



a programme funded by the European Union /  
un programme financé par l'Union européenne /  
برنامج ممول من الإتحاد الأوروبي



A HERITAGE TRAIL  
ALONG THE PHOENICIAN  
MARITIME ROUTES  
AND HISTORIC PORT CITIES  
OF THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA.

# Tourism in Tyre. Preliminary Remarks

October 2010

*by Rosita Di Peri*

## Index

<b>1. Paralleli and Mare Nostrum(abstract)</b>	3
<b>2. Introductory and Methodological Note</b>	3
<b>3. Administrative Organization</b>	4
<b>4. Governance of the Tourism System in Lebanon</b>	5
<b>5. The Tourism System in Lebanon: An Overall Picture</b>	7
<b>6. The Tourism Sector in Tyre According to the Interviews: Problems and Prospects</b>	9
<i>Awareness</i>	9
<i>Governance and the Tourism System</i>	10
<i>Tourism and Local Development</i>	11
<i>New Possibilities for Development: Projects</i>	12
<b>7. Final remarks</b>	13
<b>8. Annex</b>	14
List of Interviews	
Questionnaire	

## **1- Paralleli and Mare Nostrum (abstract)**

As part of the Mare Nostrum project, the Paralleli Institute has the task of conducting an initial reconnaissance-mapping in Rhodes (Greece) and Tyre (Lebanon), two cities where in a second phase it will be test the technique of participative planning. The objective of the mapping is to provide a detailed and concise picture of the situation in the two cities from the perspective of tourism in order to prepare a report that identifies the problems, but also the strong points, of the sector. A second correlated aim is to provide some valuable ideas for the construction of possible alternative/sustainable tourist routes in the two cities to connect the so-called “waterfront” to the major archaeological sites. This work will be used in the second phase of the project (conception and creation of the tourist itineraries), and for the participatory planning approach.

The selected methodology was that of in-depth interviews with a range of stakeholders from different fields related to the tourism sector.

## **2- Introductory and Methodological Note**

The information in this report is the result of a series of meetings held with stakeholders in the private and public sectors of the city of Tyre who are involved in various ways in the tourism sector, in the governance of the territory and in the promotion of its architectural and cultural heritage.

The meetings were held from 27 January to 6 February 2010, during a mission conducted by the curator of this report. Some of the interviews were led by the regional coordinator of the southern project, Fabrizio Fucello, after the mission ended (because it was impossible to set up appointments for some of the meetings). The work was well supported by the local partner of the project, the city of Tyre. Therefore, in addition to the people interviewed, we would particularly like to thank Sara Hassan and Hassan Dbouk, who made this work possible.

Given this approach, this report is not intended to be a complete and comprehensive study of the tourism sector of the city of Tyre, but rather a collection of information, projects and ideas that may be useful in a phase of decision making.

Unfortunately, in some respects this report is incomplete because of the lack of cooperation from some of the institutions with which it was impossible to organize meetings or receive written information.

### 3- Administrative Organization

Lebanon's administrative structure dates from the late Ottoman Empire, when the first city worthy of this name was created in the Shouf region, immediately followed by Beirut in 1877. That city remains the actual administrative unit of Lebanon since the *muhafaza* and the *qada'*, two decentralized entities, are essentially devoid of powers and their own resources<sup>1</sup>. An Administrative Decree that sought to regulate such entities existed at the time of the French Mandate (n.1208), but the cities were institutionalized with various laws after independence in 1943. The law governing this ambit, which is still in force, is Law n°118 of 1972. However, despite this "seniority", the first municipal elections were held in Lebanon only in 1963 and ironically were also the last (at least until those of 1998). In fact, the city councils elected in 1963, for which a term of four years was provided, were extended until 1969 and saw their authority eroded day after day to the advantage of the *qaimaqam* and the *muhafiz*, an expression of the central government<sup>3</sup>. Both of these positions are in fact appointed by the Ministry, and thus non-elective, and one of their functions is to implement the policy directives of the central government<sup>4</sup>.

Even though the Taif Agreement of 1989 placed great emphasis on the need to launch administrative decentralization again by strengthening local democracy, such proclamations have not translated into concrete actions, but have actually consolidated the prerogatives of local officials<sup>5</sup>. Lebanon is now divided into eight *muhafaza* (governorships) and twenty-five *qada'*.

