



ARISTOTLE
UNIVERSITY
OF THESSALONIKI



Sustainable tourism local cluster development in protected areas: The case of Parnassos

Stella Kostopoulou, Associate Professor, School of Economics, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Thekla Tsitsoni, Professor, School of Forestry & Natural Environment, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, and President of Parnassos National Park Management Body

Theodora Lanara, MSc Forester, Scientific Staff, Parnassos National Park Management Body

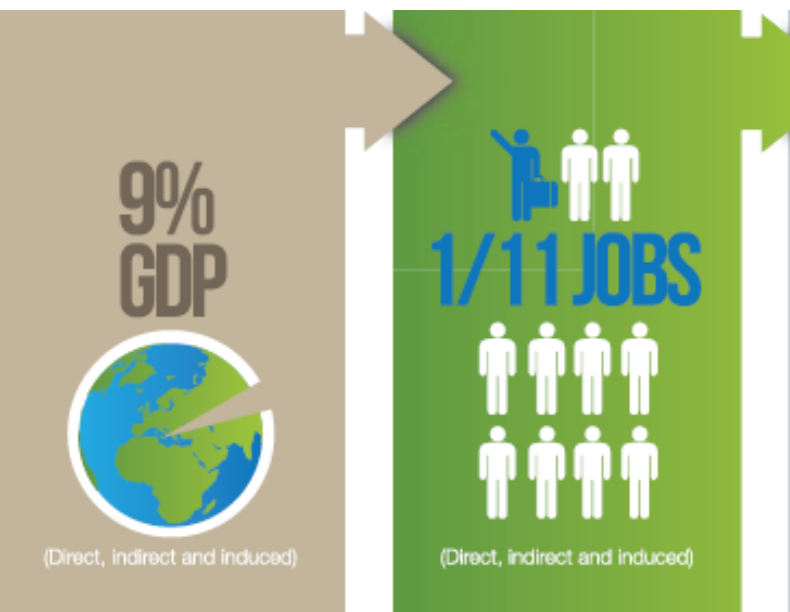
International Workshop

Information Technology, Sustainable Development, Scientific Network & Nature Protection

