	5.000	9.000	9.000	5.000	9.000	9.000	5.000

Source: Created using JASP Team (2022). JASP (Version 0.16.4.0) Computer software

The scores obtained show that these components of the natural heritage represent areas of interest for visitors, for local communities and not only, thus it is necessary that through investments, protection and conservation actions, through promotion campaigns, increase the attractiveness of the objectives, stimulate decisions of consumers of tourist services to visit natural heritage sites.

The results of the study show that tourists interested in natural heritage objectives were satisfied with the experiences they had after the visit due to the quality of the tourist services they benefited from in the tourist destinations visited, the cleanliness of the natural environment in the visited objectives, the good reputation of the tourist destinations and the personal security felt while visiting natural heritage objectives (the specific average score equal to 4.14).

For the variables describing determinants of visitor satisfaction, the scores obtained are: the good reputation of tourist destinations (with a specific average score of 4.24), the cleanliness of the natural environment in the visited destinations (with a specific average score of 4.20), the quality of tourist services offered in natural heritage sites (with a specific average score of 4.16) and to a lesser extent the personal security experienced during the visit (with a specific average score of 3.97).

The lower score of the feelings of personal safety, comfort, and trust, provided to the visitors of the natural heritage objectives shows the fact that during the visits, the tourists who opted for these tourist destinations feel much better, they are relaxed in nature, compared to tourist experiences in urban, industrial, heavily congested areas, where they are exposed to more personal safety risks.

For the variable related to the intention to revisit the tourist destination (VS5), the average score calculated is 4.80. The calculated mean score does not describe causality, does not show intention to revisit, and does not describe a causal relationship. Causality does not come from the calculated score on the semantic differential but from correlations between variables. The calculated average score of 4.80 does not mean that tourists show strong intentions to revisit, and does not describe a causal relationship, but by correlating between intention to revisit the tourist destination (VS5) and reasons to revisit: the beauty of the landscapes of the visited tourist destination (NH1), the well-maintained environment of the tourist destinations (NH2), the climatic regime of the tourist destination (NH3) and the diversity of the hydrographic network (NH4) the results show associations significantly.

Correlations between the reasons why natural heritage sites are visited with variables that describe tourists' satisfaction features after visiting natural heritage sites (Table 2) show that there are statistically significant associations between the quality of tourist services, the cleanliness of the visited tourist destination, the good reputation of the tourist destination and the personal security of tourists seen as determinants of visitor satisfaction of natural heritage sites and three of the four variables that describe the reasons for visiting such tourist destinations.

**Table 2: Correlation between the natural heritage elements (NH) and the visitor's satisfaction features (VS) after the experience in such tourist destinations**

Variable	NH 1	NH 2	NH 3	NH 4	VS 1	VS 2	VS 3	VS 4	VS 5
<b>NH 1</b> Pearson's r	—								
p-value	—								
<b>NH 2</b> Pearson's r	0.459***	—							
p-value	< .001	—							
<b>NH 3</b> Pearson's r	0.164*	0.088	—						
p-value	0.015	0.194	—						
<b>NH 4</b> Pearson's r	0.137*	0.071	0.160*	—					
p-value	0.043	0.296	0.018	—					
<b>VS 1</b> Pearson's r	0.225***	0.300***	0.240***	0.129	—				
p-value	< .001	< .001	< .001	0.057	—				
<b>VS 2</b> Pearson's r	0.242***	0.507***	0.165*	0.030	0.476***	—			
p-value	< .001	< .001	0.014	0.661	< .001	—			
<b>VS 3</b> Pearson's r	0.245***	0.347***	0.205**	0.052	0.383***	0.489***	—		
p-value	< .001	< .001	0.002	0.445	< .001	< .001	—		
<b>VS 4</b> Pearson's r	0.208**	0.336***	0.107	0.204**	0.242***	0.352***	0.341***	—	
p-value	0.002	< .001	0.116	0.002	< .001	< .001	< .001	—	
<b>VS 5</b> Pearson's r	0.187**	0.324***	0.098	-0.064	0.253***	0.242***	0.217**	0.127	—
p-value	0.006	< .001	0.147	0.343	< .001	< .001	0.001	0.060	—

\* p < .05, \*\* p < .01, \*\*\* p < .001. Created using JASP Team (2022). JASP (Version 0.16.4.0) Computer software

The quality of tourist services offered in tourist destinations that contain elements of natural heritage (VS1), a determinant of visitor satisfaction of natural heritage sites, is significantly associated from a statistical point of view with the well-maintained environment in tourist destinations (NH2), the climate regime in the tourist destination (NH3 ) and the beauty of the landscapes of the visited tourist destination (NH1), the intensity of associations being weak to average.