The city of Tyre (about 117,000 inhabitants) is located in the *qada'* of Tyre, one of the *qada'* of the *muhafaza* of Southern Lebanon. It is bounded on the west by the Mediterranean Sea, to the north by the *muhafaza* of Mount Lebanon, to the east by that of the Beqaa and the Nabatiyeh, and to the south by the border with Israel. It is located about 83 km from Beirut, at about 10 meters above sea level, and covers an area of 675 hectares. Tyre consists of a City Council composed of 21 members elected for six years by direct universal suffrage. It enjoys financial and administrative autonomy, but is under the control of the central government.

The city is part of one of the 37 Federations of Municipalities that were established by a law of 1977<sup>6</sup>. Following the municipal elections of 1988, 17 new Federations were created to give new life to these institutions of administrative decentralization, which in truth have little political and decision-making power. That of Tyre, in particular, was established by decree number 9761 in March 2003. Its administrative center is the city of Tyre.

The city does not have its own airport, but has two ports. The first is essentially dedicated to fishing and recreational activities; the second is a commercial port and one of five Lebanese ports devoted to trade in this sector. It is connected to the capital by networks of highways and to the rest of the country by a substantial number of roads.

---

<sup>1</sup> See R. Di Peri, *Il Libano contemporaneo*, Carocci, Roma 2009, appendix "La struttura amministrativa".

<sup>2</sup> The text of the law can be consulted on the web site of the Lebanese Ministry of the Interior at [http://www.moim.gov.lb/ui/moim/PDF/LoiMunicipalites\\_versionFr.pdf](http://www.moim.gov.lb/ui/moim/PDF/LoiMunicipalites_versionFr.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Z. Baroud, *Gouvernance locale et réforme institutionnelle au Liban: Les municipalités, un outil d'innovation? Analyse et étude de cas (1998-2004)*, World Bank Group – Lebanese Center for Policy Studies, Février 2004, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup> See, *Loi sur les municipalités* n° 118, 1977.

<sup>5</sup> See the text of the Taif Agreement *Document d'entente pour le Liban*, in «Le Cahier de l'Orient», 4<sup>e</sup> Trimestre 1989- 1er Trimestre 1990, n° 16-17, pp. 115-128.

<sup>6</sup> Les fédérations ou unions sont créées par décret, soit à la demande des municipalités (à titre facultatif), soit sur l'initiative du ministre de l'Intérieur (à titre impératif). Elles peuvent se constituer d'un nombre illimité de municipalité et jouissent d'une personnalité morale et d'une autonomie financière et administrative. Elles exercent leurs compétences conformément à la loi relative aux municipalités (art. 114). [www.localiban.org](http://www.localiban.org)

## 4- Governance of the Tourism System in Lebanon<sup>7</sup>

The Lebanon Tourism Service was originally created in the 1930s within the Ministry of National Economy. Its main role was to monitor and supervise the industry.

In 1948, the General Tourism Commission (CGT, or Commissariat Général du Tourisme, de l'Estivage et de l'Hivernage) was established to undertake the following tasks:

- To inform ministerial departments about the needs of the tourism sector and to assist with decision making;
- To promote Lebanon overseas; and
- To monitor private tourism enterprises and professions.

Throughout the 1960s, CGT played a significant role in promoting Lebanese tourism. Major tourism projects were carried out, and Lebanese attractions were promoted, especially in neighboring countries, the largest tourist market for Lebanon.

In 1959, CGT was transferred and annexed to the Ministry of Information, which became the Ministry of Information, Orientation, and Tourism. However, its role declined with the creation in 1962 of the National Tourism Council (Conseil National du Tourisme), a private association charged with conducting all tasks related to tourism promotion and investment.

The growth of tourism on a global scale led to the creation of the Lebanon Ministry of Tourism in 1966 (law no.21/66, issued on March 29, 1966). The Ministry of Tourism was composed of the General Directorate of Tourism (Direction Générale des Affaires Touristiques). Decree no.7142, issued on April 20, 1967, defined the specific tasks that fell under the separate responsibility of the National Tourism Council, including overseas promotion and execution of tourism projects. However, this decree was repealed by Decree no.2829, issued on October 10, 1992, which nullified the tasks entrusted to the National Tourism Council and transferred them to the Ministry of Tourism.