Varosi, Edessa 9 October 2017

Tourism: a dynamic global industry

Global tourism key figures



one of the largest and fastest growing economic sectors in the world



Tourism evolution since 1950 - trends and forecast

1950 : 25 mn

1980 : 77 mn

1990 : 438 mn

2000 : 684 mn

2010 : 940 mn

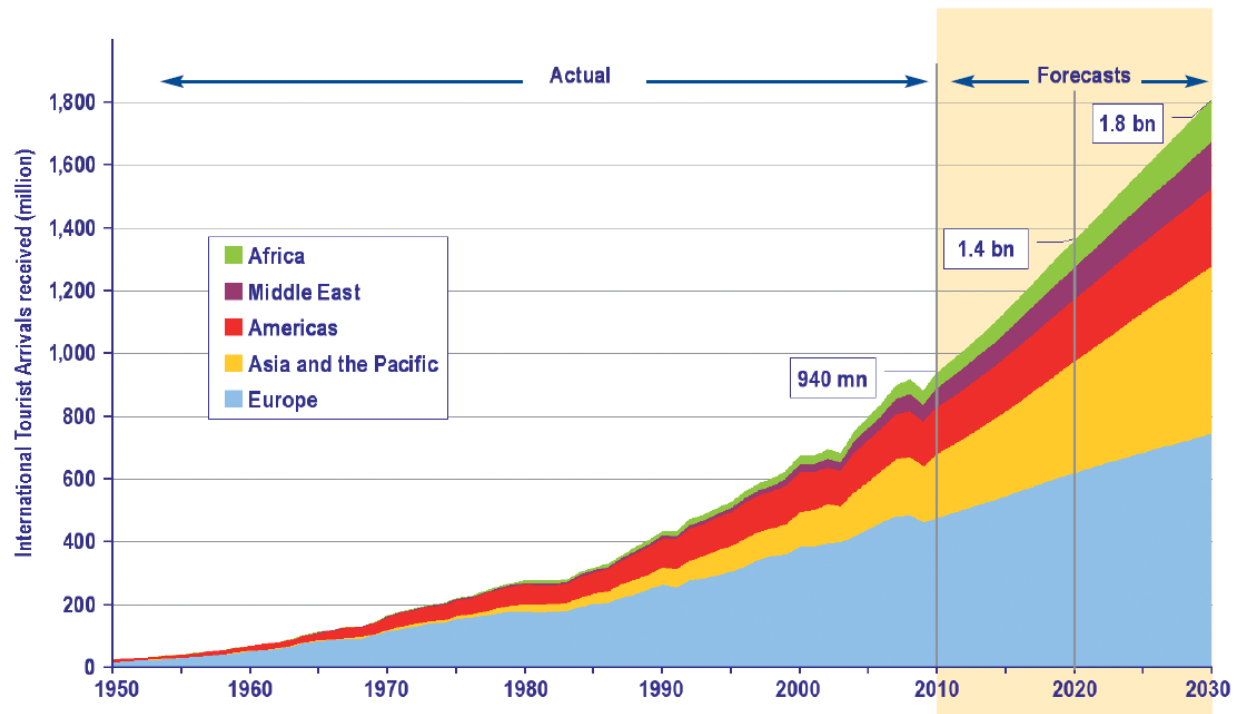
2012 : 1.035 bn

2020 : 1.4 bn

2030 : 1.8 bn

Increasing interest in
nature and culture tourism

UNWTO Tourism Towards 2030: Actual trend and forecast 1950-2030



Benefits of tourism

Economic Benefits

- Provides **employment** opportunities
- Generates foreign **exchange**
- Increases **Incomes**
- Supports local **products/** resources
- Diversifies the economy
- Spreads development
- Increases governmental **revenues**

Social / Cultural Benefits

- Broadens educational cultural horizons
- Improves quality of life
- Justifies environmental protection
- Provides recreational facilities that may be used by local population
- Reinforces preservation of heritage
- Provides employment for artists
- Breaks down language, sociocultural, political, religious barriers
- Creates a favorable destination image
- Promotes international understanding and peace

