

## **Abstract**

Ecotourism and activation of capacity building in rural areas in Iran, and in particular in Sistan region, is one of the sustainable development indicators, and an opportunity that could transform the economy of low-income rural areas, and a tool for new and sustainable income, indigenous employment boom, and local income growth and improve the economy of the deprived areas. Sistan has the potential for tourism, so, to increase the stay of tourists, there is a need for spaces that meet the recreational needs of today, and also a good collection of authentic Iranian and Islamic culture to introduce to others. The main purpose of this study: Evaluation of the capacity building capacity of rural settlements in Sistan region, and prioritize them through: Adaptation of the criteria and criteria of Creation of Ecotourism to the characteristics and conditions of each habitat. The research method was descriptive survey and data collection tool was a questionnaire. According to a memorandum of understanding between the Office of Cultural Heritage and the Housing Foundation, 20 villages with the capacity to create an accommodation center have been identified in Sistan. All 20 villages (4 from each city) were selected as the statistical sample. The researcher then completed a checklist of village facilities and features by visiting each village and field observations and interviewing the village councilor and members of the village council. Then, by examining the residential units of the village, he selected the eligible units from each village that met the criteria for creating an eco-resort, and the housing checklist for each unit was completed. Finally, in 14 villages, 37 eligible housing units were found. By studying the research literature, the criteria that are effective in assessing the capacity of ecotourism residences were extracted. Then, these criteria were prioritized using hierarchical analysis and expert questionnaire. At the end of the study villages were prioritized according to these criteria. According to the results, the criterion of indigenous architecture and culture was the most important criterion of ecotourism. The criteria for infrastructure and services and economic were next. Compared to cities: Zahak city had the highest capacity of eco-tourism in rural settlements of Sistan..

**Keywords:** Evaluation, Prioritization, Indigenous Ecotourism, Rural Settlements, Sistan



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# **Evaluating the Capacities of Establishing an Ecotourism Residence in Rural Settlements in the Sistan Region**

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