The General Directorate of Antiquities (Direction Générale des Antiquités), which was once part of the Ministry of Education and Fine Arts, was attached to the Ministry of Tourism when it was established in 1966. In 1992, it was re-annexed to the Ministry of Culture and Higher Education. However, a department charged with developing tourism at archaeological and historical sites was also created within the Ministry of Tourism.

### **The Role of the Ministry of Tourism**

As the official tourism body for Lebanon, the Ministry of Tourism is entrusted with the following tasks:

- Promoting tourism;
- Regulating, coordinating, and monitoring tourism professions;
- Regulating, coordinating, and monitoring private companies and associations working in the tourism sector;
- Promoting and executing tourism investment projects; facilitating and simplifying rules and requirements related to these projects;
- Applying laws and regulations related to tourism and tourism enterprises;
- Developing archaeological and historical sites and museums for tourism purposes.

---

<sup>7</sup> This information is taken from the site of the Lebanese Ministry of Tourism <http://www.lebanon-tourism.gov.lb>

Until the early 2000s, Lebanon lacked a policy document that gathered together all the information about land management from various perspectives. This gap was filled in 2009 after a long process initiated in 2002 that saw the development of the SDATL (Schéma Directeur d'Aménagement du Territoire Libanais). The SDATL was created for the CDR (Council for Development and Reconstruction) in collaboration with the Directorate General of Urbanism, and on behalf of a consortium grouping together the Institut d'Aménagement et d'Urbanisme de la Région Ile-de-France (IAURIF) and Dar al Handasah (Shaïr & Partners). Its role is to set out the priorities and the general principles of management that the Lebanese government must devote itself to in the coming years to comply with local plans of urbanism<sup>8</sup>.

---

<sup>8</sup> A. Seon, M. Diouddonnat, V. Walleart, *Les Autorités locale set Régionales dans la nouvelle gouvernance Méditerranéenne*, Institut de la Méditerranée, Marseille 2010, p. 50.

## 5- The Tourism System in Lebanon: An Overall Picture

The sustained economic growth that saw the emergence of Lebanon in the regional context during the 1960s also had important repercussions in the tourism sector, which developed considerably in those years by taking advantage of such favorable circumstances. In 1972, the number of tourists was estimated at 1,270,000, of which 373,000 were non-Arabs<sup>9</sup>. Tourism practices at the time were comparable with those found in other countries in the Mediterranean basin. In fact, Lebanon attracted and still attracts tourism because of its climate, its coastline and its artistic and cultural heritage. Tourism at the time was primarily seasonal, with peaks between May and September, and individual travel was more common than organized group trips. Most of the tourists (75%) resided in the hotels of the capital, Beirut, with average stays of a week that normally included day trips to the most popular tourist destinations. Obviously, this type of program was facilitated by the ease of movement and the short distances. Then, as now, tourism was crucial to the economy of Lebanon: in 1972 there was already a turnover of 207 million dollars.

Before the civil war, Lebanon was therefore a well-known and sought after tourist destination thanks to its 300 days of sunshine a year and the variety of its scenery, but especially because of a political vision strongly convinced that the tourist sector should be one of the country's main economic resources. Above all, it was a place where tourism was becoming an "avant-garde system" well-informed about the importance of the environment, the fight against pollution to preserve the landscape, and attention to the client in terms of personalized tourism<sup>10</sup>.

These aspirations would be shattered during the 1970s, with the breakout of the bloody civil war in 1975 that would shake the country for fifteen long years.

Apart from the consequences that the war had on the territory from the economic, international and social perspective (destruction, forced displacement of populations, missing persons, etc.), if we look at the tourism sector as a whole (a sector that obviously came to a complete halt in those years), we can see that there was a considerable problem concerning the production and consequent access to data after the war. Tourism worthy of the name would be apparent in the country only starting in the mid-1990s, which is also the period when statistically significant data began being produced once again.

