GREEN ROAD PROJECT FROM AN ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE PERSPECTIVE:
STAKEHOLDERS, ALTERNATIVES AND CONFLICTS

There is a two-way interaction between tourism and the environment. On the one hand, many forms of tourism depend on the environment and natural beauties in order to sustain themselves and use the nature as the main resource in many aspects; and on the other hand, it has drastic negative impacts on the environment both in terms of land and resource use, waste generation, and carbon emissions. In general, these adverse impacts are not taken into consideration properly when tourism policies are formulated, or they are even ignored on purpose in many instances and nature is sacrificed in favor of economic benefits, causing many socio-environmental conflicts around the world. This study assesses the socio-environmental conflict around the Eastern Black Sea Green Road Project and aims to reveal the attitudes of the stakeholders in the region. The Green Road Project was developed as a solution to the difficult and unsafe transportation problem between the plateaus and is put forward by DOKA (Eastern Black Sea Development Agency) as connecting “…the important plateaus and tourism centers of eight provinces and [allowing] domestic and foreign tourists coming to the region to travel along the determined route in an improved physical structure" (DOKAP, p.24, 2016). This study reveals that national tourism policies and implementations focus rather on the economic dimension and mostly ignore ecological distribution and procedural justice issues. This in turn causes local level ecological distribution conflicts and prevents an encompassing, just, and sustainable tourism practice.

Environmental Justice, Tourism Planning, Tourism Policies, Ecotourism, Stakeholder Management