Cleanliness in the visited tourist destination (VS2), a determinant of visitor satisfaction of natural heritage sites, is statistically significantly associated with the well-maintained environment in the tourist destinations (NH2) and the beauty of the landscapes in the visited tourist destination (NH1), the intensity of the association in the first case being strong and weak in the second case. There are no statistically significant associations with the climate regime and the hydrographic network and lakes of the visited tourist destination.

The good reputation of the tourist destination (VS3), a determinant of visitor satisfaction of natural heritage sites, is statistically significantly associated with the well-maintained environment of the tourist destinations (NH2) and the beauty of the landscapes of the visited tourist destination (NH1) and the climate regime in the tourist destination (NH3), the intensity of the association between the variables being but average, respectively weak. There are no statistically significant associations with the diversity of the hydrographic network in the tourist destination (NH4).

The personal safety of tourists while visiting natural heritage sites (VS4), a determinant of visitor satisfaction of natural heritage sites, is statistically significantly associated with the well-maintained environment in tourist destinations (NH2), the beauty of the landscapes of the visited tourist destination (NH1) and the diversity of the hydrographic network in the tourist destination (NH4), but the intensity of the association is lower. There are no statistically significant associations with climate regimes (NH3).

The resulting correlations between the determinants of tourists' satisfaction after visiting/revisiting natural heritage sites and variables describing reasons for visiting natural heritage sites show the combination of natural heritage elements that can be a determinant of tourists coming to visit and contribute significantly in achieving visitor satisfaction:

- the quality tourist services offered, combined with the well- well-maintained environment of the tourist destination, the climatic regime and the beauty of the landscapes that visitors can enjoy, in this order, can be a determining factor of tourists' satisfaction and the intention to revisit;
- the cleanliness of the tourist destination combined with the well-maintained environment of the tourist destination, the beauty of the landscapes and the climatic regime of the tourist destination, in this order, can be a determining factor of tourists' satisfaction and the intention to revisit;
- the good reputation of the tourist destination, combined with the well-maintained environment of the tourist destination, the beauty of the landscapes and the climatic regime of the tourist destination, in this order, can be a determining factor of tourists' satisfaction and the intention to revisit;
- the good personal security ensured during the visit of the natural heritage objectives, combined with the well-maintained environment of the tourist destination, the beauty of the landscapes and the diversity of the hydrographic network - rivers and natural and/or anthropogenic lakes, in this order, can be a determining factor of tourists' satisfaction and revisit intention.

Correlating the intention to revisit the tourist destination (VS5) with the beauty of the landscapes of the visited tourist destination (NH1), the well-maintained environment of the tourist destinations (NH2), the climatic regime of the tourist destination (NH3) and the diversity of the water network (NH4) the results show that the variable (VS5), the intention to revisit, is significantly associated with the well-maintained environment and the beauty of the landscapes.

Tourists who intend to revisit natural heritage sites are motivated especially by the well-maintained environment and the beauty of landscapes. The cleaner the natural environment, the greater the intention to revisit. The intention to revisit is not significantly influenced by climate and water network.

The resulting correlations between the intention to revisit the tourist destination (VS5) and the quality of tourist services (VS1), cleanliness in the visited tourist destination (VS2), the good reputation of the tourist destination (VS3) and the personal safety of tourists (VS4) shows that tourists intending to

visit natural heritage sites are mostly motivated by the quality of service, the cleanliness of the tourist destination and its good reputation. The intention to revisit the tourist destination (VS5) is statistically significantly associated with the quality of tourist services (VS1), cleanliness in the visited tourist destination (VS2), the good reputation of the tourist destination (VS3) but the intensity of the association is lower. There are no statistically significant associations with the personal safety of tourists (VS4).

By visiting tourist destinations that mainly contain natural heritage sites, tourists feel much more relaxed, away from the urban bustle, without interacting with increased flows of other visitors who in turn want to capture as much of the attractiveness of the respective destinations as possible. When visiting natural areas, tourists do not prioritize aspects related to personal safety, of course without completely ignoring them, most of the time they are in a position to enjoy being intimidated, without being disturbed in admiring the beauties offered by the objectives of natural heritage.