In reality, the question of data is a major issue in the case of Lebanon. Even though a research center responsible for the development and dissemination of data was set up within the Ministry of Tourism in 1994, these operations met with many difficulties due to poor collaborations with both the public sector and the private sector<sup>11</sup>. In addition, data regarding Lebanese, Palestinian and Syrian tourists is not released by the Sureté Generale for security reasons.

The Lebanese Ministry of Tourism does not have a method to assess domestic tourism. Therefore, the tourist activity can only be measured by the following parameters: arrivals by nationality, number of visitors to artistic and archaeological sites, number of clients in accommodation facilities, and various activities in the public and private sectors.

Obviously, tourism is not encouraged by the uncertainty of the regional context that Lebanon finds itself operating in. For example, at the end of 2005 tourist operators were expecting one of the best summer tourism seasons in recent years and it was completely obliterated by the Israeli invasion of 2006. We must also remember events

---

<sup>9</sup> Source: Ministry of Tourism 2003.

<sup>10</sup> D. Barrat, *Le Liban Escale du temps*, Editions du Centurion, Paris 1967.

<sup>11</sup> For example, many operators are reluctant to publish information about their commercial turnover because they fear tax investigations by the government.

like September 11<sup>th</sup>, which had a positive impact on regional tourism, but a negative impact at the international level.

Certainly, the percentage of European tourists decreased significantly after September 11<sup>th</sup>. If we look at data published by the Ministry of Tourism for 2009, for example, we see a greater incidence of Arab travelers, 42% compared to only 27% of Europeans<sup>12</sup>.

Based on a report on the Lebanese tourism sector analyzing tourist data between 1995 and 2004, there clearly appears to be a positive evolution, especially with regard to accommodation facilities<sup>13</sup>. This has been possible mainly because of heavy investments in this sector, partly due to an increase in the total tourist flow from the end of the civil war. It should be noted, however, that overall the remaining accommodation facilities are still localized and very concentrated, especially in the zones of Beirut and Mount Lebanon, even though changes are taking place very rapidly.

One area that is still a problem regards architectural resources in general. Despite the global significance of Lebanese archaeological sites, their preservation and conservation remains one of the painful footnotes in the touristic heritage of the country. In 1995, the Ministry of Tourism launched a plan for Reconstruction and Development of the Tourism Sector that also included some recommendations concerning the most important archaeological sites in the country; it did not lead to significant improvements however. Nevertheless, it should be noted that since 1995 the General Directorate of Archaeology (under the Ministry of Tourism) has carefully taken possession of sites that were abandoned or operated by private individuals.

This includes ambitious projects like the one promoted by the World Bank on Cultural Heritage and Urban Development for the urban regeneration and development of the cultural heritage (CHUD). Proposed to the Ministry of Tourism, but managed by CDR (Council for Reconstruction and Development), its aim is to promote sustainable tourism development and the integration of the main architectural and archaeological centers of the country<sup>14</sup>.

Thanks to the emergence of *ad hoc* associations in Lebanon, as well as greater attention to the territory, there has been an obvious increase in the development of culinary, sports, and recreational tourism, among other kinds. One initiative, for example, is the tourist guide **A Complete Insider's Guide to Lebanon!**, which presents the country from a local perspective by collecting and offering a good deal of little-known information with careful attention to the issues of sustainability, care for the environment and responsible tourism.

After the war in 2006, which was a new and major setback for tourism in Lebanon (and in the southern region in particular), southern Lebanon witnessed at least two "phenomena" that somehow opened up new avenues to a more careful promotion and enhancement of the area. Firstly, there was the creation of a number of regional museums and tourist sites related to the effects of the war and promoted especially by organizations and associations directly linked to the Hezbollah party, which created a new form of "devotional" tourism, mainly domestic (e.g. the Khiam Detention Center which has become a museum of the resistance). Secondly, the arrival of numerous troops linked to the UNIFIL contingent based at the border with Israel made it necessary to adapt and create new accommodations at various levels and also produced significant changes, especially in the city of Tyre (e.g., everything related to the rental sector).