Social - Environmental disadvantages of tourism

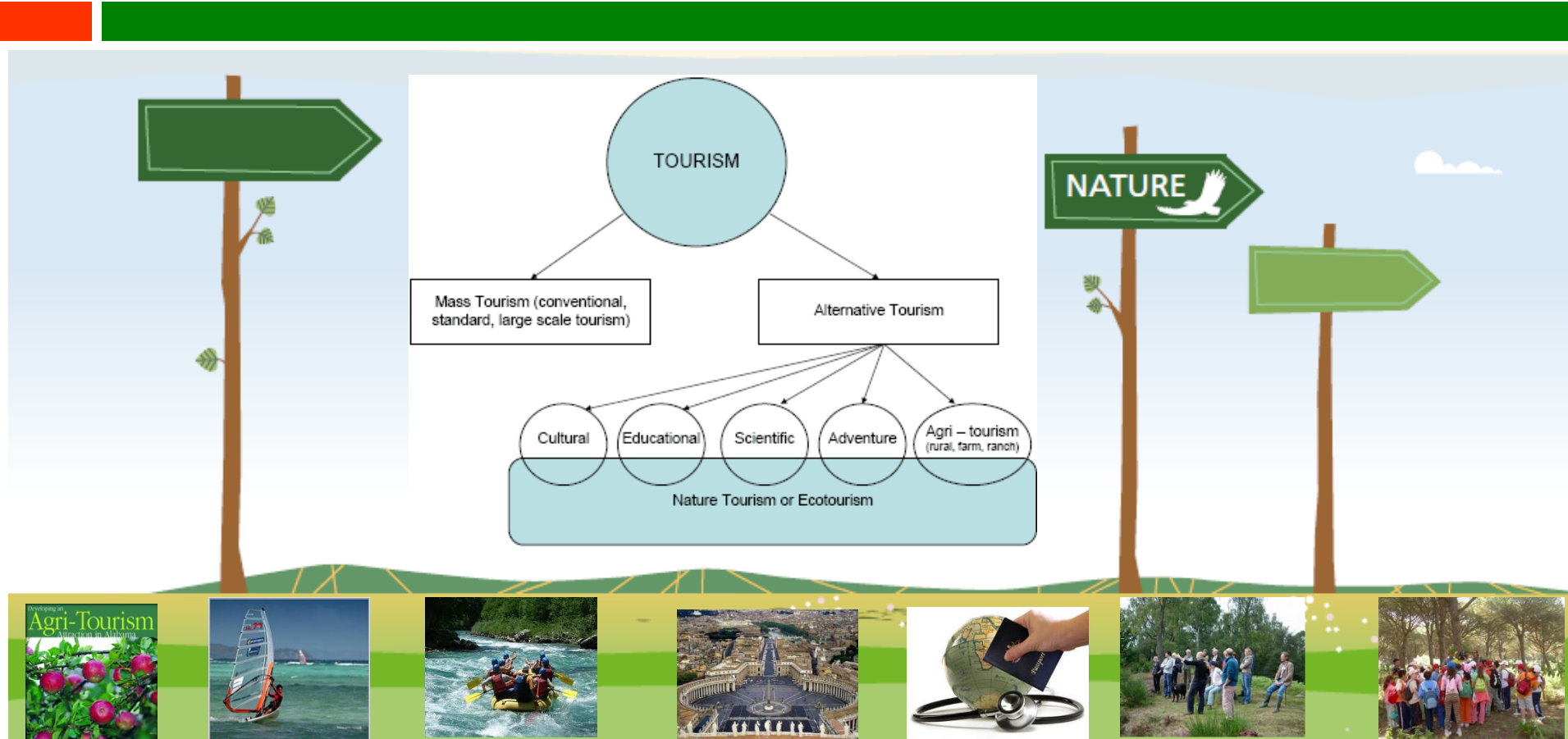


❖ tourism brings increasing **pressure** on

- environment
- social equity
- local cultures

- ✓ Creates social problems
- ✓ Degrades the natural / cultural environment
- ✓ Commercializes culture, religion, arts
- ✓ Creates **conflicts** in the host society
- ✓ Contributes to disease, economic fluctuation, transportation problems

the sustainability problematique



- “leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems” – WTO

Nature tourism

- ❖ Nature-based tourism involves
 - experiencing natural places
 - typically through outdoor activities
 - that are sustainable in terms of their impact on the environment



Tourism in protected areas

- ❖ **Protected areas:** “clearly defined geographical space, recognized, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the **long term conservation of nature** with associated ecosystem services and cultural values” (*IUCN 2008:8*)
- ❖ ‘serve as important cultural places where people contemplate and understand the natural world through **visitation and tourism**’ (*Eagles et al., 2013:60*)
- ❖ **National parks:** large natural or near natural areas set aside to protect largescale ecological processes, along with the complement of species and ecosystems characteristic of the area, which also provide a foundation for environmentally and culturally compatible spiritual, scientific, educational, **recreational & visitor** opportunities

Tourism in Protected areas: Visitor Management strategies

Direct Visitor Management strategies

- Physical (barriers, paths, location of facilities).
- Regulatory (rules, regulations, permits)
- Economic (incentives, charges)



Indirect Visitor Management strategies

- Education
- Interpretation
 - Mechanisms which seek to reduce inappropriate behaviour on a voluntary basis through education
 - Help to protect the environment / Increase visitor enjoyment
 - **Widely applied in protected areas**



Interpretation and sustainable tourism

Manage visitors and their impact

- Influence visitors where to go
- Inform about appropriate behavior for long-term conservation

Local economic benefits

- Encourage visitors to stay longer
- Diversify and strengthen local economy

Local environmental benefits

- Enhance visitors understanding about environment
- Raise awareness / Get involved / Change behavior