These aspects can be seen as opportunities for those who manage natural heritage objectives, being effective marketing approaches to the activities of managing natural heritage objectives, communications made to promote tourist destinations being able to create more interest from potential tourists and thus exploiting the tourist potential of this type of heritage.

The main concern of potential visitors is to travel to a tourist destination that satisfies their own desires and expectations, with a minimum of possible inconveniences or threats to their safety and well-being (Beirman, 2003) all these aspects being necessary to have been considered by those who administer, promote or manage tourist destinations that include elements of natural heritage.

The correlation between the intention to revisit the tourist destination (VS5) and the beauty of the landscapes (NH1), the well-maintained environment (NH2), the climatic regime of the tourist destination (NH3) and the diversity of the hydrographic network (NH4) explains the reasons why tourists revisit natural heritage sites.

From the correlation between the intention to revisit the tourist destination (VS5) with quality of tourist services (VS1), cleanliness in the visited tourist destination (VS2), the good reputation of the tourist destination (VS3) and the personal safety of tourists (VS4) it is explained what gives satisfaction to a visitor in a natural heritage destination.

## 5. Conclusions and discussions

As these results were obtained from a statistically unrepresentative sample and cannot be generalized to the whole community, they can be seen as a first description of the phenomenon under investigation and a basis for further research.

The investigation of the literature provided a basis for the analysis of tourists' preferences for natural heritage objectives, their expectations and demands, the reasons that will determine to visit or revisit these destinations.

In the conditions of possible new trips to attractive tourist destinations, other than those that include elements of natural heritage, the intentions to revisit some natural heritage objectives are manifested as a result of tourists' satisfaction following the visits made.

The research results show that there are statistically significant associations between the variables considered, the determinants of tourists' satisfaction after visiting/revisiting the natural heritage objectives and variables that describe the reasons for visiting the natural heritage objectives. Where there are statistically significant associations, some show a link of at least medium intensity between the variables (the satisfaction of visitors to tourist destinations that include elements of natural heritage given by its cleanliness, the reason for the visit being the tourists' expectations related to the well-maintained environment, the intensity of the link between the variables being high). Links of medium intensity exist in the case of statistically significant associations between the quality of tourist services, the good reputation of the tourist destination and personal security during the visit, seen as determinants of the visitor satisfaction and the well-maintained environment.

Visitors are more likely to revisit natural heritage sites if the area is clean and the landscapes is beautiful. The intention to revisit is not influenced by the climate regime and hydrographic network in

the tourist destination. In the case of natural heritage tourist destinations, the cleaner the destination, the higher the intention to revisit. Visitors are more likely to revisit natural heritage destinations if the quality of tourism services in the area is high, the area is clean and its reputation is good.

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the intention to revisit a tourist destination, regardless of its natural or cultural heritage, is still influenced by the quality of tourist services, the cleanliness of the destination and the good reputation of the destination.

I believe that the research on the reasons and intentions for revisiting the natural heritage objectives also has limitations represented mainly by the description of the reasons for visiting the natural heritage objectives against which the respondents expressed opinions, aspects that can be improved by including other elements of natural heritage, as well as the size and structure of the sample used in the research to obtain information.

Identifying and understanding the reasons why tourists visit or revisit tourist destinations that include elements of natural heritage are important for the managers of these destinations, for tourism agencies, for the local community, who can create, develop and apply marketing campaigns to attract visitors to the tourist destinations of this kind, satisfy their expectations as well as to stimulate the return of tourists, revisiting natural heritage objectives.