---

<sup>12</sup> Obviously, not having data relative to the reasons for travel, it is not clear how much of that percentage should be considered tourism in the strictest sense and how much may be included in other categories. <http://www.lebanon-tourism.gov.lb/>

<sup>13</sup> B. Dewailly, J. M. Ovazza, *Le tourisme au Liban: quand l'action ne fait plus système*, in Berriane M. (ed.), *Tourisme des nationaux, tourisme des étrangers : quelles articulations en Méditerranée ?*, Institut Universitaire Européen de Florence 2004.

<sup>14</sup> For more detailed information, consult the Projects and Operations sections of the World Bank web site <http://web.worldbank.org>

## 6- The Tourism Sector in Tyre According to the Interviews: Problems and Prospects

During the mission in Tyre, 28 interviews were performed that took into account the complex and intricate denominational division of the city and its physical and social characteristics. Regional coordinator Fabrizio Fucello played a key role in selecting the sample, which is based on the numerous acquaintances he had made locally as the result of his long experience in the region.

The meetings were very rich in terms of suggestions and in highlighting a constantly changing socio-geographical and tourist context. The interviews dealt with many issues ranging from purely "tourism" questions, in the strictest sense of the word, to those more specifically interconnecting tourism, regional and local development. We can say that all, or nearly all, of the respondents view tourism as an opportunity, but an opportunity with certain limitations that must be stressed, especially in a region like Tyre. In particular, we can argue that "tourism topics" are interwoven with other crucial local, regional, and international matters. The interviews mainly emphasized the seasonal nature of tourism (for the most part concentrated in spring and summer), the lack of a local component, and the daily flow of tourists (primarily related to tourist flows in the capital). Many also pointed out that even though important changes are underway, the quality and number of accommodation facilities is very meager, especially in the oldest part of town.

At a deeper level, the interviews revealed a number of recurring macro topics: awareness; regional governance and the tourism system; tourism and local development.

### ► **Awareness**

Raising awareness and improving better information and its circulation are without question the topics that **all the respondents** touched upon. The question of awareness was then delineated on many levels.

- A first level regards *awareness of the region*. Almost all respondents stressed the need for a full-scale operation to encourage awareness of the region by the local citizens (and the Lebanese in general). The people know little about their own territory, its resources, its attractions and consequently its potential. This is true not only from the perspective of tourism, but also concerning the possibilities/opportunities the city offers (new information points, new initiatives, new meeting places, etc.). Greater promotion of the local context, its resources, and its potential (handicrafts, cultural heritage, etc.) is a requirement the respondents see as one of the tasks of the City administration in particular.
- A second level regards the *civic sense*, the awareness of the topics of preservation and protection. There was general agreement about the need to raise awareness of key issues such as environmental protection, sustainable development, and methods of preserving the cultural heritage and enhancing it. This is premised on the basic training of young generations either through direct experience in the field or through more structured activities at the school level.
- A third level concerns an *awareness of and promotion of regional projects*. Many of the respondents appeared uncomfortable when asked whether they knew the current plans for the development of their city, either because they were not aware of any or because they could not adequately keep track of developments. It should be emphasized that at least 60% of respondents claimed to be familiar with the

CHUD plan projects managed by the CDR, but very few were able to explain they consisted of, what the total duration of work was and the timeline for their completion.

It should also be pointed out that the respondents are aware of certain inner and outer limitations: some refer to the socio-cultural and denominational context that could somehow limit the development of tourism (e.g. some religious leaders, both Muslim and Christian, pointed out that mass tourism development could alter the social fabric by bringing with it entertainment and amusements foreign to the local culture); a large number of others highlighted the geo-political problems of developing regional tourism, mainly in connection with Lebanon's proximity to the state of Israel (possible new invasions, etc.).

### ► **Governance and the Tourism System**

The interviews paint a very fragmented picture of tourism, both in terms of management and the planning of interventions in the territory. Nearly all respondents agree that the various bodies involved in the management of regional interventions (CDR, the City, the Ministry, etc.) should have greater weight and, above all, better coordination between them.