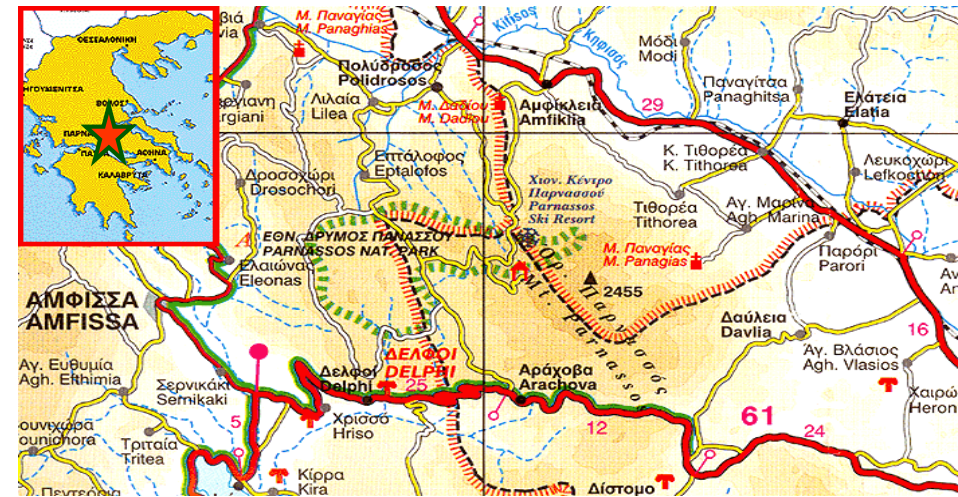
Attitudes and values

- Stimulate the hosts pride



Case study: Parnassos Mountain

- Well-known destination for **mass tourism** (Parnassos Ski Center)
- Destination for **alternative tourism** (Parnassos Mountain natural environment)
- Destination for **cultural tourism** (Delphi archaeological site)