## References

- Abbasi, G.A., Kumaravelu, J., Goh, Y.N., Singh, K.S.D. (2021) Understanding the intention to revisit a destination by expanding the theory of planned behavior (TPB). *Spanish Journal of Marketing*- vol.25 no.2, pp.282-311, available at <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/SJME-12-2019-0109/full/html>, last accessed 2022/10/29.
- Abdullah, S. I. N. W., Lui, E. (2018) Satisfaction Drivers And Revisit Intention of International Tourists in Malaysia. *Journal of Tourism, Hospitality and Environment Management*, 3(9), 1–13.
- Alegre, J., Cladera, M. (2009) Analysing the effect of satisfaction and previous visits on tourist intentions to return. *European Journal of Marketing* Vol. 43 No. 5/6, 2009 pp. 670-685.
- Alegre, J., Juaneda, C., (2006) Destination loyalty: Consumers' economic behavior. *Annals of tourism research*, 33(3), pp.684-706.
- Ariesta, D., Sukotjo, E., Suleman, N.R., (2020) The effect of attraction, accessibility and facilities on destination images and it's impact on revisit intention in the marine tourism of the Wakatobi Regency, *International Journal of Scientific & Technology Research*.
- Barrientos, F., Martin, J., De Luca, C., Tondelli, S., Gómez-García-Bermejo, J., Casanova, E.Z., (2021) Computational methods and rural cultural & natural heritage: A review. *Journal of Cultural Heritage*, 49, pp.250-259.
- Beirman, D., (2003). *Restoring tourism destinations in crisis. A strategic marketing approach*, McPherson's Printing Group, Maryborough.
- Bonn, M. A., Joseph-Mathews, S. M., Dai, M., Hayes, S., Cave, J. (2007) Heritage/Cultural Attraction Atmospherics: Creating the Right Environment for the Heritage/Cultural Visitor, *Journal of Travel Research*, 45 (3): 345-54.
- Buhalis, D., (2000) Marketing the competitive destination of the future, *Tourism Management* 21(1), pp.97–116. available at [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0261-5177\(99\)00095-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0261-5177(99)00095-3), last accessed 18.05.2022.
- Canale, R.R., De Simone, E., Di Maio, A., Parenti, B., (2019) *UNESCO World Heritage sites and tourism attractiveness: The case of Italian provinces. Land Use Policy* 85 pp.114-120.
- Camilleri, M.A., (2018) *Travel Marketing, Tourism Economics and the Airline Product. An Introduction to Theory and Practice*, Springer International Publishing.
- Căndeia, M., Simion, T., Bogan, E., (2012). *Patrimoniul turistic al României*, Editura Universitară, București.

- Constantin, C.P., Ispas, A., Candrea, A.N., (2022), Examining the relationships between visitors profile, satisfaction and revisit intentions: Evidence from Romanian ecotourism destinations. *Land*, 11(2), p.186. available at <https://doi.org/10.3390/land11020186>, last accessed 2022/10/25.
- Fernández-Hernández, C., Araña, J.E., de León, J., León, C.J., (2022) *Tourists' Preferences for Stargazing Land Resources*. *Land*, 11, 198. available at <https://doi.org/10.3390/land11020198>, last accessed 2022/10/25.
- Ghaderi, Z., Saboori, B., Khoshkam, M., (2016) *Does security matter in tourism demand? Current Issues in Tourism*, 1–14. available at <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2016.1161603>, last accessed 2022/10/29.
- Hill, G., (2002) *How does the natural heritage contribute to local economic development in Scotland?* Workshop: Options for Local Biodiversity Management in Protected Areas, Bulgaria, available at [https://macaulay.webarchive.hutton.ac.uk/workshop/bulgaria02/garyhill\\_bulgaria02.pdf](https://macaulay.webarchive.hutton.ac.uk/workshop/bulgaria02/garyhill_bulgaria02.pdf), last accessed 2022/11/01.
- Hu, Y., Ritchie, J.R.B., (1993) Measuring Destination Attractiveness: A Contextual Approach. *Journal of Travel Research*, 32(2), pp. 25–34. available at <https://doi.org/10.1177/004728759303200204>, last accessed 2022/10/29.
- Lificiu, P., (2011). *Patrimoniul natural al României*, Forumul Ecologiștilor din România, București.
- McNeely, J. A., Thorsell, J. W., (1989) Jungles, Mountains, and Islands: How Tourism Can Help Conserve the Natural Heritage. *World Leisure & Recreation*, 31(4), 29–39. available at <https://doi.org/10.1080/10261133.1989.10559089>, last accessed 2022/11/02.
- Misiura, S., (2006) *Heritage marketing*. Routledge.
- Mitova, R., Borisova, B., Koulov, B., (2021) Digital Marketing of Bulgarian Natural Heritage for Tourism and Recreation. *Sustainability*, 13, 13071, available at <https://doi.org/10.3390/su132313071>, last accessed 2022/11/02.
- National Institute of Statistics, <http://statistici.insse.ro:8077/tempo-online/#/pages/tables/insse-table> , last accessed 2022/10/18.
- Neacșu, N., Băltărețu, A., Neacșu, M., Drăghilă, M., (2016) *Resurse și destinații turistice în România*, Ed. a 3-a, Editura Universitară, București.
- Nikolova, M., Nedkov, S., Dimitrov, S., Borisova, B., Zhiyanski, M., (2021) *Conceptualization of natural heritage in the context of the ecosystem approach. Scientific notices. Heritage BG Bulletin*, (1). available at [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/359370141\\_Conceptualization\\_of\\_Natural\\_Heritage\\_in\\_the\\_Context\\_of\\_the\\_Ecosystem\\_Approach](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/359370141_Conceptualization_of_Natural_Heritage_in_the_Context_of_the_Ecosystem_Approach), last accessed 2022/10/15.
- Nursyamsiah, R.A., Setiawan, R.P., (2022) Does place attachment act as a mediating variable that affects revisit intention toward a revitalized park?, *Alexandria Engineering Journal*, available at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aej.2022.08.030>, last accessed 2022/10/19.
- Pai, C., Kang, S., Liu, Y., Zheng, Y., (2021) An Examination of Revisit Intention Based on Perceived Smart Tourism Technology Experience. *Sustainability*, 13, 1007, available at <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13021007>, last accessed 2022/11/03.
- Ray, N., Das, D., Kumar, R., (2018) *Tourism marketing: A strategic approach*. New York, Apple Academic Press.
- Rather, R.A., Hollebeck, L.D., Rasoolimanesh, S.M., (2021) First-Time versus Repeat Tourism Customer Engagement, Experience, and Value Cocreation: An Empirical Investigation. *Journal of Travel Research*, 61, 549 - 564.
- Statista, (2022), *Share of travel and tourism's total contribution to GDP in European Union member countries (EU 27) and the United Kingdom (UK) from 2019 to 2021*, Published by