Many noted the lack of government incentives for the preservation of specific areas or buildings. On the other hand, the private sector is not particularly interested in investing in the southern part of the country because of its political instability and small profit margin<sup>15</sup>. The respondents complain about the absence of a marketing of the city (its history, environment, etc.) that incentivizes the private sector. Since no data has been made available about marketing investments, many respondents feel that most investments are concentrated around the capital and the northern part of the country. One of the areas most often mentioned that between the cities of Tyre and Byblos. Although the cities have developed very differently because of differentiated investments, they have both been declared World Heritage Sites by UNESCO because of their cultural and archaeological heritage.

The Ministry of Tourism is almost never mentioned by the respondents as a possible promoter of interventions in the region, a sign of the lack of confidence in state institutions. The Ministry is described as an entity that is difficult to communicate with and which has at heart above all the interests of the capital and the north, but not the south. There is great confidence in such bodies as the World Bank, the CDR, and, to a lesser extent, the European Union.

In general, people feel they are not sufficiently involved in decision making and, above all, that they are not adequately informed. The lack of an information system is very strongly felt by many. From a strictly tourist point of view, most of the complaints concern the lack of tourist information points in the city, of maps, brochures and pamphlets, of adequate signs, of parking and of coordinated and integrated traffic management. From a more general perspective, the most important feature missing regards the lack of *ad hoc* publicity of the existing resources: the port and the fishermen, the nature reserve, the underwater archaeological heritage and the principal archaeological sites themselves.

Some respondents suggest that this problem could be resolved by promoting an integrated tourism plan for the entire region and not just the tourist sector. As many told us, "in Lebanon, the system is very liberal. The government rarely interferes, but that means there's no strategy or planning". In this regard, however, not having the opinions

---

<sup>15</sup> The one investing a great deal in the city and in the entire region is Hezbollah, through the construction of hypermarkets, restaurants, etc.

of certain categories of respondents remains a problem. During our work, we were not given the names of any associations of hotel owners, tour guides, restaurant owners, etc. One of the most interesting aspects coming out of the interviews was that, in a certain sense, this personal or private management of the tourist sector causes a myriad of small, individual, initiatives that are uncoordinated and often in competition with each other. The stakeholders we interviewed say that the tourism operators lack a comprehensive view of what tourism development is and how it should be managed and that the City administration needs to work very hard on this critical issue.

On the other hand, as we have said, the city of Tyre is experiencing seasonal tourism not tied to large numbers. Nevertheless, it has seen a considerable increase in tourists, especially since the events of 2006 concluded (in 2009 the figures spoke of 15,000 visitors, 5,000 of whom were non-Lebanese). Thus far, governance of this phenomenon has been left to individual initiative and lacks a regulatory document for shared and joint planning. At present, in terms of hotels and infrastructures, the city could not support a significant increase in tourist flows. As many have pointed out, this fact is a physical and structural limitation that tourist operators and a future integrated tourism plan should take into consideration. On the other hand, many have noted the lack of a qualified tourism offer. There are practically no local tour operators who promote integrated tourist packages just for the city of Tyre and its environs. The few travel agencies operating in the city mainly deal with ticket sales or organizing trips to other Arab and Lebanese locations.

Again regarding matters concerning the governance of tourism, the stakeholders often said they were not aware of specific laws or regulations to ensure quality or protect sustainable tourism. The projects are carried out according to the needs of the moment without a legal or development plan behind them. As many have witnessed, this is creating uncontrolled development of the sector. In particular, respondents emphasized the almost total lack of planning restrictions, especially since 1989 when the civil war ended, which has caused chaotic and unregulated development in many areas of the city, including the old part.

### **Tourism and Local Development**

The financial aspect is certainly the most recurrent element when addressing the topic of tourism and its impact on local development, but it is not the only one. Even though the question of investments is crucial, we must remember that few resources are allocated to the municipalities. As we said in the description of the administrative organization of the territory, municipalities are relatively new institutions with low decision-making power because they are controlled by various and diverse bodies under the central government. Consequently, they have a very limited budget available.

Other key elements are questions related to the enhancement of local resources and training, especially concerning the field of tourism. In terms of training, a few projects have been promoted over the years, especially with specific categories in difficulty such as fishermen, but also for training tour operators like (hotel staff, cooks, etc.), modules to understand how to open and manage a bed & breakfast, and so on. Despite promotion, the projects have had no positive impact and have often been a real failure.