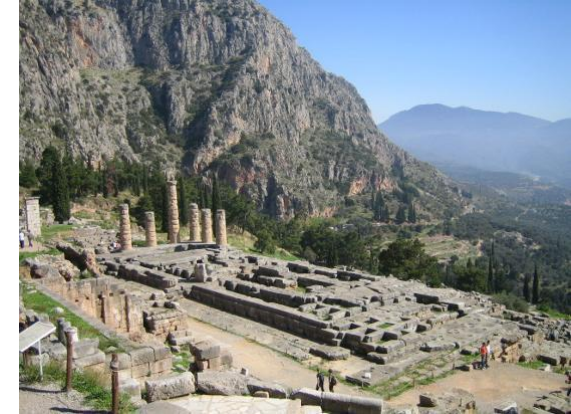
Parnassos Ski Center

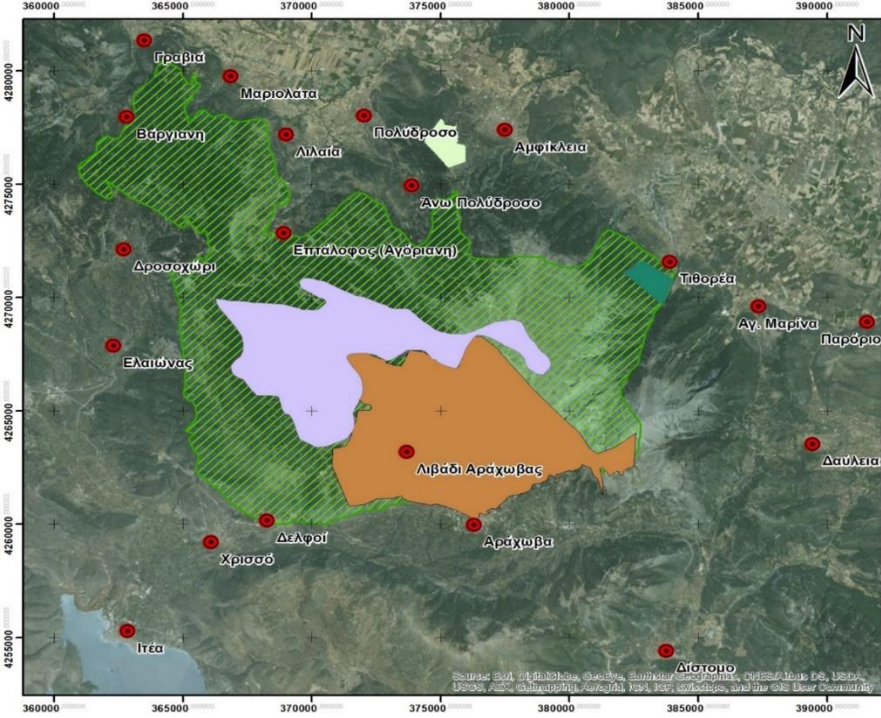


Parnassos Mountain



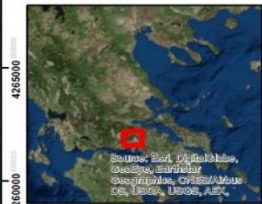
Delphi





ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΧΕΙΡΙΣΗΣ
ΕΘΝΙΚΟΥ ΔΡΥΜΟΥ
ΠΑΡΝΑΣΣΟΥ

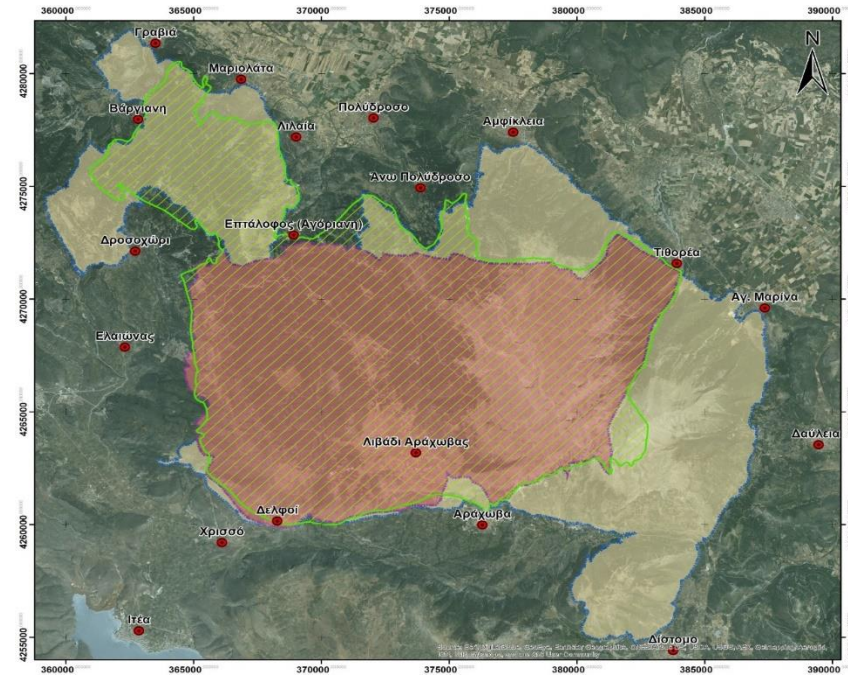
ΠΕΡΙΟΧΗ ΧΩΡΙΚΗΣ ΑΡΜΟΔΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ
ΦΔΕΔ ΠΑΡΝΑΣΣΟΥ



Σύνθεση χάρτη:
Θεοδώρα Λαναρά
ΜSc Δασολόγος-Περιβαλλοντολόγος
Γεωγραφική Προβολή Χάρτη:
ΕΓΣΑ 87

3 1,5 0 3 Km

Parnassos National Park Management Body



ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΧΕΙΡΙΣΗΣ
ΕΘΝΙΚΟΥ ΔΡΥΜΟΥ
ΠΑΡΝΑΣΣΟΥ

ΠΕΡΙΟΧΕΣ ΔΙΚΤΥΟΥ
"NATURA 2000"



Σύνθεση χάρτη:
Θεοδώρα Λαναρά
Δασολόγος-Περιβαλλοντολόγος ΜSc
Γεωγραφική Προβολή Χάρτη:
ΕΓΣΑ 87

3 1,5 0 3 Km

Parnassos Mountain

- ❖ an ecological laboratory with important and sensitive ecosystems, rich history and cultural heritage
 - landscapes of special beauty
 - rare biodiversity
 - cultural heritage