- Statista Research Department, available at <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1228395/travel-and-tourism-share-of-gdp-in-the-eu-by-country/> last accessed 2022/10/30.
- Stumpf, P., Vojtko, V., Janecek, P., (2020) Do European tourists intend to revisit the same countries? Effect of satisfaction in European Union destinations. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 20(4), 398–417. available at <https://doi.org/10.1080/15022250.2020.1807405> last accessed 2022/11/10.
  - Su, W.S., Hsu, C.C., (2018) Huang, C.H. and Chang, L.F., Setting attributes and revisit intention as mediated by place attachment. *Social Behavior and Personality: an international journal*, 46(12), pp.1967-1981.
  - Tosun, C., Dedeoğlu, B.B., Fyall, A., (2015) Destination service quality, affective image and revisit intention: The moderating role of past experience. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 4(4), pp.222-234. available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2015.08.002> , last accessed 2022/11/03.
  - Uppink, L., Soshkin, M., (2022) *Travel & Tourism Development Index 2021 Rebuilding for a Sustainable and Resilient Future*, World Economic Forum, available at [https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_Travel\\_Tourism\\_Development\\_2021.pdf](https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Travel_Tourism_Development_2021.pdf) last accessed 2022/11/03.
  - UNESCO, (1972) Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, available at <http://whc.unesco.org/?cid=175>, last accessed 2022/09/30.
  - UNESCO, (2019) Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, Available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/compendium/154> , last accessed 2022/10/19.
  - UNESCO, (2021) Cutting Edge. Bringing cultural tourism back in the game, available at <https://en.unesco.org/news/cutting-edge-bringing-cultural-tourism-back-game> last accessed 2022/10/22.
  - Wang, Z., Yang, P., Li, D., (2021) *The influence of heritage tourism destination reputation on tourist consumption behavior: A case study of world cultural heritage shaolin temple*. *SAGE Open*, 11(3), available at <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211030275> , last accessed 2022/10/11.
  - World Travel & Tourism Council (2021) Global Economic Impact & Trends 2021, available at <https://wtcc.org/Portals/0/Documents/Reports/2021/Global%20Economic%20Impact%20and%20Trends%202021.pdf> last accessed 2022/09/11.
  - World Travel & Tourism Council (2022) Economic Impact 2022, available at <https://wtcc.org/Portals/0/Documents/Reports/2022/EIR2022-Global%20Trends.pdf> last accessed 2022/10/15.
  - Yin, J., Cheng, Y., Bi, Y. and Ni, Y., (2020) Tourists perceived crowding and destination attractiveness: The moderating effects of perceived risk and experience quality. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 18, p.100489.