The second aspect, an attempt to stimulate local development through the promotion of the tourism sector as well, is the result of a joint initiative that sees the PACA Region and the Federation of Southern Municipalities working side by side. The challenge is important and foresees a period of supervised training whose aim is not only the empowerment of local institutions that enable better management of the region, but also micro projects to promote local products and resources. This ties in strongly

with what many had to say. The sea, fishing, the traditions of the fishermen, local crafts, places of commerce, food, parks and reserves are a territorial heritage to get to know and better exploit. Even small incentives are needed to do that at first, enough to enable a concrete start-up. By moving on these assumptions alone, one can ensure that the tourism sector has certain positive effects on the labor market and local development. Not only that. This could permit the creation of specific paths that better involve the territory as a whole, for example through a diversification of the tourism offer that takes into account the characteristics of the region itself. As one respondent said "the path of local development is an alphabet that we must introduce into the lexicon of the people."

The UNDP has also worked on these issues for years, primarily dealing with questions about the infrastructures in zones being reconstructed, which is at the basis of any discussion about local development.

Other issues that were raised by most of the respondents and that should be addressed altogether to ensure that tourism development is integrated with that of the region are related to environmental protection (which passes primarily through specific measures against pollution<sup>16</sup>) to an integrated plan that addresses the question of the fishermen, the enhancement of the underwater archaeological relics and of the sea as a resource, and the valorization of a handicraft tradition that is being lost.

### ► ***New Possibilities for Development: Projects***

From what the respondents had to say, it emerged that certain projects were priorities. Firstly, the valorization of the fishermen's port and the traditional role of fishermen in the society and culture of the city. The fishermen are losing their ichthyic resources due to pollution, political instability and also years of fishing by using dynamite. However, the fishing port of Tyre is probably the only one in Lebanon to have kept alive traditions such as the manufacture of fishing nets and small boats.

Secondly, the need for new tourist routes to areas of the city currently excluded from the classic tours. Obviously without neglecting the two magnificent archaeological sites, citizens stress, for example, the need to valorize a place like the nature reserve (one of five protected reserves in the country) and the old Christian quarter.

Another important element that could help enhance the region regards the festivals that are always an attraction for the city of Tyre. Perhaps these could combine cultural and architectural features by being held in prestigious places like the archeological sites.

Another proposed project is the creation of various information points and a real tourist office in the city. This could also help promote the broader region that does not involve just the city of Tyre, but also its environs (Cana, some of the places where tortoises reproduce near the Israeli border, etc.).

We also highlight the nightlife on the beach (jamal) in the summer, which attracts many tourists, especially local ones.

Only a couple of respondents, however, mentioned a possible project to enhance the *Souk* townspeople.

---

<sup>16</sup>The city of Tyre does not have a system of wastewater treatment that ends directly in the sea in 5 different points along the coast.

## 7- Final Remarks

The denominational richness of the city, its historical stratification, but also its citizen's strong sense of identity all play a key role in the creation of projects to revitalize the region and consequently its objectives as well.

The development of an integrated, sustainable tourism sector that takes into account the local context, its history and its prerogatives must deal with at least three recurring elements, which came out somewhat in all the interviews:

- Increased awareness at all levels and in all sectors
- Governance of the tourist system and the region
- Attention to the topics of local development

The report emphasizes the sense of urgency and the strong points of potential developments in the sector. As we have seen, these can be implemented on at least three levels: awareness, governance of the tourism system, and interventions in the region. Below we summarize some of the facets that emerged from the interviews so they can be a starting point for subsequent elaborations, but also for the creation of "active", participative paths of sustainable tourism.

- The activation of citizen awareness campaigns at various levels that have the participation of all administrative bodies (public and private). This should lead to a greater awareness that is the *conditio sine qua non* for the activation of joint, participative projects by and with the population.
- The need for a closer working relationship between (and within) public and private organizations and the authorities involved in tourism in the city and in the country.
- Better coordination between the city center and the outskirts to avoid marginalizing the suburban areas of the country should be the basis for integrated regional planning, especially concerning the tourism sector.
- Greater citizen involvement in regional projects.
- Enhancement of the unexploited strong points in the district such as food and wine products, local handicrafts, underwater archeological ruins, nature reserves, possibly preceded by a feasibility study.
- Creation of integrated tourist routes that tie together the cultural, historical and economic features of the area, with particular attention to the structure of the city, its needs for development, and the safeguarding and protection of the archeological/architectural heritage of the city and the region. In this regard, particular attention should be devoted to the geo-political situation that continues to have a great impact on tourism developments in the city and the entire region.