Parnassos activities of alternative tourism



Surveys results for sustainable tourism

- ❖ seasonality in winter tourism
- ❖ benefits from tourism activities not spatially equally distributed
- ❖ intense spatial concentration of tourist resorts in Parnassos Ski Center
- ❖ intense promotion of ski tourism
- ❖ number of visitors in mountainous areas during summer are quite low
- ❖ vast majority of visitors from Athens and other urban centers
- ❖ lack of cooperation among tourism stakeholders

Parnassos area hoteliers / visitors survey

In hotel leaflets reference to

Parnassos Ski Center	100,00%
Delphi archaeological site	50,00%
Parnassos National Park	37,50%

During your stay do you intent to visit

Parnassos Ski Center	50,00%
Delphi archaeological site	86,67%
Parnassos National Park	46,67%

Which is the main reason for a visitor to come to Parnassos area?

Hoteliers survey

Arahova Ski Center	50,00%
Delphi archaeological site	25,00%
Traditional settlements	12,50%
Parnassos National Park	12,50%

Visitors survey

Arahova Ski Center	16,67%
Delphi archaeological site	73,33%
Traditional settlements	3,33%
Parnassos National Park	6,67%



Great Escapers



Faillte Ireland, "Growing International Sales", www.failteireland.ie

Marketing the destination

- Great place for a family vacation
- Teach children to respect and care about nature
- Escape from the stress of the big cities
- Opportunity to do something interesting
- Opportunity to discover new and unknown mountains
- Discover and feel untouched nature

Looking for potential tourist key market segments for protected areas

Parnassos study area: sustainable tourism development policy proposals (1/3)

- ❖ **educational program** for local enterprises about alternative forms or tourism in protected areas
- ❖ **consultancy support** to tour operators , Municipal tourist offices
- ❖ **integrated tourist promotion program** with a visitor management project
- ❖ **training of employees** involved in tourism, seminars, workshops
- ❖ **environmental education** for the local population about the benefits from sustainable tourism
- ❖ special **educational programs** in schools, for environmental awareness
- ❖ **local agency** to promote sustainable tourism development and undertake initiatives

Parnassos study area: sustainable tourism development policy proposals (2/3)

- ❖ Modernization of **hotel units**, restauration of traditional buildings
- ❖ Improvement of **transport infrastructure** / access to remote mountainous settlements, construction of **green infrastructure** and implementation of projects for **environmental protection**
- ❖ Interventions and improvements on local **technical and social infrastructure** e.g. pavements, lighting, sufficient parking places, security in local municipalities to improve tourists' & residents' quality of life
- ❖ Support for public / private investments in **tourism infrastructure** e.g. hiking, climbing, mountain – climbing and agri-tourism
- ❖ Installation of **signs** and **info kiosks** at nodal poles of tourism attractions of the region

Parnassos study area: sustainable tourism development policy proposals (3/3)

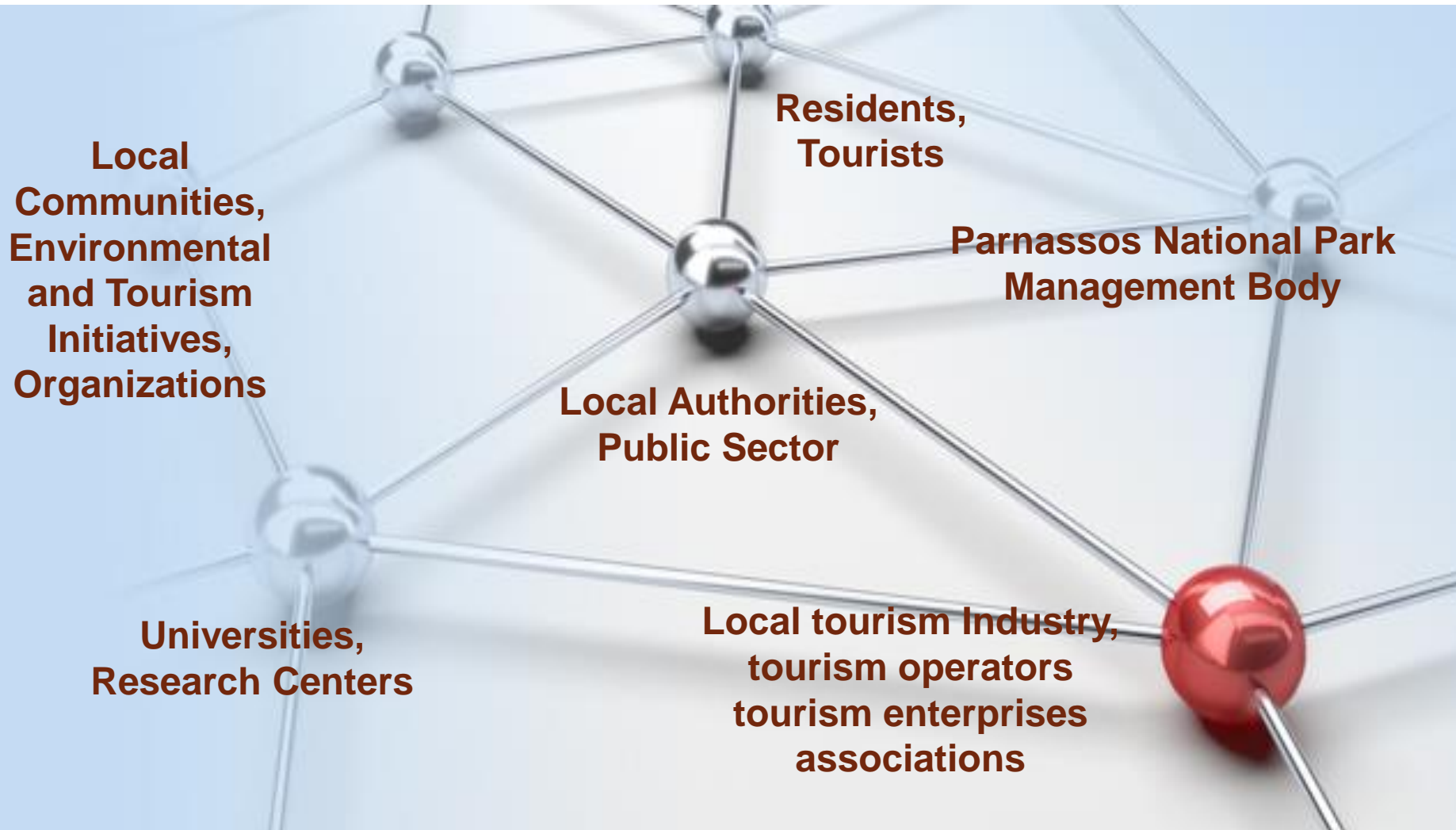
- ❖ Organizing **cultural events** festivals, revival of local traditions
- ❖ Route and networks **trails** for the promotion e.g. of archaeological heritage monuments and museums
- ❖ development of **alternative forms of tourism** in order to attract a variety of target groups all over the year.
- ❖ a **friendly touristic behavior** framework for all stakeholders involved in tourism (friendly prices, high quality service for customers etc.)
- ❖ **tourism product** adapted / harmonized with local culture, preserving **authenticity** and avoiding commercialization

Parnassos National Park Management Body: sustainable tourism development policy proposals

- ❖ creation of an **integrated tourism package**, combining visits to the National Park and other activities (entertainment, sports, ski, etc.),
- ❖ support the **participation of locals** in sustainable tourism development, through volunteering, enriching their associations etc.,
- ❖ organizing and/or participating in **awareness' seminars/ workshops/ conferences** on environment protection
- ❖ increasing and improving **educational and recreational activities** cultural events, research activities etc.)
- ❖ elaboration of specific **visitors management plans**, focusing on issues on defining the area's tourism carrying capacity.
- ❖ systematic, co-ordinated **cooperation synergies** among all stakeholders involved with tourism

The key to sustainable tourism development success: Synergies

Parnassos Local Cluster for Sustainable Tourism Development



- ❖ Education, Information, Interpretation
- ❖ Site management / National Park Management
 - Conflicts / Zoning arrangements to prevent decline of biodiversity



Thank you for your attention

kostos@econ.auth.gr

tsitsoni@for.auth.gr

doralanara@yahoo.gr