## 8- Annex

## Interviews

- 1- Nasser Ajami, director, Tyre, March 2010
- 2- Mufti (Sunni religious chief) Dilibalta, Saida, 25/02/2010
- 3- Elie Baradei, owner of restaurant "Petit Phenicienne", Tyre, 28/02/2010
- 4- Raymond Baradei, owner of "Raymond's Pub", Tyre, 28/02/2010
- 5- Sheik Hassan Abdallah, (Shia religious chief), Tyre, 6/03/2010
- 6- Bouna Jacques, (Greek-Orthodox) Greek Orthodox Church of Tyre, 7/03/2010
- 7- Elias Khoury, Greek Orthodox Archbishop, Saida, 30/01/2010
- 8- Nabil el Hajj, Mutran (Maronite) of Tyre, Tyre, 31/01/2010
- 9- Georges Bakhaouni, Greek Catholic Archbishop, Tyre, 01/02/2010
- 10- Aida Mozayan, Red Cross, Tyre, 02/02/2010
- 11- Nisreen Khalifeh, Glassblowing Workshop, 03/02/2010
- 12- Khalie Taha, President of the Tyre Fishermen's Association, Tyre, 02/02/2010
- 13- Congregation of St. Joseph of the Apparition, Sister Maria, Tyre, 02/02/2010
- 14- Ali Khresh, Amal party, Tyre, 04/02/2010
- 15- Jihad Mortada, independent tourist guide, Tyre, 04/02/2010
- 16- Jamal Younes, Geo-maritime Museum, Tyre, 05/02/2010
- 17- Raymond Salha, Hotel al Fanar, Tyre, 05/02/2010
- 18- Aida Ezzedine, Centre Culturel Francaise, Tyre, 01/02/2010
- 19- Ali Badawi, responsible for archaeological sites, Tyre, 3/02/2010
- 20- Ali el Zeddine ADR, Tyre, 01/02/2010
- 21- Ismail Sharaf el din, Head of CLAC (Centre ), Tyre, 31/01/2010
- 22- Nazih Forhat, Ristorant Pub "DIVERS INN", 31/01/2010
- 23- Yousra el Ghorayeb, UNDP, Tyre, 01/02/2010
- 24 - George Ghaby, Administrative Chief, CARITAS, 05/02/2010
- 25- Hassan Hamzi, Manager Nature Reserve, Tyre, 04/02/2010
- 26- Orange House, Mona Khalil, Tyre, 06/02/2010
- 27- Abel al Mutaleb, President of Port Authority, Tyre (05/02/2010)
- 28- Mohammed Fneish, Representative of the Hezbollah Party, Tyre, March 2010

## Questionnaire

1. What is the general situation of the tourist sector in the city of Tyre?
2. What main transformations have occurred in the past ten years?  
If there have been any, are there any important documents explaining these transformations at the urban, touristic and social level?
3. Are there documents and analyses referring to sustainability and new forms of tourism in particular?
4. What is the legal framework?

### **The port/old city: the situation**

5. Do specific projects on the enhancement of the architectural/cultural heritage exist in the city, particularly in the port area and in the medieval town?  
If yes, when and by whom have they been promoted?
6. According to you, what are the main needs of this area?
7. What are the main problems?
8. Are citizens really involved in tourist city planning?
9. Are there local, national or European incentives that are specifically focused on sustainable tourism (environment, local traditions, etc.)?
10. Do local operators work together and in synergy with local institutions?
11. Is there a tourist demand for sustainable paths and projects?

### **The port/old city: perception**

12. Can you imagine a "tourist project" for the port and the old city? Which networks and actors would you like to involve? Can you imagine the main problems to afford?
13. According to you, what aspects should potentially be valorized?
14. Which economic stakeholders should be involved?